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- I. Introduction and Credits
- II. Team Rankings
  - A. Overall Team Rankings
  - B. Offensive Team Rankings
  - C. Passing Offense Rankings
  - D. Running Offense Rankings
  - E. Defensive Team Rankings
  - F. Pass Defense Rankings
  - G. Run Defense Rankings
  - H. Special Teams Honorable Mention
- III. Schedule
  - A. Week-by-week Schedule
  - B. Explanation
  - C. Teams That Don't Play Each Other
- IV. Team Scouting Reports, Player Ratings, Schedules, Commentary
  - A. Buffalo Bills
  - B. Indianapolis Colts
  - C. Miami Dolphins
  - D. New England Patriots
  - E. New York Jets
  - F. Cincinnati Bengals
  - G. Cleveland Browns
  - H. Houston Oilers
  - I. Pittsburgh Steelers
  - J. Denver Broncos
  - K. Kansas City Chiefs
  - L. Los Angeles Raiders
  - M. San Diego Chargers
  - N. Seattle Seahawks
  - O. Washington Redskins
  - P. New York Giants
  - Q. Philadelphia Eagles
  - R. Phoenix Cardinals
  - S. Dallas Cowboys
  - T. Chicago Bears
  - U. Detroit Lions
  - V. Green Bay Packers
  - W. Minnesota Vikings
  - X. Tampa Bay Buccaneers
  - Y. San Francisco 49ers
  - Z. Los Angeles Raiders
  - AA. New Orleans Saints
  - AB. Atlanta Falcons
  - AC. AFC Pro Bowl Team

- AD. NFC Pro Bowl Team
- V. Drafting
  - A. Theory
  - B. Draft Tier Criteria (Sample)
  - C. My Personal Team Needs
- VI. Tecmo Passing Study
- VII. Miscellaneous Extended Discussions
  - A. Best Player In The Game
  - B. Best Team In The Game
  - C. Worst Team In The Game

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 Team Rankings  
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Leif's Overall-Subjective (based mostly on season MAN vs. MAN matchups; note that this is not an exact science - it depends on your style and ability as well, not to mention whether or not you can play WR at RB - this is what I have found to be most accurate for no-holds-barred, Season mode play)

Dominating Teams:

1. New York Giants (got impact players everywhere but the defensive line)
2. San Francisco 49ers (no fearsome running game, but great quality team)
3. Houston Oilers (star-oriented defense, special teams)
4. Los Angeles Raiders (great everywhere but QB, LB, K, P, and a DB or two)

Teams That Can Be Dominating:

5. Kansas City Chiefs (offensive speed and depth/returner problems)
6. Buffalo Bills (too average on D, and awful offensive depth/returners)
7. Philadelphia Eagles (horrid secondary, QB Eagles = 80% of the offense)
8. Cincinnati Bengals (lacking 8 guys on D and good receivers)
9. Detroit Lions (defense needs help and QB position is inconsistent)

Teams With Strength:

10. San Diego Chargers (need more juice to go to the next level)
11. Washington Redskins (Rypien and Humphries, good but CB-driven D)
12. Minnesota Vikings (QB position lacking, everything else good or great)
13. Miami Dolphins (running game comes from receiver corps)
14. Dallas Cowboys (passing game is not up to snuff, just solid otherwise)
15. Denver Broncos (Elway isn't very good, depth, the D can't intercept)

### Teams That Totally Rely On Stars And Star Units:

16. Atlanta Falcons (defense needs much help, offense has bad depth)
17. Chicago Bears (no passing game whatsoever)
18. Pittsburgh Steelers (painful-to-watch offense)
19. Phoenix Cardinals (no punch in the offense, safety-driven defense)
20. New York Jets (only a few stars to carry this team, weak offense)
21. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (offense has 2-3 good players, defense has Haddix)

### Teams That Just Can't Cut It Against Superior Teams:

22. Los Angeles Rams (horrible defense, help on special teams wanted)
23. Cleveland Browns (QB Browns + W. Slaughter + 2-3 OK defenders = the team)
24. New Orleans Saints (hot-and-cold offense, defense lacking punishers)
25. Green Bay Packers (day-to-day offense, pitiful D)
26. New England Patriots (little offense, but some defensive stars)
27. Seattle Seahawks (offense has no speed anywhere, terrible defense)
28. Indianapolis Colts (no defense, worst pair of QBs in the game)

(Leif: I thought the Falcons were very difficult to place, as it requires one to decide whether having one dominant unit was better than having some power on both sides of the ball. I managed to get a lot out of these guys in one MAN season, so I placed them where I thought they could play at, rather than what someone who never made any roster moves would put them as.)

Leif's Offense-Subjective (using WRs at RB, etc. - note that not all the good WRs can be good RBs - Al Toon for instance, he is too slow for such; A "RB" is a person with at least 50 MS, a WR is a guy with at least 38 MS and 63 REC - at least that's what I think I usually put down...)

### Unstoppable Offenses:

1. Houston Oilers (speed, speed, speed, and a great triggerman)
2. San Francisco 49ers (lethal passing, not so great running)
3. New York Giants (fast and solid, depth is an small issue)
4. Los Angeles Raiders (if they had a QB, they would be invincible)
5. Buffalo Bills (depth at RB needs major work here, the WRs aren't so fast)
6. Philadelphia Eagles (QB Eagles is pretty good, TE Jackson isn't bad either)

### Offenses With Potent Attacks:

7. Detroit Lions (inconsistent QB play and power run, but pretty good speed)
8. Miami Dolphins (1 great QB, 1 RB, 2 WR/RB type of offense...maybe...)

9. Los Angeles Rams (0-1-2 QB, 1 RB, 2 great WR/RB offense)

Offenses With Star Elements:

10. Cincinnati Bengals (no good WRs)
11. San Diego Chargers (1 pretty good RB and so-so everywhere else)
12. Kansas City Chiefs (1 QB, 1 RB, 1 WR/RB offense)
13. Washington Redskins (no good triggerman, but great versatility)
14. Denver Broncos (no real QB, 1 pretty good RB, 2 WR/RB offense)
15. Atlanta Falcons (very volatile offense, but they have some juice)
16. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (Testaverde is actually decent, 1 RB, 1 WR)
17. Dallas Cowboys (good running but not so good passing)
18. Minnesota Vikings (no good triggerman, only one true burner)

One-Dimensional Offenses:

19. Cleveland Browns (QB Browns, Slaughter, and Mike Pagel, no one else here)
20. Green Bay Packers (1 QB, 1 WR/RB, a RB sometimes)
21. New York Jets (1-2 QBs, 1 WR, and some miscellaneous solid people)
22. Phoenix Cardinals (solid but not good enough to make you fear them)
23. Chicago Bears (no passing game whatsoever, but very good runners)
24. New Orleans Saints (1 RB, 1 WR/RB, no QB)
25. Indianapolis Colts (no QB, but 2 WRs and a so-so running game)

Painful Offenses:

26. New England Patriots (at least they have Marv Cook...)
27. Seattle Seahawks (if you are lucky, Krieg will come through)
28. Pittsburgh Steelers (this is just hideous, no speed or talent)

(note: I have not put in rushing or passing offense rankings, because the priorities people would place on different positions, and the allowable substitutions for each person's preferences would be too much to process individually)

Leif's Defense - Subjective (based on MAN play - note how much I am prioritizing the DBs in the rankings)

Dominating Defenses:

1. Pittsburgh Steelers (turnover machine, Rod Woodson, etc.)
2. New York Giants (never underestimate their LBs, especially Reasons)
3. San Francisco 49ers (great safeties, a powerhouse D except at CB)
4. Chicago Bears (if they had a better SS and LBs, this would be evil)

5. Kansas City Chiefs (Derrick Thomas + good supporting cast = ugly games)

#### Defenses With Superstar Elements:

6. Los Angeles Raiders (weak LBs, but pretty decent elsewhere)
7. Minnesota Vikings (solid all-around defense, but some weaknesses)
- T-8 Houston Oilers (Richard Johnson and Childress, some others)
- T-8 Cincinnati Bengals (Francis, Bussey, and the incredible DAVID FULCHER)
10. San Diego Chargers (decent but not great, few superstars)
11. Dallas Cowboys (good DBs, decent interior LBs, but conditions important)
12. Washington Redskins (CB-driven defense)
13. Miami Dolphins (DB-reliant D, + Offerdahl)

#### Defenses With Unshieldable Weaknesses:

14. Phoenix Cardinals (some bona fide stars, decent secondary)
15. New York Jets (strong ILBs and FS, the rest fade quickly)
16. Buffalo Bills (Smith is a beast, so is Bennett, the rest are not great)
17. Detroit Lions (downgraded PHX secondary, more decent front seven players)
18. Philadelphia Eagles (strong front eight, then terrible back 3)

#### Defenses With Little Turnover Ability:

19. Atlanta Falcons (Deion is the only consistent impact player on this team)
20. Denver Broncos (strong against the run, but can't catch much)
21. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (Crack Haddix is 12 men)
22. New England Patriots (at least they can get INTs...)
23. New Orleans Saints (not enough impact players to get it done)

#### Prayer Processions:

24. Cleveland Browns (Mike Johnson, Frank Minnifield, Tony Blaylock)
25. Los Angeles Rams (Greene and 2 OK DBs...)
26. Green Bay Packers (Bob Nelson can get INTs...seriously...)
27. Seattle Seahawks (Jacob Green, and maybe another guy - horrid)
28. Indianapolis Colts (I shouldn't have to explain this...)

Leif's Pass Defense - Subjective (based on team pass rush, team intercepting ability, and team speed in coverage)

#### Surface-To-Air Missile Sites:

1. Chicago Bears (ridiculous Interception ratings, 2nd best line, etc.)
2. Pittsburgh Steelers (Mr. Woodson, and the rest are good enough)
- T-3. San Francisco 49ers (Lott and Waymer are too sick and the line is too good)

T-3. New York Giants (fierce outside pass rush and Reasons + secondary is very good)

Air Patrollers:

5. Houston Oilers (good enough pass rush, RJ, rest are decent DBs)
6. Kansas City Chiefs (pretty good pass rush and DT + Percy + corners)
7. Minnesota Vikings (pass rush, Merriweather, and Browner make up for weaknesses)
8. Los Angeles Raiders (best line + decent secondary + Eddie Anderson)
9. Miami Dolphins (a little pass rush, and then the rest can shut you down)
10. Washington Redskins (two extremely good corners and solid elsewhere)
11. Cincinnati Bengals (3 darn good guys clean up a lot of messes)
12. San Diego Chargers (decent pass rush and safeties, very good corners)

Small Buckets:

13. Phoenix Cardinals (all the elements, just not strong enough)
14. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (Haddix is great and the secondary is decent)
15. Dallas Cowboys (all-around solid, but not dominating in any way)
16. New York Jets (Clifton and McMillan are very versatile)

Large Buckets:

17. Atlanta Falcons (Deion and the secondary barely get it done)
18. Buffalo Bills (front seven is wonderful, but there's not too much behind it)
19. New England Patriots (Hurst and Lippett, and two in the front seven have skills)
20. Detroit Lions (better pass rush than N.E., but worse secondary)
21. Philadelphia Eagles (great pass rush, but \_only\_ Allen behind it)
22. Cleveland Browns (Minnifield and Blaylock can only cover part of the field)

Air Traffic Controllers:

23. Denver Broncos (Smith can't double up every receiver)
24. New Orleans Saints (Massey is not good enough to shield Cook, etc.)
25. Los Angeles Rams (porous defense from Greene, Humphery, and Newsome)
26. Seattle Seahawks (OK secondary + Jacob Green, but no real MAN pass defenders)
27. Green Bay Packers (Nelson anchors the pass-tippers)
28. Indianapolis Colts (seriously...the retractable roof catches more balls...)

Leif's Run Defense - Subjective (based on line's ability to hold off the OL, the quality of the LBs and DBs, and positioning is key here)

Brick Walls:

1. Pittsburgh Steelers (Woodson is great, everyone else is very good)
2. New York Giants (insane LBs and good DBs)

3. San Francisco 49ers (good line, good LBs, sick safeties)
4. Kansas City Chiefs (hella front seven, good enough corners)
5. Los Angeles Raiders (great line and good DBs, but only one LB)
6. Chicago Bears (no superstar run-stopping DB like Eddie Anderson)

#### 3.7 Yards Per Teams:

7. Minnesota Vikings (good enough at all three levels)
8. Cincinnati Bengals (Francis, Bussey, and DAVID FULCHER can stop almost anything)
9. Denver Broncos (weak line, but lots of stars)
10. San Diego Chargers (less stars than DEN but more front seven power)
11. Dallas Cowboys (line could be better, but LBs and DBs especially get it done)
12. Houston Oilers (one true star per each level, only \_great\_ with an A button)
13. Phoenix Cardinals (Nunn, Harvey, and the safeties can just barely shut 'em down)
14. Miami Dolphins (not a wonderful line, but Offerdahl and the DBs make it work)
15. Detroit Lions (hot-and-cold line, two decent LBs and safeties each isn't dominating)

#### Thin Teams:

16. Philadelphia Eagles (pretty good front seven, but Allen is exposed)
17. Buffalo Bills (great front seven, good luck with Odomes' HP)

#### Riot Shields:

18. Washington Redskins (Mann is good, two great corners, nothing else strong)
19. Atlanta Falcons (if you have the A button, Deion and Gann can get it done)
20. New York Jets (only 3 stars on this team to clean up the mess)
21. Tampa Bay Buccaneers (Haddix and Hamilton can get some things done)

#### Teams Along For The Rush:

22. New Orleans Saints (good line and a couple decent LBs, but only an LCB???)
23. New England Patriots (downgraded N.O. up front, better in back)
24. Cleveland Browns (MJ, Blaylock, and Minnifield are barely passable)
25. Green Bay Packers (Nelson and Harris can be attacked effectively)

#### Red Seas:

26. Los Angeles Rams (Kevin Greene is in a terrible spot, no one else consistent)
27. Seattle Seahawks (Jacob Green is in a bad spot and no one else is consistent)
28. Indianapolis Colts (uhhh...Duane Bickett...uhhh...Mike Prior?)

Leif's Special Teams Honorable Mention - To make this list you need to have more than one formidable part of your special teams, whether

it is kick coverage or punt blocking. Punters don't count because even a horrid punter is still beastly in this game.

1. Pittsburgh Steelers: Fearsome kick and punt return teams, with Dwight Stone, Tim Worley, and a host of thousands. Punt coverage is outstanding and kick coverage is great. Greg Lloyd can easily block kicks and Gary Anderson is a very good kicker. This unit is what gets the Steelers to the playoffs.
2. New York Giants: Great kick and punt coverage units, and pretty decent return games as well, with David Meggett or Rodney Hampton, they can take it 105 yards for the big score if everything clicks. Sean Landeta can do 80+ yards on you so don't play for field position against these guys, that's a battle you will lose. LT will ensure you get a few XPs and a ton of FGs blocked.
3. New Orleans Saints: Gil Fenerty and his friends can go all day on kick and punt returns, and Morten Andersen's leg is sure. Pat Swilling can have a say about which kickers can put it through the uprights as well.
4. San Francisco 49ers: Romo is no slouch at penetrating the FG protection, and when John Taylor gets a punt, he can take it all the way. Pretty decent kick and punt coverage as well.
5. Kansas City Chiefs: Nick Lowery can kick the ball from 70 yards out, and Derrick Thomas can block you in 1 second.
6. Cincinnati Bengals: Kendal Smith may be the best punt returner in the game, and James Francis knows how to block the kick.

#### Special Teams Almosts:

Los Angeles Raiders: These guys have return men coming out of their ears...Bo Jackson can make some big-time plays on punt coverage.

Chicago Bears: Johnny Bailey never made any coverage unit happy, and Mike Singletary can actually rush the kicker on FG attempts.

Minnesota Vikings: Merriweather is pretty good at rushing the kicker and Leo Lewis can do some damage on punt returns.

Miami Dolphins: Pete Stoyanovich is a pretty good kicker and Troy Stratford is a pretty good returner.

#####  
Schedule  
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Note that for each game, while the order of the games is rearranged, the order of the teams is not, so that ATL will always be the right-side team in a Season MAN vs. MAN game, and BUF will always be the left-side

team.

<Paul's commentary>

Simply, this is where the schedule for all 17 weeks is listed. If you are looking for team-by-team schedules, they are in the scouting reports section.

The games in each week will not necessarily follow this order. The game rearranges the schedule each week when that week arrives. The rearranging seems to follow no discernible order. These games are listed in the default order, which is in order by the first team.

</Paul's commentary>

#### Week 1

Buf. vs. Mia. | Cle. vs. Dal. | Sea. vs. N.O. | Phi. vs. G.B.  
Ind. vs. N.E. | Hou. vs. Rai. | Was. vs. Det. | Chi. vs. Min.  
Jets vs. T.B. | Pit. vs. S.D. | Gia. vs. S.F. | Phx. vs. Rams  
Cin. vs. Den. | K.C. vs. Atl. |

#### Week 2

Buf. vs. Pit. | Cin. vs. Hou. | Was. vs. Dal. | Chi. vs. T.B.  
Ind. vs. Mia. | Den. vs. Rai. | Gia. vs. Rams | Det. vs. G.B.  
N.E. vs. Cle. | K.C. vs. N.O. | Phi. vs. Phx. | Min. vs. Atl.  
Jets vs. Sea. | S.D. vs. S.F. |

#### Week 3

Buf. vs. Jets | Cin. vs. Cle. | Was. vs. Phx. | G.B. vs. T.B.  
Ind. vs. Rai. | Hou. vs. K.C. | Gia. vs. Chi. | Min. vs. S.F.  
N.E. vs. Pit. | Den. vs. Sea. | Phi. vs. Dal. | Rams vs. N.O.  
Mia. vs. Det. | S.D. vs. Atl. |

#### Week 4

Buf. vs. T.B. | Jets vs. Chi. | Den. vs. S.D. | Min. vs. N.O.  
Ind. vs. Det. | Cin. vs. Was. | K.C. vs. Sea. | Rai. vs. Atl.  
Mia. vs. G.B. | Cle. vs. Gia. | Phx. vs. Dal. | S.F. vs. Rams  
N.E. vs. Hou. | Pit. vs. Phi. |

#### Week 5

Buf. vs. Chi. | Den. vs. Min. | Gia. vs. Dal. | BYES  
Ind. vs. Sea. | K.C. vs. S.D. | Det. vs. T.B. | Cin., Cle., Pit.,  
Mia. vs. Jets | Rai. vs. S.F. | G.B. vs. Rams | Hou.  
N.E. vs. Phx. | Was. vs. Phi. | N.O. vs. Atl. |

#### Week 6

Buf. vs. K.C. | Cin. vs. Sea. | Gia. vs. Phx. | BYES  
Ind. vs. Pit. | Hou. vs. Den. | Phi. vs. T.B. | S.F., Rams, N.O.

Mia. vs. N.E. | Rai. vs. S.D. | Dal. vs. G.B. |Atl.  
Jets vs. Cle. | Was. vs. Chi. | Det. vs. Min. |

#### Week 7

Buf. vs. Ind. | Cle. vs. Was. | Phi. vs. N.O. | BYES  
Mia. vs. K.C. | Pit. vs. Gia. | Phx. vs. Min. |N.E., Den., Chi.,  
Jets vs. Hou. | Rai. vs. Sea. | S.F. vs. Atl. |T.B., Det., G.B.  
Cin. vs. Dal. | S.D. vs. Rams |

#### Week 8

Buf. vs. Cin. | Cle. vs. S.D. | Phx. vs. Atl. | BYES  
Ind. vs. Jets | Pit. vs. Sea. | Chi. vs. G.B. |Was., Gia., Phi.,  
Mia. vs. Hou. | Den. vs. K.C. | Det. vs. S.F. |Dal.  
N.E. vs. Min. | Rai. vs. Rams | T.B. vs. N.O. |

#### Week 9

N.E. vs. Den. | S.D. vs. Sea. | Dal. vs. Det. | BYES  
Cin. vs. Hou. | Was. vs. Gia. | Chi. vs. N.O. |Buf., Ind., Mia.,  
Cle. vs. Pit. | Phi. vs. S.F. | G.B. vs. T.B. |Jets  
K.C. vs. Rai. | Phx. vs. Min. | Rams vs. Atl. |

#### Week 10

Buf. vs. N.E. | Hou. vs. Was. | Chi. vs. Det. | BYES  
Ind. vs. Mia. | Pit. vs. Den. | Min. vs. T.B. |K.C., Rai., S.D.,  
Jets vs. G.B. | Gia. vs. Phi. | S.F. vs. Atl. |Sea.  
Cin. vs. Cle. | Phx. vs. Dal. | Rams vs. N.O. |

#### Week 11

Buf. vs. G.B. | Cle. vs. Phi. | S.D. vs. Sea. | Chi. vs. Min.  
Ind. vs. Jets | Hou. vs. Dal. | Was. vs. Atl. | Det. vs. T.B.  
Mia. vs. N.E. | Den. vs. Rai. | Gia. vs. Phx. | S.F. vs. N.O.  
Cin. vs. Pit. | K.C. vs. Rams |

#### Week 12

Buf. vs. Mia. | Cle. vs. Hou. | S.D. vs. N.O. | Det. vs. Rams  
Ind. vs. Chi. | Pit. vs. Was. | Gia. vs. Dal. | G.B. vs. Min.  
N.E. vs. Jets | Den. vs. K.C. | Phx. vs. S.F. | T.B. vs. Atl.  
Cin. vs. Phi. | Rai. vs. Sea. |

#### Week 13

Buf. vs. N.E. | Cin. vs. Rai. | Was. vs. Dal. | Det. vs. Min.  
Ind. vs. G.B. | Cle. vs. K.C. | Gia. vs. T.B. | S.F. vs. Rams  
Mia. vs. Chi. | Hou. vs. Pit. | Phi. vs. Phx. | N.O. vs. Atl.  
Jets vs. S.D. | Den. vs. Sea. |

#### Week 14

Buf. vs. Jets | Cin. vs. Gia. | Rai. vs. S.D. | S.F. vs. N.O.  
Ind. vs. Cle. | Pit. vs. Dal. | Was. vs. Rams | BYES  
Mia. vs. T.B. | Hou. vs. Phi. | Chi. vs. Det. | Min., Phx.  
N.E. vs. Den. | K.C. vs. Sea. | G.B. vs. Atl. |

#### Week 15

Buf. vs. Rai. | Cle. vs. Den. | Was. vs. Phx. | Chi. vs. G.B.  
Ind. vs. N.E. | Hou. vs. Pit. | Gia. vs. Phi. | Min. vs. T.B.  
Mia. vs. Cin. | K.C. vs. S.D. | Dal. vs. N.O. | Rams vs. Atl.  
Jets vs. Det. | Sea. vs. S.F. |

#### Week 16

Buf. vs. Ind. | Cle. vs. Hou. | Sea. vs. Atl. | Chi. vs. T.B.  
Mia. vs. S.D. | Den. vs. Phx. | Was. vs. Gia. | Det. vs. G.B.  
N.E. vs. Jets | K.C. vs. S.F. | Phi. vs. Dal. | Min. vs. Rams  
Cin. vs. Pit. | Rai. vs. N.O. |

#### Week 17

Buf. vs. Det. | Cle. vs. Pit. | Sea. vs. Rams | Dal. vs. Atl.  
Ind. vs. T.B. | Hou. vs. Gia. | Was. vs. Phi. | Chi. vs. S.F.  
Mia. vs. Jets | Den. vs. S.D. | Phx. vs. N.O. | Min. vs. G.B.  
N.E. vs. Cin. | K.C. vs. Rai. |

<Paul's commentary>

#### CAUTION!

Extremely long, boring, and confusing explanation ahead! If you are bored easily or care nothing about why some schedules are designed the way they are, skip to the next section and save yourself a few minutes.

There are a few oddities which exist in the schedule because of the divisions. Since four divisions have five teams and the two other divisions have only four teams, the schedule can get very convoluted.

First of all, every team plays every other team in its division twice. Every team has a sixteen game schedule with one bye week in the middle of the season. Every team plays games against four teams in a single division from the other conference. If the other division has five teams, the team plays the four teams that have the regular schedule (see below).

Most of the teams in the divisions with five teams have the basic schedule. The exceptions are New England, Denver, Phoenix, and Minnesota. The basic teams (I'll call them Type I teams) play every team in their division twice, which accounts for eight games. They also play two teams from each other division in their conference, which accounts for four more games. The last four games are played against

four teams in a single division from the other conference.

The teams in the divisions with four teams (Type II teams) have six divisional games and three games against the other two divisions in their conference. They also play four teams against four teams in a single division in the other conference.

The odd teams out, the Type III teams, play the other four teams in their respective divisions twice. In addition, they play the other Type III team in their conference twice. They play the remaining two Type III teams once each. The last four games are played against the division in their conference with only four teams.

</Paul's commentary>

Here is the lists of teams that do not play each other.

Of course, if you want two teams that play each other, choose ones that aren't on this list. :) Remember that division opponents play each other twice.

#### AFC East

Buf. : NFC East - NFC West - Cle. - Hou. - Den. - S.D. - Sea. - Min.  
Ind. : NFC East - NFC West - Cin. - Hou. - Den. - K.C. - S.D. - Min.  
Mia. : NFC East - NFC West - Cle. - Pit. - Den. - Rai. - Sea. - Min.  
N.E. : NFC West - (AFC West NOT Den.) - (NFC East NOT Phx.) -  
(NFC Central NOT Min.)  
Jets : NFC East - NFC West - Cin. - Pit. - Den. - K.C. - Rai. - Min.

#### AFC Central

Cin. : NFC Central - NFC West - Ind. - Jets - K.C. - S.D. - Phx.  
Cle. : NFC Central - NFC West - Buf. - Mia. - Rai. - Sea. - Phx.  
Hou. : NFC Central - NFC West - Buf. - Ind. - S.D. - Sea. - Phx.  
Pit. : NFC Central - NFC West - Mia. - Jets - K.C. - Rai. - Phx.

#### AFC West

Den. : NFC West - (AFC East NOT N.E.) - (NFC East NOT Phx.) -  
(NFC Central NOT Min.)  
K.C. : NFC East - NFC Central - Ind. - N.E. - Jets - Cin. - Pit.  
Rai. : NFC East - NFC Central - Mia. - N.E. - Jets - Cle. - Pit.  
S.D. : NFC East - NFC Central - Buf. - Ind. - N.E. - Cin. - Hou.

Sea. : NFC East - NFC Central - Buf. - Mia. - N.E. - Hou. - Cle.

NFC East

Was. : AFC East - AFC West - G.B. - Min. - T.B. - S.F. - N.O.  
Gia. : AFC East - AFC West - Det. - G.B. - Min. - N.O. - Atl.  
Phi. : AFC East - AFC West - Chi. - Det. - Min. - Rams - Atl.  
Phx. : AFC Central - (AFC East NOT N.E.) (AFC West NOT Den.) -  
(NFC Central NOT Min.)  
Dal. : AFC East - AFC West - Chi. - Min. - T.B. - N.O. - Atl.

NFC Central

Chi. : AFC Central - AFC West - N.E. - Phi. - Phx. - Dal. - Rams - Atl.  
Det. : AFC Central - AFC West - N.E. - Gia. - Phx. - Dal. - N.O. - Atl.  
G.B. : AFC Central - AFC West - N.E. - Was. - Gia. - Phx. - S.F. - N.O.  
Min. : AFC Central - (AFC East NOT N.E.) (AFC West NOT Den.) -  
(NFC East NOT Phx.)  
T.B. : AFC Central - AFC West - N.E. - Was. - Dal. - Phx. - S.F. - Rams

NFC West

S.F. : AFC East - AFC Central - Den. - Was. - Dal. - G.B. - T.B.  
Rams : AFC East - AFC Central - Den. - Phi. - Dal. - Chi. - T.B.  
N.O. : AFC East - AFC Central - Den. - Was. - Gia. - Det. - G.B.  
Atl. : AFC East - AFC Central - Den. - Gia. - Phi. - Chi. - Det.

#####  
Scouting Reports  
#####

I haven't put down any rankings in here of the individual players. One, it would be a biatch, but two, and much more importantly, you can get player data rips on the Internet or using certain programs, and then import them into say an Excel spreadsheet, then sort them by relevant categories. So many of these would be worthless. Really, I don't want to end up doing stupid work that does nothing for you other than increasing the size of this already massive FAQ. In addition, I took out Paul's because many of them were misleading (Paul Fairchild and Chris Gambol of N.E. being rated equally, for instance).

There may still be some scattered errors in the player data, caveat emptor (Of course you aren't buying this...caveat legatio???).

Also note that I have put down notes as to how strong I think a team's running game is. Since I am great on defense, I don't have a lot of respect for teams with 50 MS or below backs. Consequently you will find me rating such teams as average. Some people think a 50 MS back can be pretty effective (but Mr. Woodson and I know otherwise). In addition, I have also put blocker type players at TE. If you feature the TE more in the passing offense, then you can often switch around WR #2 or RB #2 with the TE. I almost never throw to him though in my offense, so he is used for blocking first.

I have also added some common offensive sets for each team. Note that I consider WRs at RB to be legal, FBs at WR, etc. and I prioritize Hitting Power at the WR # 2 position. I have also added some notes for people who don't care for WR at RB. However I have made a lot of notes about TEs at RB, hopefully the guys you play with aren't that stiff that they won't allow a pure blocker in the backfield. When I created the sets, I list the players not by their nominal position or their offensive position but by what they are intended to act as in that spot, for example a FB at WR may be intended to be more of a TE.

### Buffalo Bills

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	6
Offense	5
Defense	16
Pass D	18
Rush D	17

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
QB Bills [Jim Kelly]	0	QB	25	69	13	13	56	81	81	81
Frank Reich	11	QB	25	69	13	13	31	44	25	50
Thurman Thomas	34	RB	38	69	63	25	75	50		
Jamie Mueller	41	RB	44	69	25	88	50	25		
Kenneth Davis	23	RB	38	69	25	19	50	25		
Don Smith	30	RB	38	69	25	19	50	25		
James Lofton	80	WR	25	69	38	13	50	56		

Andre Reed	83	WR	25	69	56	13	56	69
Don Beebe	82	WR	25	69	44	13	50	44
Al Edwards	85	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44
Keith McKeller	84	TE	25	69	38	50	50	50
Pete Metzelaars	88	TE	25	69	19	50	50	31
Kent Hull	67	C	25	69	38	69		
Jim Ritcher	51	G	25	69	44	50		
John Davis	65	G	25	69	25	63		
Will Wolford	69	T	25	69	25	50		
Howard Ballard	75	T	25	69	19	63		
Scott Norwood	11	K	56	81	81	31	44	44
Rick Tuten	10	P	25	56	44	31	19	63
Bruce Smith	78	DE	44	56	69	75	25	81
Jeff Wright	91	NT	25	31	31	50	19	19
Leon Seals	96	DE	25	31	38	44	31	50
Darryl Talley	56	LB	31	44	50	38	44	63
Ray Bentley	50	LB	25	31	38	38	31	56
Shane Conlan	58	LB	31	44	50	56	19	69
C.[Cornelius]Bennett	97	LB	38	50	63	63	19	69
Nate Odomes	37	CB	38	44	56	38	38	56
Kirby Jackson	47	CB	25	31	44	38	50	50
Mark Kelso	38	FS	31	38	50	38	44	44
Leonard Smith	46	SS	31	38	50	44	44	50

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Mia. 7. Ind. 13. N.E.
2. Pit. 8. Cin. 14. Jets
3. Jets 9. BYE 15. Rai.
4. T.B. 10. N.E. 16. Ind.
5. Chi. 11. G.B. 17. Det.
6. K.C. 12. Mia.

#### Bills' Speed Set

QB QB Bills

Featured Back Thurman Thomas

2nd Back Don Beebe

Go-To WR Andre Reed

2nd Option James Lofton

TE Keith McKeller

#### Bills' Power Set

QB QB Bills

RB Thurman Thomas

FB Jamie Mueller

WR Andre Reed

TE Keith McKeller  
TE Pete Metzelaars

The Bills, as in real life, is a team that has a lot of talent but just isn't good enough to break through and make it all the way to the Big Dance and win the championship of the world. Their main problems are icky player location on defense and a major depth problem on offense.

The Bills' passing game is pretty good. They have some speed in WR Andre Reed, and QB Bills is more than happy to let it fly into double coverage. Don Beebe can help you stretch the field if Reed is injured, or, if James Lofton and Keith McKeller, two other viable receiving targets, are in BAD. This team has a decent and deep group when it comes to making you pay in the air. McKeller in particular can get it done if he has a LB covering him, he can beat that coverage in key situations. Backup QB Frank Reich is not good at all for this offense though, so don't get too cute with QB Bills. RB Thurman Thomas is a good pass-catcher, but limit his catches to no more than 5 per game.

However, the Buffalo running game is not so well set. While Thurman Thomas is quite a player, Mueller has no speed and the rest of the RB group is a bunch of schmucks. Some say that Kenneth Davis was shafted, but that's a story for another time. In order to maintain the threat of the running game you need to keep Thurman healthy and use Don Beebe to spell him late in the game when you have the clear lead, because if Thomas goes down you are in deep. Even Beebe is EXCELLENT is no more than a good back, and if you take away Andre Reed, you are going to kill your speed game deep. If you don't allow WR at RB you are up a total creek if Thomas gets hurt.

Thomas should NEVER get more than 20 touches unless you are in a must-win situation. You would really like to give him more like 9-13 touches on the ball, but sometimes you just have to roll up your sleeves and push it when you need to get the bye. If you have problems with 15 per, try using a two-back system with Beebe and put Mueller and reserve TE Pete Metzelaars in addition to the ever-present McKeller on the field, to get more power blocking to establish the threat of the big play from Beebe. That way you can go 25 carries and not kill Thurman. Mueller in particular you should try and focus on the defense's weakest player, because he can throw them for loops; you should be aware, however, that even though Mueller isn't going to have a ton of drops due to QB Bills throwing him passes, he has no speed and little hands, so if you play in a

dump offense, don't make life hard for yourself by using Mueller where Beebe or McKeller should go.

The special teams of Buffalo is not really anything special. You should take chances with your offense instead of trying to rely on Norwood to kick it through. One mistake you cannot afford to make is to use either Thomas or Reed at any returner. Unless you have absolutely no other player in AVERAGE or better, these should never see any action at returner, because the cost to the team of their injury is just too high. Using Don Smith and Kenneth Davis at the returner slots is usually your best idea. Don "Black and Blue" Smith may go down 3 times a year, but at least Thurman will be upright.

The defense of Buffalo is not a top unit. Their problem is that they have some great players, but they are not in their secondary. RCB Nate Odomes and his friends can't catch and that means the other team is going to let it fly on a regular basis. Furthermore your run-stopping personnel are all going to come from the front seven as much as possible, and that opens up the possibility of getting caught up in a big play. Odomes is a passable run-stopping RCB at least. Your best bet when going on defense is to first figure out how you will stop the run in that particular game, and go a few plays to see if your guys can stop it the way you thought you could, making adjustments as needed. The Bills' Interceptions ROLB Darryl Talley, LILB Shane Conlan, LOLB Cornelius Bennett, and all-time great RE Bruce Smith are certainly capable, but you have to know how to use them best. Once you have gotten into the flow of the game, then start to poke back away at their passing game and shut them down. Never forget that your LBs are one of the top well-rounded corps in the game, and if you are worried about a particular play you have the guys to stop it up front. Just because Talley and Conlan aren't Pro Bowlers doesn't mean you should use Bennett even when the play is going against Bennett. In particular, Talley is as good as your DBs when it comes to getting picks so don't be stubborn about Bennett when you know that the threat of the passing game is there - this team needs every warm body with soft hands it can get out in coverage.

On passing downs go to Talley and let Bruce collapse the pocket. Do keep an eye on the backfield on 3rd down so you know when the QB is going to try and run from Smith's pressure. Smith can beat 80% of the LGs in the game on any given Sunday so don't succumb to the temptation of using Bruce to cover unless Bruce's matchup is really bad. Using Bennett is also a good idea in short coverage situations where you want to be able to make the play on both the scrambling QB and the short receiver. Also, you want to keep an eye on conditions, as the Talley + DBs cover set has a lot of similar ratings, so if one guy gets it up for a given game, you can definitely get the payoff by going to him.

## AGAINST:

Defensively, you have a lot of weapons going against you. As Paul said, "this offense is a chameleon." You can be beat with the running game, you can be beat with the deep pass, you can be beat with the short pass, and you can be beat with the QB running for key first downs. One thing to be very aware of in Season mode is that RB Thurman Thomas is the one thing that holds this multi-threat offense together. Make sure, then, to tackle him so that he can be injured in a game. If the Bills try to move all their offense through him, their best player, you can thus punish them. Likewise for QB Bills and WR Reed, if you can hurt any one of those three stars this team really suffers.

However, you can't rely on any player getting hurt, so the key thing is to always be aware that you can be beat both by the run and the pass on any given down, and you must react properly to the play that is being called. You can't play the odds like you can with a team like the Browns that has basically no running offense. If you get tossed or pursued by the opposing blockers against Thurman, you can give up a TD, and if Andre Reed comes wide open, you'd better not fool around too long short, because he can make some big plays even if you are sitting on him. Against the Bills you need to contain first and then try to cinch in on them. Baiting QB Bills to throw short, while not very effective against this team, is one of the tactics you have to use in order to get some stops. Trying to get inside your opponent's head is the most crucial defensive responsibility you have, because the Bills can march if you just give them certain plays, because they don't drop and they don't fumble often. Focus on not giving up first downs without a couple of snaps each, so that you have more time to pick your opponent's play and get them backed way up, where you can ease up off Thomas or stop the run on 3rd down with good anticipation of the opponent's drive tactics.

Another thing to be very aware of is the personnel matchups. If they go into some of their power sets, you need to try and get your pass defender matched up against Mueller or Metzelaars to go for the INT. If they try and go with a speed look with 3 WRs, then you need to take your run defender and smash through them to eliminate opposing blockers on your way to Thomas. The two constants, though, are Thurman, and WR Andre Reed, so don't lose sight of them on any given play because 70% or more of the snaps in this offense involve those two guys.

Offensively, you have to start by testing the corners and never letting the defense establish a rhythm as to what you want to do to them. You want as much as possible to avoid running on multiple downs in a series, because if you start running a lot, the Bills can begin to lock down against you and find out which personnel they can get away with using to drop into coverage on running downs. The strength of the Bills is in

their power and versatility in their front seven personnel, so use plays that attack different defenders, especially ROLB Talley: he is a very versatile defender against both the short pass to the backs and the sweep down low, so you must neutralize him and get your opponent going to Conlan or Odomes, which will definitely help open up your passing game by taking away INT hazards and traps. Whether you are fine with Bennett being able to drop or blitz, it doesn't really matter since a lot of the strong runs go down against him anyhow. One thing you must absolutely do is to roll away from Bruce's side. Bruce will overpower your line unless you have a great LG, so don't expect that you can just sit back there in the pocket and play ball, keep moving around in order to elude Bruce's pressure. If you stay stationary you'd better get rid of the ball quickly.

### Indianapolis Colts

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	28
Offense	25
Defense	28
Pass D	28
Rush D	28

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Jeff George	11	QB	25	69	6	13	50	31	38 25
Jack Trudeau	10	QB	25	69	13	13	31	38	31 50
Ivy Joe Hunter	45	RB	38	69	31	50	50	25	
Albert Bentley	20	RB	38	69	44	31	50	63	
Anthony Johnson	23	RB	38	69	31	25	50	25	
Ken Clark	32	RB	38	69	38	25	50	25	
Bill Brooks	80	WR	38	69	38	13	50	69	
Jessie Hester	84	WR	44	69	38	13	50	63	
Clarence Verdin	83	WR	38	69	38	13	50	44	
Stanley Morgan	88	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44	
Pat Beach	81	TE	25	69	25	50	50	38	
Orson Mobley	89	TE	25	69	19	50	50	31	
Ray Donaldson	53	C	25	69	25	50			
Randy Dixon	69	G	25	69	25	50			
Brian Baldinger	62	G	25	69	38	38			
Zefross Moss	73	T	25	69	19	63			
Kevin Call	71	T	25	69	19	56			
Dean Biasucci	4	K	56	81	81	31	38	38	

Rohn Stark	3	P	25	56	44	31	75	56
Jon Hand	78	DE	25	31	31	56	19	25
Harvey Armstrong	79	NT	25	31	25	50	19	19
Sam Clancy	76	DE	25	31	38	50	19	64
Duane Bickett	50	LB	25	31	38	50	25	38
Fredd Young	56	LB	25	31	31	31	25	31
Jeff Herrod	54	LB	25	31	31	44	25	50
Chip Banks	51	LB	25	31	31	44	25	38
Eugene Daniel	38	CB	25	31	38	38	31	31
Chris Goode	37	CB	25	31	38	38	31	31
Mike Prior	39	FS	25	31	38	44	44	44
Keith Taylor	27	SS	25	31	44	38	38	44

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.  
 1. N.E. 7. Buf. 13. G.B.  
 2. Mia. 8. Jets 14. Cle.  
 3. Rai. 9. BYE 15. N.E.  
 4. Det. 10. Mia. 16. Buf.  
 5. Sea. 11. Jets 17. T.B.  
 6. Pit. 12. Chi.

Colts' Passing Set  
 QB Jack Trudeau  
 RB Albert Bentley  
 WR Clarence Verdin  
 WR Bill Brooks  
 WR Jessie Hester  
 TE Pat Beach

Colts' Power Set  
 QB Jack Trudeau  
 Featured Back Albert Bentley  
 FB Ivy Joe Hunter  
 WR Bill Brooks  
 TE Pat Beach  
 TE Orson Mobley

The Colts are a team you beat on newcomers to the game with. That's all they are good for. With absolutely no defense and a smoke-and-mirrors offensive attack, you are almost guaranteed a loss when you use these guys against any real team.

Jeff George, on many given Sundays, is the worst QB in the league. Slow but with enough Pass Speed to have his inaccurate throws end up hitting

the defender in the numbers before his receiver can make a try at the reception, George is a QB that can only be used with the greatest of skill and patience. Bench him for Jack Trudeau who at least can throw a few jump balls to decent WRs Bill Brooks and Jessie Hester. Backup Clarence Verdin is a decent returner and he can also do decently at the receiver spot so don't forget about him. If Albert Bentley goes into BAD condition, split him out at WR and let it fly deep to him, because this guy can really haul it in.

The running game is what suffocates this offense. Bentley has some talent but a lot of that is just our perception, because compared to the other backs on this team, 44 MS seems like 100 MPH. Ivy Joe is a better TE than a RB. You do have a deep bench though, with Anthony Johnson and Ken Clark, who are both hard runners who won't give up on a play. If one of those guys or even Ivy Joe gets the hot hand, don't be afraid to let them carry. Try to hold back from killing Bentley, but if you need him then let him pound it out, because you need every win you can get in the 16 games to make it to the playoffs, let alone to win the Super Bowl. This team at least has 3 power blockers in Ivy Joe, Pat Beach and Orson Mobley, so if you can get some headway by clogging up the defense's lanes, you've got some tools to make it work.

Special teams...Verdin should return and be replaced by one of your backup RBs or Stanley Morgan if he goes down. You don't have anything else but a punter, so...punt??? :)

I would strongly recommend lobotomy if you believe that you can play defense with this club. However you can sort of play around and try to do something. ROLB Duane Bickett and LE Sam Clancy along with SS Keith Taylor in the secondary are your best bets, but you should closely monitor the conditions of your defenders because every bit of MS counts. Your strategy here is not to get sucked in by big plays so don't go penetrate deep in there when your guys aren't anywhere close. If you can at least make it 7-12 plays now you have a chance for a fumble. Go double or nothing with your playcalling because that is how you will stop the pass. Let them run and extend the drive to give you more chances to make big plays. If they go past 50% runs though, smack them back into passing.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, you want to try and work your pass rush against this club. With a receiver-driven offense where they can get the jump ball, you want to try and gamble against them if you have the DBs and the right coverage against their players. Their running game won't get much so

try and focus on stopping their jump ball with LB blitzes and freeing up your boys (RG) in the pass rush, then dropping short. If they really start to try and run, let them get into a pattern, then call their play and force them to pass on 3rd down. One pattern that you can see sometimes with this club is a tendency to call pass, then run the ball or dump it to Bentley and let him go. If you have good downfield coverage then force them into throwing the bomb downfield and pressure Trudeau into the bad throw. Make sure to be aggressive and call some of their plays to give them less chances for big plays.

Offensively, you can do pretty much anything you want against this team. ABSOLUTELY FOCUS on not being predictable; that's the only way this team can beat you, is by calling your plays. Play to your team's strengths as much as possible and throw it up if the coverage happens to be good, but also remember that you can run your QB and you'll be about as fast as ROLB Bickett or LE Clancy so you don't really have anything to worry about there. Just don't do really stupid things and you will be fine. Try to emphasize your power game because these guys have no Hitting Power whatsoever.

### Miami Dolphins

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	13
Offense	8
Defense	13
Pass D	9
Rush D	14

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Dan Marino	13	QB	25	69	6	13	81	69	63	69
Scott Mitchell	19	QB	25	69	13	13	44	44	25	50
Sammie Smith	33	RB	44	69	38	63	50	25		
Tony Paige	49	RB	44	69	31	88	50	44		
Marc Logan	20	RB	44	69	38	44	50	25		
Troy Stradford	23	RB	38	69	38	25	50	38		
Mark Clayton	83	WR	31	69	44	13	50	69		
Mark Duper	85	WR	38	69	50	13	50	63		
Fred Banks	86	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
Tony Martin	89	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Ferrell Edmunds	80	TE	25	69	38	56	50	50		
Jim Jensen	11	TE	25	69	31	44	50	69		

Jeff Uhlenhake	63	C	25	69	31	69
Keith Sims	69	G	25	69	25	69
Harry Galbreath	62	G	25	69	38	63
Richmond Webb	78	T	25	69	38	75
Mark Dennis	74	T	25	69	25	56
Pete Stoyanovich	10	K	56	81	81	31 69 75
Reggie Roby	4	P	25	56	44	31 19 63
Jeff Cross	91	DE	38	50	56	50 19 69
Shawn Lee	98	NT	25	31	31	56 19 19
Karl Wilson	77	DE	25	31	38	50 19 50
Hugh Green	55	LB	25	31	38	44 25 50
Cliff Odom	93	LB	25	31	38	44 25 44
John Offerdahl	56	LB	38	50	56	44 31 50
David Griggs	92	LB	25	38	44	44 25 50
J.B.Brown	37	CB	25	31	44	50 44 50
Tim McKyer	22	CB	31	38	50	44 50 50
Louis Oliver	25	FS	38	44	56	56 56 56
Jarvis Williams	26	SS	38	44	56	56 56 56

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Buf. 7. K.C. 13. Chi.
2. Ind. 8. Hou. 14. T.B.
3. Det. 9. BYE 15. Cin.
4. G.B. 10. Ind. 16. S.D.
5. Jets 11. N.E. 17. Jets
6. N.E. 12. Buf.

#### Miami's Base Offense

QB Dan Marino

RB Mark Duper

FB Tony Paige

WR Mark Clayton

TE Jim Jensen

TE Ferrell Edmunds

Miami is a team, that, depending on the day, can totally destroy you or melt down by the end of the first quarter. Their offense and their defense are streaky and rely on their star players to have good days in order to succeed.

QB Dan Marino is not like most other Tecmo QBs, and he's not in the situation most other Tecmo QBs are. He's slow as a turtle, but he has a great interior offensive line, so don't go running wildly out of the pocket and rolling out, all these things, because you can just

hang in there and pick your spots. Furthermore, you can really make people pay for calling runs, because Marino's 81 Pass Speed can get to almost any uncovered receiver before the defense can figure out what's going on. His targets are not fast, his WRs Clayton and Duper are the fastest people on the team, but you can stretch the field to a certain extent. One thing that you can really take advantage of with this team is an open receiver deep. Because you have Clayton and Duper and Jensen all with great Receptions, you really need to watch out for favorable matchups against them and throw it into single coverage if the defender can't catch. When Marino is getting single-coverage receptions of 20-30 yards this team really starts to click. Since you are close to the LOS, if you need to run don't roll out, just go straight through your line to make the QB sneak. Don't make stupid throws though, Marino can certainly be picked off and Stoyanovich is a good enough kicker that you shouldn't need to press the issue too much.

Miami's running game, however, needs some real work. If you can't use Duper to at least get some speed in the backfield, then the guy in the best condition of your four RBs is the one to use. All these RBs are decent backups but bad starters. If one of them gets the hot hand you can split Duper back out to WR. If you start to get success running, just go with it, because Miami is not known for running and you can really throw the defense's rhythm off if you can get 5-7 yards a carry. If you want some blocking, start with Paige, he is a load and he can blast away weaker defenders just by touching them. If you want more, stack on some Sammie Smith, he is no easy throw either.

The Miami special teams has a pretty decent all-around returner in Troy Stratford. They don't have the best coverage units in the game by any means. LILB Offerdahl can block a kick if you need it.

On defense Miami uses LILB John Offerdahl and their good safeties to make the plays they need to make. Don't be afraid to use Offerdahl in pass coverage, especially if he gets into GOOD. However, don't forget about their DBs even then, they can make plays too. One thing you need to worry about with these guys is short yardage situations. You definitely need to call the run if they are looking to bring big-time blockers at you, particularly if you use Offerdahl. The basic strategy of Miami's D is to not give up big plays and force throws into coverage where the DBs and Offerdahl can pick them off. Condition plays a big role here too, go with the EXCELLENT players as much as you can. RE Jeff Cross can sometimes be a factor, particularly if Offerdahl is in BAD, so don't forget about him as an alternative.

## AGAINST:

Defensively, the key here is firstly to keep an eye out and not let them start to open up their running game. Where Miami struggles is when they have to throw into coverages that they don't like and get intercepted; they don't have a lot of safe plays they can run where they only have to risk the fumble. Taking advantage of their slow QB Marino and his lame running skills and also of their slower RBs and WRs is the key. Do not let them get untracked in their running game, keep them passing so you can take advantage of their mistakes, because except for Clayton, you can generally pick off any target Marino wants to throw to. When you go to defend against the deep pass, you want to try and hang back short as long as possible, then break at just the instant you need to so that you can be on the X when the pass arrives. Marino will not kill you throwing the jump ball so you just need to get there on time. Try and hold him as much as possible to let your pass rush come free of his powerful offensive line and get some guys to make him move around and change directions.

Offensively, your focus is in working the short pass and then trying to avoid LILB Offerdahl in the running game. They have some good safeties but they can't be that effective against the run. Offerdahl, on the other hand, he's just a beast when he runs free because of his great speed. If you can, try to run at him, but be aware that a lot of plays like those runs out of the shifting oneseback formations are very vulnerable to the LILB attacking the LOS and coming at you. Using power personnel and also your best REC people is usually the best way to get good matchups, since their star players are fairly fast but don't have any particular category in which they excel. Try to make Offerdahl have to come at you early in the play directly since he's weak and you often can get a power advantage, especially if you can get some help. Don't let the play develop and then try to explode into the open field, because this defense is very much geared towards letting their corners and front seven engage, then have playmaking Offerdahl and their safeties strike and prevent a major gain.

Passingwise, you want to make a decision relatively quickly because in many cases you won't have a favorable matchup against their surprisingly strong defensive line. You don't want to have to panick a throw because Offerdahl and his safety friends have the speed and PI to close in on your short guys from deep assignments and make the play. Roll out and play close to the line so that when the MAN has to commit, you can throw it short or run the ball and get some quick yards. When you want to go deep, throw it against their RCB J.B. Brown

who is clearly their weakest corner, but if he is getting some safety help over the top, go back to the other side if it's any better there. You don't really have much of an option if Miami gets into a good passing play against your routes, because they can make the play. Just work the shorter gains and make Offerdahl have to try and make enough plays to win the game; you can often win because you can force it in there against him and you also have the HP advantage. Really, the big key here is to avoid getting predictable so you can chip away at them and wait for an opportunity.

### New England Patriots

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	26
Offense	26
Defense	22
Pass D	19
Rush D	23

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Steve Grogan	14	QB	25	69	6	13	19	25	31	44
Marc Wilson	15	QB	25	69	13	13	38	44	25	38
Marvin Allen	39	RB	44	69	25	38	50	25		
John Stephens	44	RB	44	69	31	50	50	31		
George Adams	33	RB	38	69	31	31	50	25		
Mosi Tatupu	30	RB	38	69	31	31	50	25		
Irving Fryar	80	WR	31	69	31	13	50	63		
Hart Lee Dykes	88	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Greg McMurty										
[sic-McMurtry]	19	WR	25	69	19	13	50	50		
Sammy Martin	82	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Marv Cook	46	TE	25	69	44	56	50	63		
Eric Sievers	85	TE	25	69	25	31	50	50		
Paul Fairchild	66	C	25	69	38	38				
Chris Gambol	74	G	25	69	19	50				
Damian Johnson	68	G	25	69	25	44				
Bruce Armstrong	78	T	25	69	38	69				
Danny Villa	75	T	25	69	19	50				
Jason Staurovsky	4	K	56	81	81	31	63	44		
Brian Hansen	10	P	25	56	44	31	31	31		
Garin Veris	60	DE	25	31	31	50	19	50		
Tim Goad	72	NT	25	31	25	50	19	19		

Ray Agnew	92	DE	38	50	56	56	31	56
Andre Tippett	56	LB	25	38	44	56	31	44
Ed Reynolds	95	LB	25	31	38	38	19	31
Richard Harvey	58	LB	25	31	31	38	19	31
Chris Singleton	55	LB	25	31	31	38	19	38
Maurice Hurst	37	CB	31	38	50	44	50	38
Ronnie Lippett	42	CB	38	44	56	50	63	56
Fred Marion	31	FS	25	31	44	50	50	44
Rod McSwain	23	SS	25	31	31	56	31	31

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Ind. 7. BYE 13. Buf.
2. Cle. 8. Min. 14. Den.
3. Pit. 9. Den. 15. Ind.
4. Hou. 10. Buf. 16. Jets
5. Phx. 11. Mia. 17. Cin.
6. Mia. 12. Jets

Patriots' Base Set

QB Marc Wilson

Featured Back Marv Cook

FB Mosi Tatupu

Go-to WR Irving Fryar

TE John Stephens

TE Eric Sievers

The Patriots have had the worst reputation in the Tecmo community for some time, most of it deserved (though the Colts are nipping at their heels). Their offense is a couple of players away from being a joke and their defense has some players, but they aren't good enough to get this team out of the cellar.

First order of business - bench Grogan. He is slow and, while he does have the ability to throw unstoppable jump balls, most Sundays he just throws moonballs and INTs. He is one of the few QBs in the game that can be picked off by Interception LBs jumping to pull down his pass as he releases it. Marc Wilson may not be much better but you will get some Pass Speed and Pass Control that you didn't have before. Try and run as much as possible, firstly to minimize the number of balls that are actually thrown on pass plays, but also to try and keep from having your accuracy totally destroyed by the pass rush up the gut, your line sucks in the middle.

Fryar must be the go-to WR, while Cook must be the runner unless Cook

is in BAD and someone else is in EXCELLENT. You want the power set here to try and open up the run since no WR is passable as a deep threat besides Fryar. Eric Sievers gets the call in my system because he has 50 Receptions, hopefully helping Wilson complete something. However, others favor George Adams for his extra speed, while still others want John Stephens because he is the best blocker. Really, what it boils down to is who is in the best condition when you set up your three blocking back positions. One player you should never forget about is Mosi Tatupu, who clearly plays above his stats on a very regular basis. If all your other backs are in EXCELLENT or something, then you might be able to take him out, but be warned, sometimes he's still faster than they are.

Whatever you do, don't stress the middle, you are weak up there. If you get Cook hurt, then just go with the fastest player you have, again, don't forget about Mosi - he wants the rock. If you can't play WR at RB, then give it to Mosi and let him roll. :) Don't ever take chances on offense, you will usually end up paying for it dearly, unless you are doing a bomb play or somesuch. You have a decent kicker, so don't overdo it.

On return teams, again, go with the healthiest players.

Defensively, the Patriots can maybe stymie the opposition. Ray Agnew is one heck of a player at LE and Andre Tippett is not a terrible ROLB. Their CBs are pretty decent comparatively speaking, especially LCB Ronnie Lippett. Try to get the opposing offense into a passing down so you can bring out Lippett who is clearly the best player on this team, while letting Agnew and Tippett rush the passer. Stop the run first and then pin your ears back on a longer third down. If you want an extra cover man from the front seven take either Agnew or Tippett, whichever one has the strongest man in front of him, since both have the same (OK for a run-stuffer) hands. Beware of a lesser offense that will run on all three downs, or a great running game that can pick up a longer third down. If you doubt that it's pass, then go with your run-stuffer for that formation.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, don't let them get anything started. Your key to winning is preventing the jump ball and in-coverage pass deep, so use a base of pass defense and then shut down the run with your star players. This team can beat you if they can kick some FGs and play good defense, so don't let them get into your territory. Giving up a few 1st downs is OK but focus on calling their play and defending deep. Also, target their C and RG for freeing up your boys, if you can get a pass rush on these terrible QBs it is over for New England, because they won't

complete anything.

On offense, RUN THE FOOTBALL. HAND IT OFF. POUND THE \*\*\*\*\* ROCK. They do not stand a chance against you if you can run the ball consistently, and then you can catch them using ROLB Andre Tippett and LE Ray Agnew against your WRs deep. What you do not want to have is Lippett getting substantial time, because turning over the ball will give their offense a chance to score, and he is their biggest playmaker. With their Ave-Maria offense, you must play superior defense to win the game. Sweep down low at Lippett and make them defend your run in order to stop your attack. They can't use him if you are smart about playcalling.

### New York Jets

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	20
Offense	21
Defense	15
Pass D	16
Rush D	20

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Ken O'Brien [O'Brien]	7	QB	25	69	13	13	56	50	44	38
Tony Eason	11	QB	25	69	13	13	44	44	25	31
Blair Thomas	32	RB	38	69	44	25	50	31		
Freeman McNeil	24	RB	38	69	38	19	50	25		
Brad Baxter	30	RB	44	69	31	31	50	25		
Johnny Hector	34	RB	44	69	44	19	50	25		
Al Toon	88	WR	31	69	44	13	50	69		
Rob Moore	85	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Terance Mathis	81	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
Jojo Townsell	83	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
Mark Boyer	80	TE	25	69	25	56	50	50		
Doug Wellsandt	86	TE	25	69	19	38	50	31		
Jim Sweeney	53	C	25	69	38	44				
Mike Haight	79	G	25	69	31	44				
Dave Cadigan	66	G	25	69	31	50				
Jeff Criswell	61	T	25	69	25	50				
Brett Miller	72	T	25	69	25	50				
Pat Leahy	5	K	56	81	81	31	75	69		
Joe Prokop	6	P	25	56	44	31	69	75		
Jeff Lageman	56	DE	25	31	31	44	19	31		

Scott Mersereau	94	NT	25	31	31	44	19	31
Ron Stallworth	96	DE	25	31	38	50	19	50
Joe Kelly	58	LB	25	31	31	44	19	31
Dennis Byrd	90	LB	38	50	56	69	25	69
Kyle Clifton	59	LB	31	44	50	50	50	44
Joe Mott	51	LB	25	31	31	44	19	31
James Hasty	40	CB	25	31	38	38	44	31
Tony Stargell	45	CB	25	31	38	31	44	31
Erik McMillan	22	FS	38	44	56	56	63	81
Brian Washington	21	SS	25	31	44	38	50	38

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. T.B. 7. Hou. 13. S.D.
2. Sea. 8. Ind. 14. Buf.
3. Buf. 9. BYE 15. Det.
4. Chi. 10. G.B. 16. N.E.
5. Mia. 11. Ind. 17. Mia.
6. Cle. 12. N.E.

### Jets' Speed Set

QB Ken O'Brien  
 RB Blair Thomas  
 RB Johnny Hector  
 WR Al Toon  
 WR Rob Moore  
 TE Freeman McNeil

### Jets' Power Set

QB Ken O'Brien  
 RB Blair Thomas  
 FB Brad Baxter  
 WR Al Toon  
 TE Mark Boyer  
 TE Doug Wellsandt

### Jets' Hands Set

QB Ken O'Brien  
 RB Blair Thomas  
 Possession WR Rob Moore  
 Deep Threat Al Toon  
 2nd Option Mark Boyer  
 TE Doug Wellsandt

The Jets are a team that certainly has some juice, but they aren't that

talented, especially on offense, so you will have to play very hard and make the most of your star players to win with this team in the playoffs. The defense must be able to stuff up the opposing offense to give O'Brien and the passing game a chance to edge the other team.

The key for the Jets to succeed is in their passing game, and they have two QBs who can get it done if they are healthy. Ken O'Brien is not a terrible QB at all, and Tony Eason can do a few QB Browns tricks if he gets into EXCELLENT. WR Al Toon is not among the elite in this game, but he can catch some jump balls and passes in coverage, and you can score on a few plays if you get lucky (very lucky). The problem with this team however, is that you have some speed, and you have some REC, but you don't have some of both. Blair Thomas and Al Toon are your only real receiving threats. The rest of your players are slow (Moore, Boyer) or will drop the ball (Baxter, Hector, McNeil, etc.). Players to really avoid are Terance Mathis and Jojo Townsell. Real-life production aside, these guys just flat out blow in this game. What you want to do in the passing game is really a matter of how many drops you can take. What I like to do is use Johnny Hector to give me speed out of the backfield and then deploy Freeman McNeil as my TE while splitting Mark Boyer out at WR #2. When you draw up your game plans and your offense for the year, think about which players are going to be touching the ball the most (look for conditions here), and put your best receivers where you think the ball is going to end up going the most. Sometimes that means splitting out Blair Thomas wide and going to Hector as the lone back; that's OK because they can both run about as well. Try to execute plays quickly because your offensive line can evaporate against a great defensive pass rush.

And speaking of the running game, the Jets' personnel department wishes they had drafted Emmitt Smith instead of Blair Thomas, because (ironically, as Blair Thomas ran a 4.3 or somesuch while Smith ran a 4.6) Smith is a lot faster in this game than any of the Jets' backs. Try to involve whichever players are fastest based on condition into the running game, they have strengths and weaknesses which can offset each other. Freeman McNeil is the odd man out in the backfield; however, Brad Baxter can block some so if he gets into EXCELLENT, try and get him some blocking to do. Hector is the man you want to look to for running the ball 15 times a game because you want to save Blair as much as possible to catch short passes. However, if Blair is in much better condition than anyone else, feed him. You need as much running game as you can muster with this team and if it means getting some more short drops, then so be it.

Special teams...not much experience here, so I won't comment too strongly, except to say that you want to try and use your reserve backs

Baxter and McNeil, maybe Wellsandt, as your returners. You need every strong body you can get for your set offense so don't waste Hector or Toon taking shots with this so-so return game. However you have a great kicker and punter in Leahy and Prokop; don't do stupid things throwing it deep to Toon every long third down because turning the ball over will give up points and major field position.

Defensively, the Jets have some solid stars and then a lot of chumps. Thank goodness Ron Stallworth, their best linesman, is the LE for tactics, because the schmuckery begins up front. Their OLBs suck, but they have one of the best pairs of ILBs in the game. RILB Dennis Byrd is a fearsome run stuffer, but LILB Kyle Clifton is one of the most underrated LBs in the game, period. He is decently fast, but he has FIFTY Interceptions. That makes him a pretty decent pass defender and it gives you a lot of options with coverages and QB spying. Don't be afraid to go to him on passing downs, and if you can, use him on your running downs because he can help the team recover from a pass play easily without drawing McMillan away from deep coverage. The secondary is terrible except for FS Erik McMillan, but McMillan can hold up a lot from his position. A very good all-around safety, he's another very good run-stopping/pass-coverage option for your defense. You can really have some versatility in your looks and your play calls when you use those three guys back and forth and not let your opponent key on one of them in the running game. The key here is to try and force some iffy throws short if possible because the corners blow, and that way, you can get Clifton involved in the passing game and not tax your weak defense too much. Playcalling has to naturally revolve around protecting those corners and getting McMillan deep in order to stifle the jump ball to the primary receiver. Becoming expert with the use of the LILB to stop runs is the key to mastering this defense.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, the key is to not let Al Toon get out of hand. He is by far their best weapon, and, with their weak running game and slow blockers, the Jets will look to pass first. This means you come out with the mindset to contain Thomas and Hector using your star run defender. Toon can burn you if you let O'Brien or Eason throw a lot up to him, so don't let it get out of hand. If they really start going heavy with the run, don't fear to stack up, but remember that the run is something you don't have to fear big plays against, and that Toon is what the Jets really want. Make sure to exploit the bad hands of the Jets short in the red zone, and don't go crazy trying to call their play if Toon is getting covered well, especially run plays. With competency, you can beat this team, but they can score some points if you gamble and give them a few deep. The C and LG are

vulnerable, so free up your boys to work against the jump ball.

Offensively, you run to neutralize FS McMillan. You want to cut down the options of the Jets' D as far as which player they use, and you want them to have to use RILB Byrd and LILB Clifton as much as possible because they open up opportunities for big plays in the running game, which helps against the good MAN pass defenders.

However, you must be very careful passing against Clifton. If you are the type of player that likes to throw to your backs, then Clifton can eat you up if you start getting careless. This team has a bona fide LB INT threat, but their corners blow. Throw it deep against their corners and their SS Brian Washington. Make them use passes and expose their LBs in the running game, then get blockers on them or wrestle them away to begin a big run. The toughest part of your running game is going to be neutralizing them because they are in the best places to stop a lot of runs, but work and see what goes well. Don't forget about your power game against them; they don't have good personnel except Byrd and McMillan to match up against a powerful FB, so you can get yourself open that way too.

Passing the ball in general is about avoiding Clifton and McMillan. McMillan is more to be feared than Clifton by far, but you have better things to do than trying to throw against Clifton. Somewhere on the field there is a shmuck corner waiting to be torched, and your job as the QB is to find where he is, check your matchup, and throw the ball against his coverage. You must also really focus in, if your opponent is trying to cover deep, into running your QB to pick up shorter yardages on any down - this isn't a swarming interior defense and you can bootleg like Al Capone if you are smart and don't betray it too early in the play. You can sit back and wait in the pocket against this team for a few seconds since their pass rush is pitiful. Then you can penetrate the line or do the standard roll-out boot. Don't forget about your medium options as well like your TE, sometimes you can rip this team's guts out throwing to the TE if you begin a ball-control attack running your QB, then throwing 10 yard passes for 20 yard gains. Because you can really draw the MAN into covering you, there are places you can put the ball to hurt this defense big time.

### Cincinnati Bengals

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	8
Offense	10

Defense T-8  
 Pass D 11  
 Rush D 8

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Boomer Esiason	7	QB	25	69	19	13	63	56	69	75
Erik Wilhelm	4	QB	25	69	25	13	44	44	38	38
James Brooks	21	RB	38	69	56	31	50	38		
Ickey Woods	30	RB	44	69	31	81	50	31		
Harold Green	28	RB	38	69	38	31	50	25		
S.[Stanford]Jennings	36	RB	38	69	38	25	50	25		
Tim McGee	85	WR	31	69	31	13	50	56		
Eddie Brown	81	WR	31	69	38	13	50	56		
Kendal Smith	82	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Mike Barber	86	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Rodney Holman	82	TE	25	69	38	69	50	56		
Eric Kattus	84	TE	25	69	25	38	50	31		
Bruce Kozerski	64	C	25	69	31	56				
Bruce Reimers	75	G	25	69	31	63				
Brian Blados	74	G	25	69	25	56				
Anthony Munoz	78	T	25	69	38	75				
Joe Walter	63	T	25	69	25	50				
Jim Breech	3	K	56	81	81	31	63	31		
Lee Johnson	11	P	25	56	44	31	44	69		
Jason Buck	99	DE	25	31	38	50	19	25		
Tim Krumrie	69	NT	25	31	38	44	19	19		
Skip McClendon	72	DE	25	31	38	44	19	31		
James Francis	50	LB	31	44	50	69	19	63		
Kevin Walker	59	LB	25	31	38	38	19	31		
Carl Zander	91	LB	25	31	38	38	31	31		
Leon White	51	LB	25	31	31	38	31	38		
Carl Carter	45	CB	25	31	25	31	38	25		
Lewis Billups	24	CB	25	31	25	31	44	25		
Barney Bussey	27	FS	31	38	50	50	50	63		
David Fulcher	33	SS	44	56	69	75	69	75		

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Den. 7. Dal. 13. Rai.
2. Hou. 8. Buf. 14. Gia.
3. Cle. 9. Hou. 15. Mia.
4. Was. 10. Cle. 16. Pit.
5. BYE 11. Pit. 17. N.E.
6. Sea. 12. Phi.

#### Bengals' Base Offense

QB Boomer Esiason  
Featured Back James Brooks  
3rd Down Back Harold Green  
2nd WR Eddie Brown  
1st Option Rodney Holman  
TE Ickey Woods

Bengals' Passing Set  
QB Boomer Esiason  
Featured Back James Brooks  
Underneath Man Harold Green  
1st Option Rodney Holman  
2nd WR Eddie Brown  
3rd WR Tim McGee

The Bengals were good around this time, but not good enough to win the Super Bowl. This Tecmo team has some real talent, but they have too many weaknesses to overcome to be a serious contender for the championship of the world.

Boomer can beat you on any given Sunday, even given his receivers, who are just too slow. Esiason has some fairly quick feet for a good passing QB, so don't forget about his ability to pick up 3rd-and-short. Erik Wilhelm is not a bad backup either, he can complete short and he also has pretty passable scrambling ability. The key is to set up the pass with the run because you can't really stretch the field with this team and thus you have to have good ball distribution to throw off the defense. Rodney Holman should be split out at WR and Tim McGee should be benched, because there are not enough spots on this starting lineup for a 31 MS, 56 REC WR. Harold Green's MS and HP push McGee off the depth chart. The running game dictates that the TE be Ickey Woods, since Boomer shouldn't have too many drops compared to Woods' ability to get a push off the LOS.

The Bengals have one of the better running games in Tecmo. James Brooks, one of the great rushers in Bengals history, definitely has some juice and your first priority is to make sure Brooks touches it at least 10 times a game. Their offensive line is quite good so you shouldn't have any problems running. Plus, the Bengals have a pretty good power set, so you can really cause problems for a defense that relies on one star player to make the stop. If Brooks goes down, go with Harold Green, one of the best backup RBs in the game. Green needs to see the field in this offense, he can save you on third down with his speed and toughness to beat the CPU defenders. I have had good success using him as my second back so that he will get out into the short middle where he can get some yards underneath after the catch. However if Stanford Jennings or Ickey

start to get the hot hand, don't fear to feature them at RB #2.

Ickey Woods is one of the great enigmas in Tecmo, he can have a tendency to fumble and he doesn't have a good ability to get into and stay in GOOD or EXCELLENT. However, his HP means you need to get him on the field so he is the blocking TE in my offense, and he needs to find the weakest defender and smash him out of the way if possible. However, you can't forget that Holman is no chump in the blocking game himself, so don't screw over your passing game by accidentally featuring Woods.

The Bengals have pretty good special teams. Jim Breech, despite low Avoid Kick Block, is a pretty decent kicker, so you can make the defense pay for bend-don't-break, and Stanford Jennings is not the worst KR in this game. ROLB James Francis can definitely penetrate the FG blocking and get a hand in. The best part of the Bengals' special teams, though, is PR Kendal Smith, who is absolutely phenomenal at PR. Without question, he is a Top 3 PR, and in my opinion, he is the best PR in the game. He almost immediately hits his top speed which is in the Top 10 of all PRs in the game, and he has great agility - you won't lose a notch of speed when you pull some crazy move on a hapless cover guy. I would never use Smith at KR or WR, he is just too good at PR - with this guy, you can actually play for field position, because if the other team outkicks their coverage, you have 10 guaranteed yards and maybe 10-30 on top of that. Throw in Jim Breech's 50-yard-line range and you have the makings of a team that scores on every possession.

This defense has three stars and then eight chumps. James Francis is a very good ROLB and he can make plays all over the field. He is the man responsible for taking out the dive on 3rd down and a ton of runs on first down. You definitely need to be up on your run defense though, because none of the other players in this front seven are worth anything, LILB Carl Zander can get the sack on called plays but he's still a schmuck. Unless he or LOLB Leon White get into EXCELLENT, Francis has to hold this front seven together. Too bad (then-)All-Pro NT Tim Krumrie's leg was broken in Super Bowl XXIII.

Paul said it best, "The corners are second and third to worst among defensive backs." You can see for yourself the horror of Carl Carter and Lewis Billups, I know them well since they always get burned. The key idea with the Bengals, as bad as their front seven is, is to protect Carter and Billups; because if you have them one-on-one on the outside, then the opposing team can just throw it up, and since the team's best WR usually matches up against RCB Carter, you can't expect anything out of him. In order to give them help though, you have to be able to pull back Bussey and/or Fulcher and get some underneath help from the ILBs, so you have to call passes against the opposing offense and rely on the trifecta of Francis, Bussey, and Fulcher to shut down the opposing run, even without LB and DL help 80% of the time.

However, if there are two safeties in the game that can get it done on that end, certainly FS Barney Bussey and SS David Fulcher can clean up the mess. Bussey is not that good and you have to pick your spots with him, but if he gets into EXCELLENT he can hang with anyone. But DAVID FULCHER...he is a weapon amongst weapons. He is by far the best-rounded of the top defenders in this game - he can throw you down with his HP or pick you off with his Interceptions. Not to mention he is pretty fast, and he can become possessed. In fact, he is below the league's best in each of those categories by just one notch each (excepting Mark Carrier of the Bears, with 81 Interceptions). Using the Bengals effectively means using DAVID FULCHER to his utmost, even against the sweep down low. You have to play possessed with him, even if he's in BAD. When you attack the run, you have to run into the blockers in front of you and blow them away, 2 or 3 on a given play if necessary. When they take to the air, you start defending short and then run back just before the WR gets past your range to stop the deep pass. If you can feed him an INT or two a game, you can often keep him in GOOD or EXCELLENT, so definitely be aggressive about trying to get the short INT. In short, you must singlehandedly destroy the opposing offense with Fulcher if you want to win games, but you certainly have the juice to do so.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, you need to stop their run. James Brooks can get stronger as the game goes on, so don't let him get into a rhythm. Call runs and then use your best pass defender to take away their deep passing game. If you can keep Brooks under control, you can force Boomer into some throws he doesn't want to make. The key with this offense, because their ground game is so solid, is to make them go 15-20 plays and scoop up the fumble or grab a coverage sack. Harold Green can really hurt you underneath in the passing game, so don't overestimate your ability to stop him. The power run is very good, but their receivers are not very talented, so being able to overload one or the other with key personnel choices (such as great PI defenders against the passes) will really help your defense.

On offense, you must stretch the field. DAVID FULCHER is a force of nature and you cannot make your offense attempt to beat Fulcher like you can try to beat Kevin Greene or Dennis Smith, you WILL lose the battle if your opponent has any clue. This guy can hang with Jerry Rice and Bo Jackson, don't try to go through him. Sweeping down low and power diving is the best way to start your running attack, this will hopefully either make your opponent try the NTD with Krumrie, or if you can get some big plays, you may be able to make your opponent use ROLB James Francis. Not using too many shotguns is a big key here, because if you do that, then you will tip the play and Fulcher will be

running all over the field. Once you have him going to a certain tendency (other than using Fulcher) then you can begin to work him off that, since the ways this defense can stop you are very limited (though effective). If he starts to drop down to Krumrie, having protected against the sweep, then you can catch him with a QB sneak or you can use a shotgun (with discretion) to work the QB draw some and get some underneath space. One thing you must be very aware of is what the matchup of Francis vs. your LT is, because if your LT is getting owned by the ROLB drone rush, you must try and focus some sort of running game to control Francis. If you find their corners alone, burn them. They WILL NOT get the job done, either in wresting the ball away or in keeping up with the receiver deep down the field. You can extend the time your receivers have to come open by watching out for Francis, as you can often dodge just the one pass rusher. However, it's rare that Francis actually makes the sack; players like LOLB Leon White and RILB Kevin Walker end up making a lot of pressure plays, so don't get cocky about it. One key way to avoid Fulcher is to throw it deep out of his reach, and you can get some room to run if you can make some deep pass plays.

### Cleveland Browns

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	23
Offense	19
Defense	24
Pass D	22
Rush D	24

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
QB Browns [Bernie										
Kosar]	0	QB	25	69	25	13	44	75	50	44
Mike Pagel	10	QB	25	69	25	13	38	31	38	38
Kevin Mack	34	RB	44	69	31	88	50	44		
Eric Metcalf	21	RB	38	69	38	25	50	56		
Leroy Hoard	33	RB	44	69	25	31	50	25		
Brent Fullwood	29	RB	44	69	25	38	50	25		
W.[Webster]Slaughter	84	WR	31	69	38	13	50	63		
Reggie Langhorne	88	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Vernan Joines	80	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
[Brian Brenner?]										
Brian Brennan	86	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		

Ozzie Newsome	82	TE	25	69	31	50	50	38
John Talley	87	TE	25	69	19	38	50	25
Mike Baab	61	C	25	69	38	44		
Ralph Tamm	65	G	25	69	31	50		
Gregg Rakoczy	73	G	25	69	25	50		
Paul Farren	74	T	25	69	31	44		
Tony Jones	66	T	25	69	25	50		
Jerry Kauric	2	K	56	81	81	31	38	31
Bryan Wagner	15	P	25	56	44	31	25	19
Robert Banks	97	DE	25	31	38	50	19	38
Chris Pike	75	NT	25	31	38	44	19	19
Al Baker	60	DE	25	31	38	50	19	38
Tony Blaylock	24	LB	25	38	44	38	38	38
David Grayson	56	LB	25	31	38	38	31	38
Mike Johnson	59	LB	31	44	50	69	19	63
Clay Matthews	57	LB	25	38	44	38	19	38
Raymond Clayborn	26	CB	25	31	25	31	38	25
Frank Minnifield	31	CB	31	38	50	50	44	50
Thane Gash	30	FS	25	31	38	44	31	31
Felix Wright	22	SS	25	31	38	38	50	44

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Dal. 7. Was. 13. K.C.
2. N.E. 8. S.D. 14. Ind.
3. Cin. 9. Pit. 15. Den.
4. Gia. 10. Cin. 16. Hou.
5. BYE 11. Phi. 17. Pit.
6. Jets 12. Hou.

#### Browns' Base Offense

QB QB Browns

RB Eric Metcalf

FB Kevin Mack "The Truck"

Go-To WR W. Slaughter

TE Ozzie Newsome

TE Brent Fullwood

The Browns, one of the most storied franchises in NFL history, have certainly had their ups and downs, and in this game they got handed a major downer. This is one of the weakest teams in the game when you look at their personnel, especially the team speed. The saving grace of this limp team is QB Browns (Bernie Kosar), who is a quarterback of legends. One day Tecmoers around the world will tell their kids the stories of the incredible victories, coming from behind, that QB Browns

orchestrated and forced through with his sheer will. What they won't tell them is that they missed the playoffs every year.

The QB position, anomalously for Tecmo, is actually the strength of this team. QB Browns is known around the league for his extremely high TD-to-INT ratio, and he gets passes in coverage that not even Joe Montana can pull off consistently. The secret is his high Pass Control and his relatively low Pass Accuracy, which keeps the balls out of the hands of his defenders (so to speak). QB Browns isn't all arm, though - he's got 25 MS, so he can run the football if he needs to. With QB Browns you must find Webster Slaughter and throw it deep, throw it short, but most importantly, you must check his matchup before a game and match him up against the defender with the worst Interceptions. If Slaughter is getting balls from QB Browns it can get very ugly very quickly even if a top defender is there - never mind some of the slop DBs in this game. Your next priority is to match up Eric Metcalf and Ozzie Newsome against weak LBs and throw it in to them if you don't have anyone open. Always roll out and threaten the run, rolling to Slaughter's side and keeping Newsome or Metcalf on the opposite side. Try and get Metcalf involved in the passing game as much as possible; moving him to RB #2 and changing your runs to go to RB #2 usually helps a lot with this.

Don't forget, however, about Mike Pagel. They call him "Browns Jr." in the locker room, and can this guy play. He has 25 MS too, so he can run it, and if he gets into EXCELLENT he is a major threat. If he is in EXCELLENT and QB Browns is in BAD, then go to Pagel. He can make the MAN's life very painful. Play him just the same way you play QB Browns, run him to the line and make the throw then, to avoid your line and to instantly force the defense to set up and commit. If you need to run a lot, put in Pagel instead of Browns, hopefully Pagel will get hurt (not likely, he's a damn good player) and you can then run Browns without any fear. Even if you have Browns in there, don't worry about running, you have Pagel in reserve and things will go well at this position even if your guy goes down.

One only wishes one could say that for the skill positions on this team. One of their linemen!!! is faster than all but two players on this pitiful offense. You must work as much as possible running the QB, because Metcalf and Mack aren't going anywhere. I don't even know if there are really any tips for running the ball with this team, because it is impossible at times. Try Mack if you have a good thumb, maybe you can throw the guy when he closes on you. If Mack goes into EXCELLENT you can get some running game going, behind power blocking with Fullwood and Newsome. If you go with the power dives using Mack, make sure to set Fullwood into your backfield to lead block for you, because Metcalf is not going to do much in that

regard. Resist the temptation to use Metcalf at WR because if he goes into EXCELLENT then he can become a running weapon, which you need desperately. If he has any speed at all, use him in your backfield; of course, if they still destroy your run in the first quarter, then cut your losses and give the ball to Browns, splitting Metcalf out at WR. Try at least to mix in a few surprise runs using Mack if you go with the wide-open look, so that you can make your opponent think twice about using their best pass defender. If it turns out that Metcalf is the best option, don't forget to set up Mack against the team's weakest defender if possible.

Special teams...not much to say here. Brennan has a rep, I don't much give a flip about him. Your mileage may vary. Just don't use your starters on the return, every notch of your ratings counts here. Hoard may be an option for you returning. The kicker and punter are atrocities as are the kick and punt coverage teams.

Defensively, get to love LILB Mike Johnson (at least he's not the third Richard Johnson). He isn't a great player, but you can definitely stop some runs with him. Your other option here is Frank Minnifield who is a decent CB, but he is an LCB, which means the sweep down low is going to hurt him big time. Thus, Johnson plays on running downs and Minnifield handles passing downs.

However, there is one wild card here: ROLB Tony Blaylock. A CB in real life, Blaylock is a good pass defender (for a LB) and has some speed like Mike Johnson. However, his ratings are still low for an every-down player, despite his propensity for playing above his stats. Therefore, find situations such as certain run plays, goalline situations, passing downs, and other places where you can use his pass defense skills. He certainly is not a run defender for weak A buttons, but he can do a lot of good things if you give him the chance.

The rest of your defense is an atrocity, and RCB Raymond Clayborn had to be better than this in real life - he is horrid in this game. Most fast receivers will beat him straight out even if Clayborn picks them up. You must protect Clayborn at all costs - he WILL get you killed if you leave him in single coverage on any Top 20 receiver.

One interesting view of the overall defensive strategy is that, because Raymond Clayborn is so bad, one might go try all-out run defense and then use Frank Minnifield to keep him from pulling up, as Clayborn isn't very useful anyway. Another view is to get all the warm bodies possible, and to use Tony Blaylock to make crucial plays against the pass. Other people want to use bend-don't-break, and have Mike Johnson throw down the short receivers and stop runs. Really, if you keep mixing all this up, you can get ahead of your opponent for a few drives.

However, you must be able to control the tempo of the game. This team is not capable of defense on a regular basis because the secondary is so weak

and each defensive strategy you use has pros and cons. Compounding this is the changing conditions; Tony Blaylock in EXCELLENT may force you to abuse him, compared to a BAD Mike Johnson. This will further allow your opponent to drive a wedge into your defense and fulcrum it to the end zone. These factors mean that your offense must be capable of keeping the score in your favor, as the defensive effectiveness is largely out of your control. Slow down the game on offense and defense if you have a clear lead, and speed it up on offense, especially if you are down or close to losing. The winds change so fast with this team because the anchor is the offense, not the defense. Fortunately, the QB-oriented attack gives you a lot of different options - more QB runs to slow it down, more passes to speed it up. Good luck on D.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, you MUST shut down Webster Slaughter. QB Browns can force balls into him all day long and he will get stuff deep. Don't worry about the run, Browns is the real threat. Call passes and make Browns throw it early in the play with a LB blitz, freeing up your boy (over C) and then dropping into short coverage, or a CB coming off short coverage to grab Browns before he can get out of bounds on the scramble. Another ploy is to stick to Metcalf and Newsome, then slide off them as Browns comes up to throw and attack the lesser target (usually a RB). You can't expect to get INTs though against QB Browns, which is just a very weird thing. You might get one or two, but Browns is not a player you can put a demolition job on with your coverages. The key is to not let them get things down the field which can allow them to score points. Their running game is so bad that they must heave it to score, and if you allow them any room to dump pass or deep bomb, QB Browns and Mike Pagel will simply not let up on you until they are dancing in the end zone.

However, don't be too lulled into thinking their running game sucks, because if they get a guy into EXCELLENT, then they can become a threat to ram it down your throat. Check out what's going on with the players' health, then go for the jugular.

Offensively, RCB Raymond Clayborn is your target. Throw it at him, run it on him, do anything you want, but do it against Clayborn. That side of the field is just so weak against the pass that you must throw deep balls at least 5 times a game against that coverage, unless you can sucker LCB Minnifield over there. Make sure to press the coverage and to fake the QB run so that you can betray if the MAN has cheated back short - then you can go over the top.

Run to both sides equally though, you can also help to neutralize Minnifield if you go down low enough. Don't force it too much down at Minnifield; keep a good pass-run balance, because a good player

will try to protect Minnifield by calling the sweep down low and praying against the pass. If you can get these Browns to start calling runs regularly, you can smash them to pieces, because their pass defense will then give up all kinds of big plays. Be patient and let their playcalling expose weaknesses - don't take any chances against Minnifield if you can help it. He can get them a key stop or two, and sometimes that's all QB Browns needs.

Sometimes you will also see ROLB Tony Blaylock on the field. Do not make the mistake of challenging him, as he can pick you off just as well.

Attempt to neutralize him and LILB Mike Johnson with solid running, should the MAN decide to use those players. As long as you can keep the Browns bleeding, you will score, and scoring is the most important thing you can do, as the turnover capability of this defense is limited, while the offensive firepower of the Browns is deceptive yet lethal. You must stay ahead of the chains even if that means burning clock or risking fumbles, because the Browns want long downs more than anything else, as it greatly simplifies their defensive strategy by allowing them to bring both Blaylock and Minnifield to bear. Keep running in long yardage and don't allow them to cut you off from your strengths, as any strength you have can overwhelm this defense.

#### Houston Oilers

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	3
Offense	1
Defense	T-8
Pass D	5
Rush D	12

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Warren Moon	1	QB	25	69	19	13	69	75	75	63
Cody Carlson	14	QB	25	69	13	13	44	31	38	44
Lorenzo White	44	RB	38	69	44	38	19	44		
Ernest Givins	81	WR	44	69	56	13	81	75		
Allen Pinkett	20	RB	38	69	38	25	81	25		
Victor Jones	37	RB	38	69	38	25	81	25		
Haywood Jeffries										
[sic-Jeffires]	84	WR	38	69	50	13	81	75		
Drew Hill	85	WR	44	69	63	13	81	75		
Doug Lloyd	35	RB	38	69	38	25	81	25		
Tony Jones	82	WR	25	69	19	13	81	50		

Curtis Duncan	80	WR	38	69	50	13	81	63
Gerald McNeil	89	WR	25	69	44	13	81	44
Jay Pennison	52	C	25	69	31	50		
Mike Munchak	63	G	25	69	31	63		
Bruce Matthews	74	G	25	69	44	69		
Don Maggs	78	T	25	69	25	50		
Dean Steinkuhler	70	T	25	69	25	50		
Tony Zendejas	7	K	56	81	81	31	38	31
Greg Montgomery	9	P	25	56	44	31	69	56
Sean Jones	96	DE	38	50	56	56	19	56
Doug Smith	99	NT	25	31	38	50	19	44
William Fuller	95	DE	25	38	50	56	19	56
Johnny Meads	91	LB	25	31	38	31	31	38
Al Smith	54	LB	25	38	44	38	19	38
John Grimsley	59	LB	25	31	38	31	19	38
Ray Childress	79	LB	38	50	56	63	19	69
Richard Johnson	23	CB	38	50	63	44	75	75
Cris Dishman	28	CB	25	31	44	31	56	50
Terry Kinard	27	FS	31	38	50	44	56	44
Bubba McDowell	25	SS	25	31	44	44	50	44

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Rai. 7. Jets 13. Pit.
2. Cin. 8. Mia. 14. Phi.
3. K.C. 9. Cin. 15. Pit.
4. N.E. 10. Was. 16. Cle.
5. BYE 11. Dal. 17. Gia.
6. Den. 12. Cle.

#### Houston's Base Offense

QB Warren Moon

RB Drew Hill

WR Curtis Duncan

WR Ernest Givins

WR Haywood Jeffires

WR Gerald McNeil/Lo White (if you don't throw to White)

The Houston Oilers. This team was always on the cusp of Super Bowl domination in the early '90s. Loaded with talent from top to bottom, choking always early in the playoffs even to teams they had smacked in the regular season, capped with a loss that even Browns fans could hardly stand, the 41-38 meltdown against Buffalo after the 1992 season in which they led by 35-3 shortly after halftime, after having taken them to the trash in the regular season closer. Heartbreakers, all.

If you avoid Lo White though, you won't meet the same fate with this team. Nothing less than a Super Bowl appearance is acceptable with a team this loaded.

Offensively, descriptions are sublime. Moon is throwing to 5 good receivers, 4 of them great ones. His Pass Speed allows you to take advantage of the defense's weakest player, matching him up against Ernest Givins or Haywood Jeffires and firing it to him in coverage before the defense can come help. He can run too. Carlson is not that great, but with this supporting cast, you don't need to be great to score. Drew Hill at RB can be a force for a defense that is trying to contain all of the Oilers' weapons. Spread the field with this team, run with Moon if you just need a few yards, and break down the D with quick passes or, if you don't like what you see, throw it deep and score a TD 25% of the time. Don't run too much because you don't have good blockers on this team - although you do have a great offensive line, so don't be freaked about throwing quickly.

The only thing that needs mentioning otherwise about this offense are injury subs and Lo White. If one of your WRs goes out, replace him with the next fastest player (NOT Lo White, ever) and keep on going. When Houston has the run threat this team is lethal. This is a problem for people who don't play WR at RB - in that case this team takes a major hit at RB. To sub, you probably want Tony Jones to avoid drops; but if you are adventurous, Allen Pinkett can sometimes do good things - just don't try to force it to him.

The other issue here is Lo White. If you need a RB, don't succumb to him unless you MUST use him to get running yards. If you do need him, ALWAYS run him out of bounds. With White serving his punishment in 14-fumble purgatory, you don't want him coughing up the ball. Use Pinkett instead (or any of the other two identical RBs) to run the ball. However, you can't forget that Lo White is the best blocker on this team, and if you have a position you don't throw to often if ever (like for myself, TE), then you can put him there to get some blocking out of him - just don't expect your opponent to respect him if you want to try and grab a first down. He will try and tackle him in bounds so don't force it across with White, he will betray you too often. One place he is useful is the goal line, because if you throw it to him there, TD.

Special teams - just throw someone there, not your runner. Gerald McNeil, the former USFL star with the Gamblers (?) is as good as any. Kicking, one word of advice - don't. The "Zendejas-meister" is at the end of his undistinguished career, he's got nothing left.

Defensively, RCB Richard Johnson is the key. He is not the fastest DB in

the game but he can move, and more importantly, you have to throw away from him. He can make the opponent pay for throwing short. He can also stop the run pretty well. LOLB Ray Childress is a good option if you need extra cover men down on the goal line or in very long passing downs. Let the D-line do their work, RE Sean Jones can get a pass rush pretty easily. Focus on stopping the run first with this team, and then go back and work Johnson against the short threat, or FS Terry Kinard, or SS Bubba McDowell (depending on conditions), as this secondary is pretty decent. If you can make life difficult for the other team's backs, you have a pretty good shot at getting the three stops you need to win with the Oilers.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, I can offer no advice. If they play smart they will score 21 (at least). This team has too many weapons and their players don't fumble the ball. If you can force the ball into the hands of Lo White, you can get some fumbles, but you have to then get him before he goes out of bounds, and a smart player will do everything possible, including going backwards, to keep him from getting hit. I would advise focusing on the pass and then praying against the running game, using your best run-stopper for that particular form exclusively. You must get some coverage help from your other guys since the Oilers' receivers can all make big plays. At least you can be happy that the jump ball isn't too big of a threat, so just leave your guys in deep coverage and don't try to help them; you have to gamble short when you have the deep men covered if you want to beat the Oilers. Know also that when they run, at least 50% of their players are weak WRs, so you can just smash into them with your run-stopper and throw them across the field on your way to the ballcarrier - that is the key insight into stopping the Oilers' run.

In addition, make sure to not give up big plays gambling short on the stop when you have guys in the middle and deep, or to gamble too much on the run, because you can contain them and make Zendejas score if you stop them. Since he's such a bad kicker, you will make your opponent line it up, and you can then go for the block against him. This makes not doing stupid things very important. Against teams like the Chiefs, you gamble in certain situations to keep them out of field goal range, but the Oilers don't have that big range like the Chiefs or accuracy like the Bucs. Don't mistake them passing the 50 for them having 3 points on the board.

Offensively, avoid RCB Johnson. He will make you pay if you test him. This is not that solid of an interior defense in the LB corps. LCB Cris Dishman is the weakest corner. Exploit these weaknesses by running down against the grain of LOLB Childress' rush (provided Childress isn't

owning your RT) and throwing it against the much weaker personnel on the bottom of the field. Move your deep threat WR down there as well. Make your moves deliberately, but not slowly, because there is a pass rush threat there. Pass first and then go back to the run when you are beginning to see tighter coverages, because you want to stress Richard Johnson covering the whole field later in the game with run calls coming in the second quarter. A lot of times your opponent will come out with run calls and try to shut down your running game early so he can just dominate you with RJ. Don't let them get you into a pattern, because they can dominate your run or your pass, but not both very well. If you can run against Johnson, do so, but be aware that he is a top corner and you may not be able to do anything against him. If you can force the MAN to change to Childress or William Fuller, you have done your job in that regard. Most of all, your job is to have smart possessions and play the game on your tempo. Unless you are down late, don't get out of your usual offensive rhythm to try to match the Oilers'. After all, you get the same number of possessions no matter whether you score quickly or slowly. Unless you are trying something at the end of a half to get a score, don't be tempted to force it.

### Pittsburgh Steelers

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	18
Offense	28
Defense	1
Pass D	2
Rush D	1

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Bubby Brister	6	QB	25	69	13	13	75	25	56	38
Rick Strom	11	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	25	38
Merril Hoge	33	RB	38	69	38	38	81	44		
Warren Williams	42	RB	38	69	38	31	81	44		
Tim Worley	38	RB	38	69	38	31	81	25		
Richard Bell	21	RB	38	69	31	19	81	25		
Louis Lipps	83	WR	31	69	31	19	81	56		
Derek Hill	82	WR	25	69	25	19	81	44		
Chris Calloway	88	WR	25	69	19	19	81	44		
Dwight Stone	20	WR	31	69	31	19	81	44		
Eric Green	86	TE	25	69	31	63	81	44		

Mike Mularkey	84	TE	25	69	25	44	81	44
Dermontti Dawson	63	C	25	69	38	56		
B.Blankenship	60	G	25	69	38	44		
Terry Long	74	G	25	69	38	44		
John Jackson	65	T	25	69	25	50		
Tunch Ilkin	62	T	25	69	44	69		
Gary Anderson	1	K	56	81	81	31	63	50
Dan Stryzinski	4	P	25	56	44	31	38	50
Donald Evans	66	DE	25	38	44	50	19	56
Gerald Williams	98	NT	38	44	50	56	19	75
Keith Willis	93	DE	25	38	44	44	19	56
Greg Lloyd	95	LB	38	50	56	63	31	69
David Little	50	LB	38	44	56	50	31	63
Hardy Nickerson	54	LB	25	38	44	44	19	56
Brian Hinkle	53	LB	25	38	44	44	19	56
Rod Woodson	26	CB	44	56	75	69	63	75
Dwayne Woodruff	44	CB	38	44	56	56	56	56
Thomas Everett	27	FS	31	38	50	38	56	44
Carnell Lake	37	SS	38	44	56	50	50	63

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. S.D. 7. Gia. 13. Hou.
2. Buf. 8. Sea. 14. Dal.
3. N.E. 9. Cle. 15. Hou.
4. Phi. 10. Den. 16. Cin.
5. BYE 11. Cin. 17. Cle.
6. Ind. 12. Was.

As you can see, Pittsburgh doesn't have a base offense. This is because whom you decide to start depends mostly on condition. Isn't that a great way to talk about this team? What talent. At least on defense, they are the most dominating team in this game by far. Too bad the offense can't take advantage of their incredible defense and special teams.

QBs, QBs...Brister or Strom? The answer to that question depends on what you see in the games. If you have short receivers you are trying to hit, then Brister. On the other hand, if you're looking at good coverage, then Strom Thurmond can throw better jump balls by far. Condition here plays a good deal in the decision. It's more about your confidence in your QB than it is about the QB himself, because they both blow.

RBs, RBs...Hoge and Williams are "nice". However look even for WR Dwight

Stone, etc. because all these guys are just about as fast as each other. Derek Hill, Chris Calloway, and Mike Mularkey are the emergency outs. Just get the fastest one.

WRs, WRs...Lipps is a guy you want out there as often as possible, but if he gets into good shape and you need a RB, give him the takes. Try to at least have someone you can throw the ball to without dropping it.

The only constant on this offense here is TE Eric Green. Where you throw him, well, it's a \*\*\*\* stew anyway, so just take your pick. Whatever feels most comfortable for you is what's important, because whatever difference you might have between pros and cons of the offensive personnel...unless you are doing outright stupid things, it doesn't matter. However, even Green can be too slow to make the cut. Use your discretion.

One might think that this offense, with the crack of 81 BC for every player, is a force to be reckoned with when pounding away, but really, the perception that Pittsburgh never fumbles is just fed by the fact that their offense never gets any drives going and lives on long balls because the talent here is horrid. You can still give up fumbles on punt returns for TDs, you aren't invincible by half with this team.

**FINALLY, I CAN STOP MUTTERING ABOUT THAT "OFFENSE"!!!**

Specialteamswise, Dwight Stone is a beast especially on kick returns. So is Tim Worley on punt returns. So is just about anybody you throw back there. But offense comes first, even with Dwight Stone who can easily score a KR TD, so if these guys need to pull double duty, pull the strings to make it happen. With great blocking, great coverage, great returners, a great kicker, and a great FG blocker in Greg Lloyd, Pittsburgh is the best special teams combination in the game.

Defense...what is there to say? Everyone is very good except the LILB Hardy Nickerson and the LOLB Bryan Hinkle in the LBs, the D-line is unimpressive, and the DBs don't catch as well as you might think. But there is one thing to say about these guys...fumbles. Fumble fumble fumble is all the other team can do against this defense. I got at least 20 fumbles one year in a MAN season with this team, more like 25. Remember, PIT plays the Oilers twice, WAS, etc. That was impressive. These guys are fast and they swarm the ballcarrier. Any DB is good for almost anything. The strongest link of this Steel Curtain, though, is RCB Rod Woodson. This guy is ridiculous. I have put away games in the first quarter with Woodson. He has 75 MS, and while he only has 63 INTs,

he plays possessed. If he goes into EXCELLENT he can stop almost any team singlehandedly. In the AFC Championship Game that year I held Bo Jackson, yes, that Bo Jackson, to \_30\_ yards. All I did was I obliterated any blockers coming my way with Woodson's 69 HP, then smashed into Jackson and took him straight down. Against a MAN. \_30\_ yards. In other years he's had 3 INTs and 10 tackles in a game, etc. An unbelievable player, and if you can get some of your other guys to help, this defense can be nearly impossible to score on. I easily pitched a record for shutouts that year with more than 6 shutouts, and at least 2 more near-shutouts. The secret?

The key is to completely destroy the run in the early stages of the game and keep an eye on it throughout. With this team you need to gamble because your personnel can recover, and you need to try and call as many of the opponent's plays as possible to get sacks which lead to fumbles, etc. Make the other team throw into your corners and S Carnell Lake - you can get a couple INTs a game if you are lucky. You must respect the pass though, you can easily lose if you get too loose with the pass and you don't get fumbles when you make the tackle. Be aggressive, because even if you get thrown, a lot of times your other guys will make the stop on the MAN ballcarrier for you. Use the best player to stop the particular formation's runs and then come back into the pass defense (usually Woodson). You've got the best D in the game, play like it.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, just don't do stupid things. There is no one you should fear on this team. Make them hold the ball by covering short and make them pay for every first down with 2 or 3 passes. Do not let these QBs hide their weaknesses by allowing the run, make the Steelers pass 30 times a game if possible. Don't necessarily try to tackle them in bounds, just don't let them get any more yards than they should on a given play. Freeing up the boys can work here as well, as their guards are weak and it can really help you get the jump ball accuracy and timing off. Freeing up the boys, then dropping into short coverage - you can waste the Steelers' passing game thus.

Offensively, your first priority is to find something that works against RCB Woodson. Try the pass first in the game to maybe try and prey on a run-stopping mindset. Be conservative with the QB run; your guy will fumble if hit enough times in a game, against this powerful D. Running is going to be a very painful and very difficult process, but every 6 downs or so, throw out a run to keep your opponent's

focus at least partially on stopping the run. If you start to get something going then try it once every 4 downs until you become balanced (good luck...). Against this defense, your best chance is to keep them off guard playcallingwise, then chip away at them by getting first downs and running out of bounds to avoid fumbling or getting guys hurt (something else PIT loves to do to your offense).

One VERY key thing to do is to score when you get into their territory, even if it's only a field goal. Do not take any major risks against PIT's D - you need every last point you can get because a) you don't know if you'll ever get back into their territory and b) their offense can't score much, so if you can just steal enough points from their D, in many games even 4 FGs for 12 points will be enough to win it. Furthermore, you shouldn't be gambling against them anywhere short, because if you turn it over (i.e. PIT forces yet another fumble) you are just handing the PIT offense what they need to score TDs and get FGs. Playing the game of "kick the ball back to the PIT 20 to make their O stall and then try to penetrate the Steel Curtain again" is the most effective way to stop Pittsburgh. They want points at all costs and their best way to get them is from their defense handing them great field position with turnovers. If you deny that avenue to them, then they rely on their pathetic jump balls and pure luck to even get into FG range, let alone the end zone. Win the battle by running out of bounds and throwing only when you know the guy will still be there when the ball arrives.

Emphasize Pass Speed over passing competency in order to move the ball more quickly with easy games of chicken and by making PIT autodive. In the red zone, focus on getting yards instead of scoring, as Woodson is easily capable of stopping anything you do in the air, and you must keep their emphasis on your QB run instead of your receivers (whom they can totally cover).

Emphasize quick-strike offense over ball-control, as PIT makes a mockery with their sickening run defense and short-pass containment of any scheme that forces the players to get seven yards and then hold onto the ball. You can get in some jump balls now and then if your timing is good, so if you end up in a long third down, throwing it up to the end zone is just about as good as anything else outside of field goal range. If your defense is playing well, your offense's ability to score probably far outclasses that of Pittsburgh's, so in this situation, keep the game as up-tempo as possible until you can get a sizeable lead, then sit on it and make PIT's slow, pathetic players try to play catch-up. The Achilles heel of this defense is the Steelers' offense, so don't let the Steelers dictate a pace that allows their team to sneak by with a few lucky scores.

Denver Broncos

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Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	15
Offense	14
Defense	20
Pass D	23
Rush D	9

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
John Elway	7	QB	25	69	25	13	75	31	69	50
Gary Kubiak	8	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Bobby Humphrey	26	RB	38	69	63	38	50	38		
Steve Sewell	30	RB	38	69	25	25	50	50		
Sammy Winder	23	RB	44	69	25	31	50	25		
Melvin Bratton	32	RB	44	69	25	44	50	38		
Vance Johnson	82	WR	38	69	50	13	50	56		
Mark Jackson	80	WR	38	69	44	13	50	69		
Ricky Nattiel	84	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Michael Young	83	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Clarence Kay	88	TE	31	69	31	50	50	44		
Paul Green	87	TE	25	69	19	44	50	31		
Keith Kartz	72	C	25	69	38	44				
Jim Juriga	66	G	25	69	38	44				
Doug Widell	67	G	69	31	44	44				
Darryl Hamilton	69	T	25	69	25	56				
Ken Lanier	76	T	25	69	25	50				
David Treadwell	9	K	56	81	81	31	69	31		
Mike Horan	2	P	25	56	44	31	81	75		
Ron Holmes	91	DE	25	31	38	44	19	31		
Greg Kragen	71	NT	25	31	31	44	19	31		
Warren Powers	91	DE	25	31	38	50	19	31		
Karl Mecklenburg	77	LB	31	44	50	56	19	63		
Michael Brooks	56	LB	25	38	44	56	19	56		
Marc Munford	51	LB	25	31	38	31	19	38		
Simon Fletcher	56	LB	38	50	56	38	19	69		
Wymon Henderson	24	CB	25	31	19	38	38	31		
Tyrone Braxton	34	CB	25	31	44	44	50	31		
Steve Atwater	27	FS	31	38	50	69	31	63		
Dennis Smith	49	SS	38	44	56	50	44	63		

Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Cin. 7. BYE 13. Sea.
2. Rai. 8. K.C. 14. N.E.
3. Sea. 9. N.E. 15. Cle.
4. S.D. 10. Pit. 16. Phx.
5. Min. 11. Rai. 17. S.D.
6. Hou. 12. K.C.

#### Denver's Base Offense

QB John Elway

RB Bobby Humphrey

FB Clarence Kay

WR Mark Jackson

WR Vance Johnson

TE Melvin Bratton

The Broncos look better on paper than they do as a playoff team. They have some stars, but they come up woefully short in the depth and in forcing turnovers on defense. You must manage your offense and have good defensive playcalling in order to win with this team.

Elway, though he may be a Hall of Famer, is not good in this game. He is pretty inaccurate for his ratings and he misses open guys. Plus his team can't catch all that well, so you will see some drops from your RBs. Kubiak can really blow, try to avoid him if you can. One good thing about Elway is he has 25 MS, so run the cartilage out of him and emphasize getting short receivers open with hands - this way, you can stretch the opposite side of the field before taking off and picking up a few yards.

In the passing game you have two good WRs so take advantage of them. You must stretch the field to give Elway room to run, so I suggest using both of them deep usually, and try to match up Johnson against the slower CB while Jackson takes the one with lesser hands. One thing you can also do with this team is that, if you want short passing, put Kay out at WR (or maybe even Sewell) and have Johnson run a short route, get the ball to him, and run after the catch, since Johnson is one of the faster receivers in this game.

You can't force it into Mark Jackson too well, but you may be able to get something going there. Try not to dump it when you can run because of the drops you will get with this team.

Don't forget about Paul Green, he may be able to give you a little more offense if he is in good condition. Techniquewise, this is one of the QBs you most want to use the dupe and switch passes with because you have enough Pass Speed to get the ball to the other guy before the defense can recover.

I think I will let Paul describe this team's running game:

"Humphrey is a better back than anyone gives him credit for...

The other three running backs are bumbling morons who can't outrun Elway, so don't even try to involve any of them in the ground game."

That about says it all. If you need to run, use one of your WRs at RB should Humphrey go down. Otherwise use Melvin Bratton for his HP and REC vs. Sewell or Winder, if you can't use a WR at RB. I wish you luck if you lose Humphrey. Preserve him and pass first to keep Humphrey on the field. Go out of bounds, he is that important to this offense, especially if you don't play WR at RB. I wouldn't even run Thurman out of bounds, but Humphrey MUST be healthy for you to succeed running the football. Try not to use him in the passing game, he can drop and you want to limit his touches even though he isn't that bad of a receiver. Clarence Kay is another option if Humphrey goes down. Try to use Humphrey's speed on the perimeter because this offensive line is just no good.

Special teams...not too good. Treadwell is OK and Horan is pretty good, but you have to watch out for returning. Basically put whomever is not your starter and also who is in the best condition back there; this team has no special returning talent except for Vance Johnson, but he's too valuable to this offense.

Defensively these guys can stop the run, but the pass is another issue. Wymon Henderson is a waste of jersey, and your DBs don't have high INTs. Expect teams to pass first against you, trying to get you to use SS Dennis Smith and LCB Tyrone Braxton to stop the pass, then running against those personnel. LOLB Simon Fletcher will also get caught up in those sweeps down low. You may have to use ROLB Karl Mecklenburg more than you would, and sometimes LILB Michael Brooks may be the best LB option. Your line sucks, don't expect anything from them in the way of pass rush. Try to use Michael Brooks more than Mecklenburg, because Mecklenburg may be able to generate a pass rush when CPU controlled. Steve Atwater is your main run-stopper in the secondary, but he can't catch at all so he's little better than a LB (albeit a very good LB).

To stop the opposing offense, call pass first, then try and use your run-stopping personnel to throw them down. Then try and flow with what your opponent wants to do. Playcalling needs to be able to generate some called pass plays and to keep the running yards to maybe 3 a carry, so you have to focus in on that aspect of the game, since the basic strategy is usually "choose Atwater, pray vs. the pass" anyway. Try to change up your run-stoppers to keep your opponent from trying to run at one of your guys, since you have 4 guys who can get it done provided you have a decent thumb. One of those guys is Dennis Smith, so try and do some work about gambling and using him at

unpredictable intervals, so that you can cheat and get some pass plays with Smith as well as using him to stop the run.

#### AGAINST:

This team can be neutralized if you know what you are doing. The first thing you must remember is that Elway doesn't have deep ball accuracy. If he rolls out one way you can leave a guy open deep on the other side of the field because he won't be able to hit him with any consistency. The next key is to stop Humphrey so you can try and find a rhythm against Elway's running on passing downs. Use a powerful run stopper to smash against any WRs that come to block, and see early in the game on a play that you know you will be able to make the stop on, to see if you can throw their 5th man, whether it is Sewell, Winder, etc. NOT Bratton. Sometimes you can't tell from their condition and yours whether or not you can throw them, so test them early, it can really help you clear away a path to Humphrey. Watch out for Paul Green, he can block as well as Bratton, so don't be fooled into thinking he can't hurt you at all.

Once you have Humphrey under control and you know what they can do in the running game, then start to work Elway. You want to call as many passes as possible against Elway to give yourself coverage deep so that he can't get any deep balls, since he can't throw the jumper. Then take one of your pass defenders and cover him short. If he looks to run, fake at him and see if you can't make him throw hastily. If you can get matched up against his short receivers you've got a pretty decent chance for a pick. If you can force him to make a lot of close decisions, then you are well on the way to beating this team. They will drop it short in many cases so you can get stops just off that. If you get some defensive stops, don't get complacent about Humphrey, he is a major threat.

Also don't be lazy when covering short; Mark Jackson can catch some balls in coverage, so you need to try and get over there after the pass comes off just in case. In that regard, don't let Elway sit back there and try for the deep ball either, go for Jackson if Elway drops deep or go for Elway if he drops short. Just don't try for the sack or pressure too often because it gets easy to exploit that tactic. However you need to stay loose because even if you are covering the receiver on Elway's side, his speed can still hurt you in a short yardage situation.

One major key to pressuring Elway and forcing a lot of tackles in bounds is to free up your boys. All their interior linemen have 44 HP, so you can really clean up on them if your team is powerful. If you can get 3 guys out there rushing Elway...happy hunting.

Offensively, the key is to make Wymon Henderson and Steve Atwater cry.

Get your deep threat on that side and throw it up all day long. You don't have much to fear from this team picking you off, so if you go to that side you can maim them easily. Runningwise, if they start changing players a lot, remember to just go with your strengths. They will eventually guess wrong and that's when you will hurt them. But your running game mustn't dominate your playcalling even if you have a great back, you need to let it fly against this secondary a few times a drive, especially early on when you are trying to get down the field and you can score big on jump balls. Be unpredictable with run vs. pass to force the MAN back into pass coverage and to give you more opportunities for big plays, since this defense can sometimes stop you if they can keep you from passing the ball.

### Kansas City Chiefs

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	5
Offense	12
Defense	5
Pass D	6
Rush D	4

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Steve De Berg	17	QB	25	69	6	13	50	63	56	56
Mike Elkins	10	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Christian Okoye	34	RB	63	75	50	94	50	19		
Barry Word	23	RB	50	69	31	75	50	19		
Todd McNair	48	RB	38	69	38	25	50	44		
Bill Jones	43	RB	38	69	25	38	50	38		
Robb Thomas	81	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Stephone Paige	83	WR	38	69	50	13	50	75		
J.J.Birden	88	WR	31	69	38	13	50	44		
Emile Harry	86	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Alfredo Roberts	87	TE	25	69	19	50	50	31		
Jonathan Hayes	85	TE	25	69	19	50	50	31		
Mike Webster	53	C	25	69	38	69				
David Szott	79	G	25	69	38	50				
David Lutz	72	G	25	69	25	56				
John Alt	76	T	25	69	19	81				
Rich Baldinger	77	T	25	69	25	69				
Nick Lowery	8	K	56	81	81	31	81	81		
Bryan Barker	4	P	25	56	44	31	31	63		

Bill Maas	63	DE	25	38	44	44	19	44
Dan Saleaumua	97	NT	38	31	25	56	19	56
Neil Smith	90	DE	31	44	50	63	19	56
Derrick Thomas	58	LB	44	56	63	69	19	81
Dino Hackett	56	LB	31	44	50	63	19	56
Percy Snow	59	LB	38	50	56	56	31	50
Chris Martin	57	LB	25	38	44	50	19	44
Kevin Ross	31	CB	31	38	50	44	56	44
Albert Lewis	29	CB	31	38	50	56	50	69
Deron Cherry	20	FS	25	31	44	38	50	50
Kevin Porter	27	SS	25	31	44	38	38	38

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Atl. 7. Mia. 13. Cle.
2. N.O. 8. Den. 14. Sea.
3. Hou. 9. Rai. 15. S.D.
4. Sea. 10. BYE 16. S.F.
5. S.D. 11. Rams 17. Rai.
6. Buf. 12. Den.

### Kansas City's Base Offense

QB Steve DeBerg  
 Featured Back Christian Okoye  
 RB Todd McNair  
 Go-To WR Stephone Paige  
 2nd Option J.J. Birden  
 TE Barry Word

### Kansas City's 2 Minute Offense

QB Steve DeBerg  
 RB Christian Okoye  
 RB Todd McNair  
 WR Stephone Paige  
 WR J.J. Birden  
 WR Robb Thomas

### Kansas City's Power Set

QB Steve DeBerg  
 RB Christian Okoye  
 FB Barry Word  
 WR Stephone Paige  
 TE Jonathan Hayes  
 TE Alfredo Roberts

Kansas City is a team that you look at it, and you say, "Where's the beef?" But when you go against them, you find it's difficult to stop their offensive attack, and their defense can be a brick wall at times. While their offense isn't terrible, their defense is what carries this squad to the playoffs.

QB Steve DeBerg is slow but he can distribute the ball very well. Don't count on him to make any big plays, however, with his arm alone; he doesn't have the receiving talent to force the ball into coverage. He can however do very well if you only ask him to throw to open receivers because he's got that kind of an arm. Thus the running game must set up the pass. And no, Mike Elkins is not the answer despite being an OK backup. DeBerg throws to Stephone Paige who is one of the best in the AFC. Paige needs to see the ball a few times a game to put fear in the MAN's heart. J.J. Birden has a little speed but he is not a big-play threat, he's only there to stretch the defense. WR Robb Thomas, he is so slow and you wonder if anyone ever uses him, and the answer is "Yes". Robb Zombie seems to play above his stats so sometimes you will see people putting him out there. After that's it's pretty iffy. Alfredo Roberts and Jonathan Hayes are snot running down the wall when it comes to making plays, and while Todd McNair has some skills, he is nowhere near All-Pro. Again, throwing to open receivers is the key here. Okoye and Word may be available but they can drop the ball, so limit their touches in the passing game.

The running game is where the Chiefs earn their checks. This offensive line has some of the best guys in the game to start it up, professional boogers Roberts and Hayes are actually decent blockers, and powerful Barry Word will blast open a lot of holes over the course of 20 carries. And those 20 carries will be going to one and only one man: Christian Okoye, the Nigerian Nightmare. Knee injuries ended his career, but he still has the makings of the league-leading rusher in this game. With 50 MS, he can take the corner, but what really makes this player a force on the field is his astounding 94 HP. Furthermore his 63 RS and 75 RP mean that when he gets the ball he is already at full speed. In short yardage, the defense can't count on stopping him via simple confrontation to throw him down. For the Chiefs to succeed, Okoye must be getting 5 yards a carry. Even though this team doesn't have much depth, Okoye needs to carry 15 times a game if possible, because he sets up the passing game and forces the defense into stopping him, which means that now DeBerg can get the ball to Paige or McNair coming out of the backfield. If a total disaster should come about and Okoye goes down (and he will go down at least once in 16 games) you must watch conditions. If Word is in EXCELLENT he is your man. However Todd McNair may be the best option as well. If you are in a pinch, you can sacrifice Paige on the altar of a running game, but know that your opponent will have nothing

to fear from your deep pass. If Paige is not an option, Birden may be your man. If all else fails, just go with the best condition player of the remaining chumps. Of course, if all the aforementioned players are not going to cut it at RB, then you have major problems in any case. And if you can only use RB at RB, then good luck to you if Word and McNair aren't up to it. One tip to remember if Okoye goes into BAD: if you go to Word, say (if he's in EXCELLENT for example), then put Okoye in a position to blow up defenders because you can't leave that incredible HP out of your offense, not to mention his speed. In any event, make sure to return to the passing game even if Okoye is running well. You want to try and not kill Okoye if you can avoid it, and DeBerg is a nice distraction to the defense, to give them something else to think about to keep the fire off Okoye, because Okoye (and indeed, no back in this game) is good enough to do it alone. Also, make sure to run out of bounds to avoid injuring Okoye and to prevent fumbles which can really kill this team, for reasons stated below.

The Chiefs' special teams are actually something to remark about. K Nick Lowery is the best kicker in the game, and he can put it through the uprights consistently from 70 yards out. Yes, you read that correctly. You only want to throw to open receivers because even if you can only make it to the 45, Lowery will bail you out. You just need a few first downs to score 3 points. Use his range, give your opponent something to think about when he is defending your 1st down from your 30. Derrick Thomas is the second-best FG blocker in this game, he can do sick things.

Defensively, the Chiefs can really take it to you, as they have one of the best front seven units in the game. Their line isn't that good although LE Neil Smith is a pretty good player, but their LBs are some evil fellas. ROLB Derrick Thomas will make your opponent throw controllers because he is so fierce in run defense if played by an aggressive MAN, and his friends are almost as bad. RILB Dino Hackett is a pretty good run stopper and LILB Percy Snow can do a little bit of everything. Derrick in particular, he plays possessed, but even LOLB Chris Martin can make some plays. On many downs you want to be Derrick just because he is such a playmaker, but many times you may want to use Snow because he has 31 Interceptions. Check which LT Derrick is up against and if he can blow him up, let the CPU control him while you cover with Snow. But if you need some possessed run defense or just some all-around beatings to be handed out, stick with Thomas. And indeed, covering with Snow will be helpful. While your corners are pretty decent, your safeties aren't good at all. You need to be able to stop the run with your front 9 because your safeties are of not of much use in that regard, or in pass defense. Be wary of using

run plays because if those corners pull up, you can be toasted very easily with the deep ball. If you have your corners back there, though, you can be very aggressive. Stopping the run with these LBs should be pretty easy and containing it almost a no-brainer, so don't let the opposing quarterback get some easy shots on you while you are pounding the opposing running game senseless.

#### AGAINST:

Against their offense, know that they only have two weapons: Christian and Stephone. Shut these two down and you have taken all the explosion out of this team. Stopping Paige is easy, just drop and cover him, DeBerg is not known for jump balls. However, stopping Christian and the short pass is more interesting. Really, what you have to do is to get some decent play calls going and let Okoye outrun his blocking on longer 3rd downs. You have to kind of hand a few yards to Okoye, especially if you don't have a strong thumb. If you can stop the short pass and get some pass plays called against the Chiefs, you are going to do well against these guys. With Okoye also, you want to force him back into the middle of the field where your LBs can get back into the play. If you just let Okoye run along the sideline, he will be able to take on your corners and you will usually lose that battle, plus he can break out more easily without a ton of strong LBs to go through. His key weapon is his ability to punch through the weak parts of your defense so emphasize in your playcalling, that you take away the plays that go against your weaker personnel and make him go through the strongest parts of your defense. Another key to Okoye is to make sure and tackle him. He's just a typical 50 BC back, and with the reliance that this team has on his running, you can expect to be able to make him fumble at least once a game. Plus, if you can tackle him, you may be able to injure him and that will put 3 flat tires in this offense. If you let him beat your guys, get 5 yards, then go right out of bounds, it's going to be all day.

Also remember that DeBerg is slow, so if you need a key stop, you may be able to blitz him or NTD him and take away his deep ball.

On your own offense, don't rely on your line to keep things sane. They have players who can make your life ugly in a few seconds, so try to make your plays direct and to the point, especially when it comes to avoiding their great LBs, one of whom is the ferocious Derrick Thomas. Try to run at Thomas as much as possible because he can do a lot of ugly things to you in a very short time. Also emphasize the pass because their safeties are weak. Try to get one of your WRs matched up against a single safety and throw the ball to him. Watch out for Percy Snow, because he can make you pay if you carelessly check down, seeing that the corners have left the screen.

Know that their LBs are the key to their run defense and that if you work the power run, or pass frequently, you can cause them major pain and grief with big plays. This team can be very solid, even dominating, if you play conservatively, but if you let it loose then they can have some problems containing you.

One thing that is worth mentioning about this team is the fact that Derrick Thomas can block your FG extremely quickly. You definitely want to set up quickly and try to get the ball into the middle of the field if you are looking for a game-winner, because Thomas will block you twice a game if you aren't getting the kick off swiftly.

### Los Angeles Raiders

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	4
Offense	4
Defense	6
Pass D	8
Rush D	5

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Jay Schroeder	13	QB	25	69	13	13	69	31	44	63
Steve Beuerlein	7	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Bo Jackson	34	RB	38	69	75	31	81	19		
Marcus Allen	32	RB	38	69	56	25	50	31		
Steve Smith	35	RB	44	69	25	50	50	31		
Greg Bell	28	RB	44	69	31	38	50	19		
Mervyn Fernandez	86	WR	38	69	50	13	63	63		
Willie Gault	83	WR	44	69	63	13	50	56		
Tim Brown	81	WR	44	69	56	13	50	50		
Sam Graddy	85	WR	44	69	63	13	50	19		
Ethan Horton	88	TE	25	69	44	50	50	44		
Mike Dyal	84	TE	25	69	19	38	50	25		
Don Mosebar	72	C	25	69	31	50				
Steve Wisniewski	76	G	25	69	44	69				
Max Montoya	65	G	25	69	31	56				
Bruce Wilkerson	68	T	25	69	50	50				
Rory Graves	60	T	25	69	25	50				
Jeff Jaeger	18	K	56	81	81	31	56	56		
Jeff Gossett	6	P	25	56	44	31	31	38		
Greg Townsend	93	DE	38	50	56	63	31	69		
Bob Golic	79	NT	25	31	31	69	25	56		

Howie Long 75 DE 38 50 56 69 31 69  
Aaron Wallace 51 LB 25 38 44 38 19 25  
Scott Davis 70 LB 25 68 44 63 25 63  
Riki Ellison 50 LB 25 31 38 38 44 25  
Jerry Robinson 57 LB 25 31 38 38 44 25  
L. Washington 48 CB 38 44 56 44 38 50  
Terry McDaniel 36 CB 38 44 56 44 38 50  
Eddie Anderson 33 FS 38 50 63 69 50 63  
Mike Harden 45 SS 25 31 44 50 50 50

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.  
1. Hou. 7. Sea. 13. Cin.  
2. Den. 8. Rams 14. S.D.  
3. Ind. 9. K.C. 15. Buf.  
4. Atl. 10. BYE 16. N.O.  
5. S.F. 11. Den. 17. K.C.  
6. S.D. 12. Sea.

#### Raiders' Base Offense

QB Jay Schroeder  
RB Bo Jackson  
RB Marcus Allen  
WR Willie Gault  
WR Mervyn Fernandez  
TE Ethan Horton

#### Raiders' Open Set

QB Jay Schroeder  
RB Bo Jackson  
RB Marcus Allen  
WR Willie Gault  
WR Mervyn Fernandez  
WR Tim Brown

#### Raiders' Power Set

QB Jay Schroeder  
RB Bo Jackson  
FB Ethan Horton  
WR Willie Gault  
Physical Specimen Marcus Allen  
TE Steve Smith

The Raiders are a team, the depth of which makes you just shudder and ask why none of this was distributed across teams like Green Bay or

Pittsburgh. Al Davis was notorious around this time for bringing in pure speed and he sure got what he asked for, at least in this video game. These guys are too fast on offense, and on defense, this team can certainly bring it as well.

QB Jay Schroeder is what keeps this team from being totally unstoppable. He has good Pass Speed but nothing else to back it up. Beuerlein isn't any better in that regard. Use Schroeder's PS to beat the defense deep with the speed of your WRs, and fake the bootleg to throw shorter passes. The ability of this team to stretch the field is almost beyond comprehension or rival, and that will open up a lot of QB running room. If they try to play you short, throw it over their heads. Send your WRs deep on every passing down, no sense in wasting this speed running curls. You can get anything short you want when you know the MAN has to be 30 yards downfield almost every time. As far as whom you actually throw to, well you have your choice! I like Willie Gault as the WR #1 because that way he will streak on a ton of plays, and having Fernandez as the second gives you a lot of flexibility when it comes to just being able to force a bad matchup. Tim Brown is faster than Fernandez but not as good otherwise.

One thing I think is very important with this team is to use as many high Receptions players as possible because Schroeder will cause some drops. You can see if you try throwing even to Allen, where Jay will just screw it up. Be patient and let things develop, you've got a pretty decent offensive line. Ethan Horton is a good target too, so don't forget about him, especially in short yardage where he can bull his way up for a few extra yards.

One other thing to note: while Sam Graddy is a WR, he cannot catch at all, so don't use him to catch passes. If you want to stretch the field with him though, that's OK.

There is a temptation there, with the defense almost always stacking against Jackso and Allen, to want to throw the ball more than 50% of the time in order to get massive plays, or to try and extend the running game over into the passing game by running Schroeder and throwing "safe" dumpoffs. **DO NOT DO THIS.** Schroeder IS NOT CAPABLE of performing these tasks on a consistent basis. He is only in there so that the MAN must be honest about his playcalls, as opposed to Beuerlein, who isn't going to win any chicken games short, nor will he deliver the ball over the top before the defender can recover with the superhuman speed given to the pursuer after the ball is thrown. Schroeder's PS doesn't help any with his brainfarts and his alarming tendency to throw picks - Schroeder is a triple edged sword: one against the MAN, two against you. Furthermore, with Schroeder's slow speed and the high number of set runs on which you will get stuffed, the conservative approach often ends with you falling

behind the chains due to insufficient yards-per-snap.

The thing you MUST avoid with the Raiders is to fall into 3rd and more than 5, because on those downs, you are relying on either

- a) the ability of your running game to pick up the 1st with more than 5 yards per carry on a consistent basis
- b) the ability of your passing game to stretch the field and produce open receivers who can stretch past the marker
- c) picking up less than 5 yards on 3rd down, then going for it on 4th down and getting positive yardage

a) doesn't apply for any team, c) is extremely risky for any team, and b) doesn't work because Schroeder has such a low completion percentage. Schroeder's strength is the big play, not the move-the-chains play. If you force him to move the chains, he will sputter and bring down your offensive momentum. He throws too many wild passes and too many interceptions to be a featured component. He can go one or two possessions maybe without incident, but he always returns to his old ways. This is because sooner or later, he has a bad play on 1st or 2nd down, then the Raiders run and get stuffed, and now 3rd and long is looming, and the Raiders, for what their offense is worth, have more trouble with 3rd and long than any team with even a hint of this kind of firepower. Jackso is the most reliable back in the game; don't let him go to waste trying to be cute with pass playcalling. Found your offense on the constant pressure of Jackso and Allen and let Schroeder be the pinnacle, not the basis, of your success.

Well, I talked a little bit about speed. Bonus for you! You get to hear me prattle on more about speed! This time though, it's about Bo Jackson ("Jackso"), the best pure running back in the game. Jackso does not have ordinary speed. Jackso is a little slow to start, but when he's going, there are about 10, maybe 15 defenders, in this entire game who can stop him alone. You can cut back with Jackso. You can reverse your entire field and break out with Jackso, if there's no room to run where the play was originally intended to go. However, you cannot catch passes with Jackso, that is his one weakness. Jackso is, amazingly, a player you can and should abuse, because if he goes down - pity! - you just put in his friend Marcus Allen to get the takes. If you allow WR at RB, you can also go for Sam Graddy, especially if Graddy gets up into EXCELLENT or something equally horrifying for your opponent. Not to mention all the fast WRs you could also substitute (Willie Gault in EXCELLENT comes to mind as a beastly thing). However if Marcus goes in alone, then don't push it too much with the running game, because after that, you're out of running backs (if you don't allow WR at RB). Your blocking however may be suspect. The people who can really block for you are Horton, Steve Smith, and to a limited extent Greg Bell.

Just use Smith and Horton for power and get more speed out of whatever slot you would have put Bell in.

On special teams, Tim Brown is your best bet. I have always been fond of Greg Bell but he may not have any skills whatsoever. Jaeger is OK as a kicker but Gossett needs some serious coaching. Bo Jackson can make devastating plays to tackle the punt returner almost instantly, so try and free him up if possible, because he will smack straight into the guy if Bo is in EXCELLENT.

On defense, you are to hold the fort until the devastating line moves through to the quarterback. By "moves", I mean "evaporates". This defensive line is the best in the game and they can break through almost any interior offensive line within a few seconds. Your job is to get the QB into trouble by holding him from throwing to his short receivers and forcing long bombs which will be less successful at creating sustained drives. That's pretty much the passing D in a nutshell. To execute it, FS Eddie Anderson never hurt anyone...on your own team, that is. SS Mike Harden is just not as good and you are not going to cover anyone with those lower linebackers. You should try and double-cover on the deep ball though, because while you have some speed at CB, you don't have very good hands there, or even in Anderson himself, so prudence is best there. If you are really good, you may even be able to get those lower linebackers to come out into coverage with a particular pass play call, and that would be very nice for you, since this team has two of the better Interceptions linebackers in the game in LILB Riki Ellison and LOLB Jerry Robinson. However Jerry Robinson is a rush LB (since he plays LOLB), so you might try freeing up him in the beginning of the play with someone like LE Howie Long and then running back to cover. However this doesn't work so well, because now you're stuck with Howie, who is not anywhere near the pass defender that Eddie Anderson is. (In EXCELLENT, though, he and Greg Townsend are fearsome all-around defenders.)

In the running game, you need to try to push the play back inside because your LBs will have problems pursuing the play, being so slow. However, Eddie Anderson is a Top 5 safety in this game, so if you can beat it down with him, hey, that's what 69 Hitting Power is for. RILB Scott Davis may be of some mild use to you in stopping the run as well (ironically, a DL in real life), but don't ask many favors of him. If you can hold up the progress of the running play, you may also be able to get your defensive linemen in on the fun. Your corners are pretty solid against the run as is Mike Harden. You shouldn't have much difficulty against the run with this team.

AGAINST:

Defensively, the key is to make Schroeder make plays. This means not allowing him to throw wide-open deep bombs and forcing him into his RBs who will drop the ball. Also, you want to call some of his plays and make him take sacks, because Schroeder is not capable of completing in coverage.

However, the real problem here is Jackso. Don't expect to completely shut him down, just make them run it twice and throw a pass to get a first down. With Jackso you want to contain and then get a bead on their playcalling strategy, focusing on passes. You are NEVER immune to a Jackso run, though. He can pick up 3rd and 20 easily if you are goofing off. Jackso is not the key to stopping this offense, but he is what makes it go, so you can't let him run wild. If your opponent tries to abuse him, make him pay, but otherwise, you need to break the weakest links and those are the drops and the sacks in the passing game. You aren't trying to hold this team to no yards, you are trying to stop them on 3 straight downs. Find out which plays Jackso runs that you can stop - don't call those plays. Find out which plays Jackso runs that you can't stop - call those sometimes. Find out which plays Schroeder is running well - destroy those.

Also, don't be fooled by deep receivers going way deep. Even though Schroeder has PS, he can't throw a jump ball with any consistency, so don't worry about humping the receivers, you just need to get there whenever the ball arrives. You can pick him off too, so that's another reason to call passes - then you can cover short and flush him out or get him to throw an ill-advised short pass.

On offense, avoid FS Eddie Anderson. Also, avoid your offensive line, and know that if you want to play chicken you better do it quick, because that defensive line is going to eat your guys up. Other than that, you are kind of free to do what you want. Their DBs aren't great at catching, so you can throw it up at them, and you should definitely try the outside sweep (like Pitch L Open) to attack Anderson and take him away. Just don't run through the middle, you will be eaten alive by their defensive line. Also, don't get stupid about throwing it short, they do have some Interceptions LBs you have to be careful about and that can get you in trouble very quickly. Keep changing it up and keep making Eddie Anderson make plays and you should be able to score with some regularity against this defense.

## San Diego Chargers

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### Points and Rankings

Category Rank  
Subjective

Overall 10  
 Offense 11  
 Defense 10  
 Pass D 12  
 Rush D 10

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
B.J.[Billy Joe]										
Tolliver	11	QB	25	69	13	13	81	31	31	44
Mark Vlastic	13	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	25	38
Marion Butts	35	RB	38	69	63	38	50	25		
Rod Bernstine	82	RB	44	69	25	44	50	19		
Joe Caravello	46	RB	38	69	25	44	50	25		
Ronnie Harmon	33	RB	38	69	31	25	50	50		
Quinn Early	87	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Anthony Miller	83	WR	38	69	44	13	50	69		
Nate Lewis	81	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Wayne Walker	80	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Derrick Walker	89	TE	25	69	31	50	50	38		
Arthur Cox	88	TE	25	69	19	63	50	31		
Frank Cornish	63	C	25	69	31	56				
Courtney Hall	53	G	25	69	38	50				
David Richards	65	G	25	69	25	69				
Joel Patten	78	T	25	69	25	63				
B.[Broderick]Thompson	76	T	25	69	25	56				
John Carney	3	K	56	81	81	31	75	50		
John Kidd	10	P	25	56	44	31	69	56		
Burt Grossman	92	DE	31	44	50	50	19	69		
Les Miller	69	NT	25	38	44	56	19	44		
Lee Williams	99	DE	31	44	50	56	19	56		
Leslie O.Neal										
[O'Neal]	91	LB	31	50	56	63	19	69		
Junior Seau	55	LB	25	31	38	44	19	38		
Gary Plummer	50	LB	25	38	44	69	19	44		
Henry Rolling	57	LB	25	31	38	38	31	50		
Sam Seale	30	CB	38	44	56	38	50	44		
Gill Byrd	22	CB	38	50	63	50	69	75		
Vencie Glenn	25	FS	31	38	50	44	44	44		
Martin Bayless	44	SS	25	31	44	56	44	44		

Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.  
 1. Pit. 7. Rams 13. Jets  
 2. S.F. 8. Cle. 14. Rai.  
 3. Atl. 9. Sea. 15. K.C.  
 4. Den. 10. BYE 16. Mia.

5. K.C. 11. Sea. 17. Den.  
6. Rai. 12. N.O.

#### Chargers' Base Offense

QB Billy Joe Tolliver  
Featured Back Marion Butts  
Physical WR Ronnie Harmon  
Go-To WR Anthony Miller  
Pass-Catching TE Derrick Walker  
Blocking TE Arthur Cox

#### Chargers' All-Out Muscle Offense

QB Billy Joe Tolliver  
Featured Back Marion Butts  
FB Joe Caravello  
Pass-Catching TE Derrick Walker  
TE Arthur Cox  
TE Rod Bernstine

#### Chargers' Hands Set

QB Billy Joe Tolliver  
RB Marion Butts  
Physical WR Ronnie Harmon  
Primary WR Anthony Miller  
Last Read WR Wayne Walker  
Big-Play TE Derrick Walker

The Chargers might be 3 years away from the Super Bowl...but they are 3 years away from the Super Bowl. This team has some talent, especially defensively, but they have a lot of needs as well. Pretty much a mixed bag with this squad, the names of which make me wonder what in the world Bobby Beathard was thinking when he put this team together.

QB Billy Joe Tolliver...I'll remind you that his first two initials are 'B' and 'J' and leave it at that. One thing he does have though is the highest Pass Speed in the game (T-1 w/Dan Marino) so you can play chicken with him like nobody's business. He's just an average Tecmo QB running though, so you can't slash your opponent's throat just with that. Be careful about throwing over defenders with him and make sure you have a clear lane to your guy, because Tolliver is VERY vulnerable to jumping interceptions. One might wonder about Mark Vlasic, and I will say that he is a better in-coverage QB, but Vlasic has so much of a disadvantage compared to BJ when it comes to the Pass Speed that it usually isn't worth it to put him in, because it can really disrupt your offensive rhythm with the two different styles of play

that you end up using by switching them around. However if Pickle-Boy is in EXCELLENT and Blow Fish Tolliver is in BAD, you can give the pickle a little tickle (I assure you, it will be cleaner from this point onwards). If Tolliver goes into EXCELLENT though, he can really fire some balls and make life very difficult for an opposing offense. The key to using him then is to find the open receiver and just throw the ball to him once you know the MAN is out of range, and believe me, in EXCELLENT, almost any defender is out of range against Tolliver's short pass once they leave the screen.

Now about the receivers...I will say that Billy Joe's initials are...

the same as the receiving talent: a lot of anticipation and a few seconds of glory. The glory in this case is Anthony Miller who has some skills in this game (some say that he is way underrated).

Anyhow, Miller is your fastest WR, so he should be your #1 in this offense by default. None of these QBs can force balls into him.

The anticipation is a deep but not stellar supporting cast (obviously, as otherwise Miller wouldn't be the show). Ronnie Harmon is listed as a RB but he is your man; he thankfully also has a little HP (25) so he is not a \_total\_ pushover, but a top run stopper won't have any problems wiping the floor with him. What you do with the rest is a matter of how much power you want in your running game, and what the conditions are. Thus I won't spend any more time here, other than to say that Derrick Walker should be on the field at all times, both for his HP and his REC ability. This guy is a big-play TE, believe it or not, and in EXCELLENT he can really hurt you underneath, doing things like throwing 5 defenders off and running for 20 more yards.

In the running game, Marion Butts is the cast, crew, and lighting apparatus, but the offensive line and the power blockers are the stage on which this team's offense is played. 63 MS and 38 HP make Butts a force to be reckoned with, and he gets some serious help on every down from this dominating offensive line in front. I would very strongly recommend taking a position that is not featured in your passing offense (like TE is in mine) and putting Arthur Cox in there, because Cox (does it stop?) is a force in the blocking game. If you can get him matched up against a weaker defender he may be able to throw them after a brief struggle. However your offensive rhythm and keeping the threat of the pass is more important than blocking so if you've got some receivers itching to go, by all means use them instead. If Butts goes down, Miller may play, but do not forget about Derrick Walker - check his condition first, for since anybody you use will be slow anyway, you can at least get some power out of Derrick. If you are in desperate straits, go to your WRs Wayne Walker and Quinn Early, and if you really are in deep (or you play only RB at RB), go to Harmon, then your choice of Joe Caravello or Rod Bernstine. Just pray it doesn't get that far.

Whether you want to protect Butts by limiting his number of touches or not is an interesting issue. This team is one of the absolute worst teams as far as its backup running options, and I think you have to protect Butts to a certain extent, especially since he only has 50 BC and he can cough it up if he gets a lot of touches, plus you don't want to test his 25 REC much. However, know that he is your true big-play threat, so you can't leave him out in crunch time, and if you have to push for the first down or the big run, give him the ball and let him work. If Butts doesn't get the ball 15 times a game, you are going to have major problems pulling out wins against competition, especially since you will be letting this great offensive line go to waste.

As far as blocking is concerned, you will typically have as many power players (Derrick, Ronnie, Cox) as your offense will permit already in there, so your real need for extra power comes when Butts goes down, and for that, you want to put in any of those first three in first, then go to Caravello and Bernstine if you don't need to throw passes to those positions. However, one certainly wonders what in the world kind of runner you are if you don't even need 2 or 3 positions in the passing game; use your discretion.

On special teams, Carney and Kidd definitely have skills, so again, don't do stupid things with Tolliver. Leslie O'Neal is also a pretty good FG blocker, so make use of him. On returns Wayne Walker can get the call in PRs, but KR's and depth is iffy usually. Bernstine and Caravello are just about as good as anyone in that department, so you don't need to fret about it too much. Just don't use starters on the returns because this team is shallow as it is.

Defensively, the Chargers have some firepower they can use to cripple the opposing offense, but they have some weaknesses that can bring them down if you aren't careful. The line here is pretty nice, you are not going to find so many better lines - not a premier nose tackle here, but the ends are definitely sufficient. The linebackers are also nice, you have ROLB Leslie O'Neal who can do everything (but intercept), and LILB Gary Plummer is a very good run-stopper at the right times. You can do a tad of coverage with Henry Rolling but he is too slow and too vulnerable at LOLB for general use, I would avoid him. Certainly avoid RILB Junior Seau, hard as it may be to choke down, he is a pretty crummy linebacker, especially compared to the other guys here.

The Chargers' secondary is where things get interesting. The corners are pretty good, especially LCB Gill Byrd, who is one of the better corners in the league. RCB Sam Seale isn't that great but he has some wheels, so don't count him out of your defensive gameplan. However, you kind of have placeholder safeties, they are so-so in every way. The key here is to be a corner, trying for Byrd but shifting to Seale to

try and prevent the sweep down low from becoming too vicious, and then let the CPU take the safeties. Unless you have a play on which you KNOW the safety is the best option (and those plays are few and far between with Gill Byrd on your team), stick with the corners and linebackers. Your strategy is to shut as much down as you can with your corner play and go to your linebackers when there is the threat of a run you can't stop. You aren't going to win by running O'Neal all around because you don't have that much in the way of big-play potential short, although your corners will screw over their opposing WR #2 and Seale is not going to get beat. If you can get a MAN Byrd on 50% of the plays you are in good shape to win the game. Don't ever forget about Plummer and O'Neal against the sweep down low, because those two can create total chaos for an offense trying to pulverize Byrd. Shifting your choice of MAN around and using Byrd on obvious passing downs is usually going to give you a nice solid D, but if you can protect Byrd, then do that and make it difficult for the opponent passing.

Run vs. pass is a much more difficult chore than for most teams, which are typically star-centered teams, because with this team, you aren't trying to figure out so much whether run or pass, you are trying to figure which player your opponent is trying to target. Once you know this you can figure out what they want to do offensively, and you can key on it and shut it down. As a general rule of thumb (this certainly isn't unique to this team due to the skewed plays in this game), think sweep down low and short pass. As the game goes on and you make plays, you will have more specifics on what your opponent is going to think is important to stop. If at all possible try to get Byrd available, because he improves your pass defense by the boatload. If your opponent matches up a good receiver against your safeties, and he is a gambler, then think about helping out, but otherwise let your guys make the play, they aren't that bad.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, try to pressure BJ. He isn't going to make plays with his feet, and because you will often be a LB in order to try and shut down Butts, this will present you with some nice opportunities to try and free up your boys or to LB blitz. BJ is not going to have any real success throwing in the backpedal - this can be a very good way to get some INTs. However, you can't gamble too much, because if he has a checkdown who sets up quickly, you are going to overplay him since he has such good Pass Speed. When you go to cover, you are looking to get single coverages on all receivers (you don't have much to fear by in-coverage passes or jump balls), so leave your guys all alone and try to focus in on forcing BJ to get tackled or to make some risky throws which you have a decent chance of getting in there and forcing the incompletion or making a diving INT. Focus on stopping those pass

plays which spread the field short, because Tolliver lives on those passes since he can play chicken with you in a major way. Against the run, Butts is the key, keep tackling him and good things will happen. Watch out if an EXCELLENT Harmon or Derrick Walker lines up back there, they may be able to surprise you with their speed on short-yardage plays. Butts is a back you want to key on, but you must remember that if they want to run Butts 30 times a game, they will pay the price in short order, so make sure that BJ can't clean up the mess and keep Butts' knees intact by converting third down. Keep the heat on Butts but reject the BJ.

On offense, you cannot rely on your WR #1 and WR #2 positions getting open. If you've been subsisting on jump balls, you are going to be in for a rude awakening. Try to flow your offense in through your TE or your RBs, they aren't going to have much short coverage ability if their corners drop deep. If you must go deep, RCB Sam Seale is a much better side to go on than LCB Gill Byrd whom you must avoid, and know that their safeties aren't going to beat you by themselves. The man you put against Seale is your hands WR, because you don't have much of a chance of beating him with speed. What you want to do with Byrd is the problem, you might try making that a blocker position because you aren't going to want to throw that way.

Against their LBs, you are going to have issues in the running game. Know that their LBs are capable run stoppers and can blitz as well, so you had better try and get some big plays against them by running straight against them rather than around them. The temptation is there to kill Byrd, but you can't just leave ROLB O'Neal and LILB Plummer to devise against you behind the LOS; try to work your opponent into a pattern in which set players are used and then kill those players. One easy way to do it is to run a few passing plays at the beginning of each half and see which player is chosen on which down, and then come back at a particular player you hate with runs, and when you need a play, kill the player your opponent is resorting to. Try as much as possible to use the pass, because even though there are the corners to worry about, you want to get some room to run underneath and this team does have the ability to shut you down, plus it gets the MAN away from the LBs to the corners, which alleviates deep ball problems somewhat.

### Seattle Seahawks

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#### Points and Rankings

Category Rank

Subjective

Overall 27

Offense 27  
 Defense 27  
 Pass D 26  
 Rush D 27

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Dave Krieg	17	QB	25	69	13	13	25	69	69	69
Kelly Stouffer	11	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	38	38
John L. Williams	32	RB	44	69	25	38	50	69		
Derrick Fenner	44	RB	56	69	25	75	50	25		
James Jones	30	RB	38	69	38	31	50	25		
Chris Warren	42	RB	38	69	38	31	50	25		
Brian Blades	89	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Tommy Kane	81	WR	31	69	38	13	50	56		
Paul Skansi	82	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Jeff Chadwick	88	WR	31	69	38	13	50	44		
Ron Heller	85	TE	25	69	19	44	50	31		
Travis McNeal	86	TE	25	69	25	44	50	31		
Grant Feasel	54	C	25	69	31	56				
Edwin Bailey	65	G	25	69	38	44				
Brian [sic-Bryan] Millard	71	G	25	69	31	50				
Andy Heck	66	T	25	69	44	50				
Ron Mattes	70	T	25	69	25	56				
Norm Johnson	9	K	56	81	81	31	44	38		
Rick Donelly	3	P	25	56	44	31	44	63		
Tony Woods	57	DE	25	38	44	50	19	56		
Joe Nash	72	NT	25	31	38	44	19	31		
Jacob Green	79	DE	38	50	63	56	19	69		
Rufus Porter	97	LB	25	38	44	44	19	56		
Cortez Kennedy	96	LB	25	31	38	56	19	44		
David Wyman	92	LB	25	31	38	38	19	38		
Terry Wooden	51	LB	25	31	38	38	19	25		
Patrick Hunter	27	CB	25	31	38	38	38	44		
Dwayne Harper	29	CB	31	38	50	31	50	50		
Eugene Robinson	41	FS	25	31	38	38	50	38		
Nesby Glasgow	22	SS	31	38	50	56	25	56		

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. N.O. 7. Rai. 13. Den.
2. Jets 8. Pit. 14. K.C.
3. Den. 9. S.D. 15. S.F.
4. K.C. 10. BYE 16. Atl.
5. Ind. 11. S.D. 17. Rams

6. Cin. 12. Rai.

Seahawks' Base Offense

QB Dave Krieg

RB James Jones

Checkdown WR Jeff Chadwick

Deep Threat WR Tommy Kane

2nd Option WR Brian Blades

TE John L. Williams

Seahawks' Power Set

QB Dave Krieg/Kelly Stouffer (take your pick)

RB James Jones

FB Derrick Fenner

WR Tommy Kane

TE John L. Williams

TE Travis McNeal

The quarterback situation in Seattle might lead you to believe that this team has some talent. You are wrong. Look again, at Krieg's 25 Pass Speed and this team's slew of players with 38 MS (no higher), and you will quickly be disabused of the notion that this can be a .500 team. I haven't even talked about the "defense"...

QB Dave Krieg has great passing stats except for Pass Speed. This is a major problem because you have a much harder time throwing short than with normal quarterbacks. To alleviate this, go with the deep pass. For some reason, these receivers just seem to do well with the jump ball some games. Brian Blades is particularly notorious as being a jump-ball threat. There isn't that much ability here to force the ball in to the receivers because their REC ratings are pretty average. Establish the deep pass early in the game by letting it fly and make sure to mark the deep routes with the passing cursor before throwing. Then use that to get some QB runs with Krieg.

Other people want the short pass, so they want Stouffer to be the man. He can't throw the deep ball that well, so your emphasis then is speed. Only problem with this is that Stouffer is not a good QB and RBs Chris Warren and James Jones and Derrick Fenner (blocking back) are going to drop on a semi-regular basis. Pick your poison.

In either case, pick Tommy Kane and then your choice of Brian Blades or Jeff Chadwick as your primary WRs. I like to use all of them, and I put Chadwick in my backfield for his speed. Watch the conditions and also the performance of these players in the game, sometimes one of them will get hot and you can throw deep all day long. One other thing to mention is Paul Skansi, "The Polish Thunder". In the passing

game he seems to have abnormal strength at times, do not count him out just because he is slow. Also, keep your feet alive in the pocket, particularly if you are using Krieg and the deep pass, because you simply have no hope of staying alive if you just sit there and let your interior collapse.

Early in a game (as in, the first snap), you are going to have to come to grips with the fact that you have no running game unless you have someone in GOOD or EXCELLENT who also happens to be a key player for you. James Jones, Chris Warren, Tommy Kane, and Jeff Chadwick are your options in the running game, choose whichever of the eligible runners is fastest. Try to avoid Chris Warren if possible since he plays in the return as well, but if he's fast use him. I would seriously discourage you from using a power set with this team because you still aren't going to go anywhere, but Derrick Fenner is a beast and can be used to blow up selected defenders. Note also that Travis McNeal is better than the starter TE Ron Heller so don't be fooled by the foolishness of the game. :) In a pinch John L. can also be used to pound out some yards. In any event, just settle for 4 yards, you aren't going to get big plays with this offense, especially with the fact that even if you have a 50 MS back due to one of your fast guys being in EXCELLENT, you still have to deal with this offensive line and the strength of this team being in the deep pass. It's more important to focus on getting short third downs and moving the chains so that the QB can run for first downs when the receivers stretch the field (however slowly they may do so) than it is to make big plays with James Jones.

In the returning game Chris Warren and Paul Skansi have some skills, both on kickoffs, and Warren for sure on punts. Don't rely on anything from the kicking games or the coverage teams, they just reek.

Your defense has a name: Jacob Green (LE). Learn to love him and learn to stop every play with him and learn to play possessed because he's all you have on a consistent basis. SS Nesby Glasgow may be available sometimes as well, but he is a pure run stopper and nowhere near as fast in coverage so you don't want to OD on him. Likewise for LCB Dwayne Harper, he may be something but he is in the line of fire even more than Green when the sweep down low comes out strong. Watch for FS Eugene Robinson, if he goes into EXCELLENT he can be of assistance in a big way. The rest are not worth mentioning, they're just eating, sleeping, and diddling on company time.

One thing you must learn with this team is how to stop plays with generic personnel like ROLB Rufus Porter and Eugene Robinson. If you can't do some measure of run stopping with tactics, then you are done for sure. The first key to defending here is to contain the run. Once

you have contained the run, try and work the pass some, and try to seek big plays in the run defense so that you can get them into an obvious passing down where you can actually do something. Use your A button to throw the blockers that come at you instead of trying to dance, if you can develop a good sense of when to avoid and when to struggle you can really help the contain. Playcalling is essential here, and if you don't call at least 5 of their plays a game, you will lose. Big plays and contain are the keys with a defense with this little power to change events. Make sure to keep up on those conditions and seek to go to the LBs or the DBs if the numbers add up. One thing you might also try is to bait the offense into running at one of your guys, typically Green, then exploit that tendency by calling the sweep going at Green.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, don't let Krieg aim and fire. Key in on the pass and call their plays, and also free up your boys (LG especially), and go out and cover.

If he's out there and he's in BAD, you can also work the LB blitz, but you don't want to feature that since you can get some major turnovers if you can force him to make terrible throws under pressure. Moreover, he is a known jump-ball quarterback and he can kill you deep even in coverage. Make him throw into your DBs where they can sit on the X on an overthrown or underthrown ball and pick it off. You can also force a lot of incompletions short, even with a LB, so you don't want to gamble \*too\* much against Krieg. Sacks are nice but you don't want to give him opportunities to show off his arm, so don't force it on the blitz. Also, since you want to shut down the run using tactics, you don't want to be selling out with the nose tackle with any regularity.

If you can't shut down this run with a good defender you need some serious practice. I am not going to insult you by giving you tips about run defense here, this is Defense 101.

Offensively, just feature your offense's strength. Throw against RCB Patrick Hunter, sweep down low, that's the rubric here. They want big plays, so be conservative and just move the ball. Focus on not being predictable, because you will let them back in the game that way. Jacob Green will often be the MAN's choice, so make sure not to use plays that he can easily stop.

Washington Redskins

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## Points and Rankings

Category Rank

Subjective

Overall 11

Offense 13

Defense 12

Pass D 10

Rush D 18

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Mark Rypien	11	QB	25	69	6	13	38	44	44	38
Stan Humphries	16	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Earnest Byner	21	RB	38	69	50	25	81	38		
Ricky Sanders	83	WR	44	69	56	13	81	56		
Gerald Riggs	37	RB	44	69	31	81	81	19		
Kelvin Bryant	24	RB	38	69	44	19	81	38		
Art Monk	81	WR	38	69	44	38	81	63		
Gary Clark	84	WR	38	69	50	13	81	75		
Brian Mitchell	30	RB	38	69	38	31	81	25		
Joe Howard	80	WR	25	69	25	13	81	44		
Don Warren	85	TE	25	69	19	38	81	31		
Jimmie Johnson	88	TE	25	69	25	38	81	31		
Jeff Bostic	53	C	25	69	38	69				
Russ Grimm	68	G	25	69	38	56				
Raleigh McKenzie	63	G	25	69	38	56				
Jim Lachey	79	T	25	69	31	69				
Ed Simmons	76	T	25	69	25	63				
Chip Lohmiller	8	K	56	81	81	31	50	81		
Kelly Goodburn	2	P	25	56	44	31	25	50		
Markus Koch	74	DE	25	38	44	44	19	38		
Darryl Grant	77	NT	25	31	38	50	19	44		
Charles Mann	71	DE	31	44	50	56	19	63		
Wilber Marshall	58	LB	25	31	38	50	31	50		
Greg Manusky	91	LB	25	31	38	44	19	31		
Tracy Rucker	99	LB	25	31	38	50	19	44		
Andre Collins	55	LB	25	38	44	38	19	50		
Darrell Green	28	CB	44	56	75	44	44	31		
Martin Mayhew	35	CB	38	50	63	31	69	38		
Todd Bowles	23	FS	25	31	44	44	50	31		
Alvin Walton	40	SS	25	31	44	31	44	31		

## Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Det. 7. Cle. 13. Dal.

2. Dal. 8. BYE 14. Rams

3. Phx. 9. Gia. 15. Phx.

4. Cin. 10. Hou. 16. Gia.  
5. Phi. 11. Atl. 17. Phi.  
6. Chi. 12. Pit.

#### Washington's Base Offense

QB Stan Humphries  
Scatback Earnest Byner  
WR Ricky Sanders  
Deep Threat Gary Clark  
Physical WR Art Monk  
TE Brian Mitchell

#### Washington's Power Set

QB Stan Humphries  
RB Earnest Byner  
FB Gerald Riggs  
WR Gary Clark  
WR Art Monk  
TE Brian Mitchell

#### Washington's Open Set

QB Stan Humphries  
RB Earnest Byner  
WR Ricky Sanders  
WR Gary Clark  
WR Art Monk  
Pass-Catching Back Kelvin Bryant

In my view, the Redskins are pretty much underrated. The QB situation is the cause of this, but make no mistake: this team can kill you if they have juiced players and your opponent knows how to conceal their weaknesses. Solid play down after down is the key to beating this team because they have some weapons on both offense and defense that can make you pay for gambling.

On offense, many people don't know this, but Mark Rypien is a 6 MS QB. Sure, he won the Super Bowl this year. Ride the pine Hermes!!! Really, you aren't giving up much if anything, and in my view, Stan's greater Pass Speed and Maximum Speed give you a much better use of your weapons and much less vulnerability to the sack. I would not risk Humphries too much, because you do not want to be trying to go up against a nose tackle dive or star OLB blitz with a QB as poorly rated as Rypien, but don't play scared with Humphries, you aren't giving up that much by going to Rypien. And of course, with two QBs this poor, check the conditions fairly often.

That's where the pain ends with this offense, thankfully. This is one of those cracked-up teams, where everybody has insane Ball Control, and you have to stay in bounds to make the most out of your team, because the depth is great here as well. Ricky Sanders is not a blocker, but he can definitely get it on underneath against LBs, and Gary Clark is one of the top receivers in the NFC, a 50 MS-75 REC guy. Art Monk is probably your best all-around player though; he's not that fast but he can catch and get jump balls, and he is by far the best WR at blocking in this game with 38 HP - not a Jamie Mueller or Brad Muster number, but you can definitely make life difficult for your opponent by getting him out there in the running game. Plus, he is just as good of a deep target as Gary Clark because he can power through the DBs if he makes a catch. You cannot let this crew go unused by trying to protect them; this receiver corps was made for big plays at key times and you don't want to be relying on Humphries or your running game too much. As far as your reserve options are concerned, your RBs are your best deal for getting passes: Byner if he goes into BAD is not a total atrocity, and you can also use Kelvin Bryant and Brian Mitchell to catch passes, but you will have some drops with those guys. I wouldn't rely on Don Howard or your TEs, they are really slow. Gerald Riggs vs. Brian Mitchell, it's a toss-up, but Mitchell is the better pure pass-catcher. However, you don't want to forget about Riggs, especially for his run-blocking ability.

Pass protection-wise, you are set. If you want to hide in the pocket and not be fooling around rolling out, you can do that with this team. Such is an especially good idea with Rypien, who can't get anything going in the running game outside of EXCELLENT. That way, you stay closer to your short receivers and force the defense to come back for Ricky Sanders and Earnest Byner, at which point you let it fly for Clark or Monk. They're not invincible, but the Hogs are pretty close...as Paul says, "Every time I see the Redskins' offense, I look at Rypien and think of what could have been." Add Humphries to that list.

In the running game, the Redskins are not feared for their speed but rather their power in their blocking - you can't bowl over a lot of guys on this team. This offensive line of theirs was feared for many years because of great talent and coaching, and they are one of the absolute best in Tecmo. You've just got to get in there and pound away at it. To compound that, you have Art Monk whom even LT has a hard time throwing, and you have the devastating blocker Gerald Riggs whom you must match up against the team's weakest defender, or even get in behind him on the power dive, because this guy will leave the defense seeing stars after a few runs up the gut. The key here is not to rely on the inside running game too much, because you will get behind the chains quickly if your opponent is keying on your run, especially in a game like Tecmo with the called plays. Fortunately, Byner can take the corner with the blocking he gets from his friends. Your options at

backup RB are pretty good: between Bryant, Riggs, and Mitchell someone has to be feeling good, and if it's legal, you can use Sanders or Clark there for speed. This isn't a terrifying running game, but you can get some yards if you know what you are doing. Also remember, you aren't going to fumble much with this team, so fight for every yard and keep pounding on the A button to work your way out from the middle into the open field. I have to say I love Gerald Riggs on the field at all times, but he can be a liability in the passing game depending on how your other players are feeling.

On special teams, I don't think the Redskins are that great, their kick and punt return teams are sort of an enigma - they have great blockers but don't get too much out of their returners despite this. Brian Mitchell may be the greatest KR ever but he isn't very good in this game at all. Kelvin Bryant, Gerald Riggs, maybe even Don Warren! Kind of your pick here. If you are a skin-of-your-teeth guy, Gary Clark might be able to break something. Chip Lohmiller isn't too bad though, great Avoid Kick Block here. However, I wouldn't want to be giving the ball to this shmuck of a punter if I were backed up deep - fortunately punters are almost meaningless in this game. I wouldn't pick this team if you want to block things, they don't have the speed for that. Thankfully their coverage teams do have some ability - Darrell Green can make life painful if he gets up there in condition.

The defense here is solid in the power but not in the hands. The line is pretty average with LE Charles Mann being a guy who can rush the passer. Their LBs have a little power but lack in everything else, especially LOLB Andre Collins who has to hold up the sweep down low. ROLB Wilber Marshall has 31 Interceptions, but he is a pass rusher and he is way too slow for a MAN to use, so that much is a wash. The safeties aren't horrid, but you can't leave them alone against top receivers or try to stop great running backs with them too often, as they are decent, but nothing more.

What makes this unit capable of getting big stops and turnovers is the play of their two excellent corners RCB Darrell Green and LCB Martin Mayhew. Green is a pure burner and you can't expect to pick off too many balls with him. Mayhew, on the other hand, is a much better pass-coverage player. Using Green on running downs and Mayhew on passing downs is kind of the prototypical strategy with the Redskins. However, you must use your speed to stop the run, because neither of these guys will blow apart an offense. Harassing the opposing running back and forcing him into your guys is the key here. If you have a great A button you can start to dominate against the run, but usually a player has to be more cautious about giving up the big play with this team. Remember to use Wilber Marshall when you've called a pass play, as you can get some key stops because their corners can hold it up on the outside. This team's run

defense is a lot different from other star-driven teams in that you can't really fight off their guys and then pound the runner; you have to make a sure cut through their blocking team, and you are vulnerable to the sweeps in a big way, so discretion is the better part of valor with this defense. Make them go bust in the passing game instead of trying to completely shut down the run.

Playcallingwise, try to pinpoint which of your corners your opponent hates more and wants to neutralize and use the other, while punishing him when possible, but never allowing big plays in the passing game. These corners have to hold it down or you are going to get taken to the trash. Know that if you are a great run-stopper, your opponent will try and take out Green, while if you try and defend the pass, Mayhew will get the bulls-eye. That can hold you for a drive or two at least.

#### AGAINST:

If Rypien is out there, blitz the Hades out of him. Nose tackle dive, whatever it takes, bring him down. Using the nose tackle is often a good idea with this team, because they want to use the power dive with Byner behind one of their relatively powerful backups. Watch out for Riggs, he can make life painful for you if you go flying into him. With Humphries, you can't be as aggressive trying to sack the guy, because he can make some moves in the backfield and let his line come back into you. However, powerful run defense up front is the key to beating this team: they aren't that fast in the running game and you can shut them down if you play it smart and don't let them bust ones out of the middle.

In the passing game, you want to apply pressure, because if these WRs get down the field, the QB can sometimes get the jumper. However, you can cover the receivers as well, I have had pretty good success just coming straight for the receivers and the QB is just not going to get the job done. The key is not to let them chip away at you too much with their WRs short, as they can get down the field in 7 plays with their great underneath speed if you don't pay them any mind. Try to sneak in as many pass plays as possible and know that Byner is not a top back, he has his limits and the pass is more important than holding him to nothing.

Offensively, relying on the pass is a mistake. You must establish the run early and make them guess as to which corner (or LB) to use, then when they guess wrong, you must capitalize on it with a big play. They can shut you down on 75% of your snaps, but on that other 25% you can completely tear apart their otherwise untalented defense by abusing the drones. Using your fastest player is the key, because unless you can throw the MAN quickly, they can trap you with speed before you can get some room to run. Effective use of your blockers is vital

because none of these guys, when controlled by a MAN, can stand up to you and the blocker smashing into your struggle. DO NOT throw it on LCB Mayhew's side; RCB Green is not that talented of a pass defender in this game, but Mayhew can and will make you pay on a regular basis - he is their one big turnover threat and you cannot let him beat you. When you have lots of coverage on the field though, don't try and play games with those corners short, throw it deep against their safeties. Even Green, with his 75 MS, can make your day very very long even if you catch the MAN cheating up on you. Don't take stupid risks against their corners; put points on the board and force their offense to put it in the end zone to beat you.

### New York Giants

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	1
Offense	3
Defense	2
Pass D	T-3
Rush D	2

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Phil Simms	11	QB	25	69	13	13	50	63	63	81
Jeff Hostetler	15	QB	25	69	25	13	38	31	38	19
Ottis Anderson	24	RB	56	69	50	88	75	31		
David Meggett	30	RB	38	69	56	19	75	50		
Maurice Carthon	44	RB	44	69	25	44	50	25		
Rodney Hampton	27	RB	38	69	31	38	63	38		
Mark Ingram	82	WR	44	69	56	13	63	50		
Stephen Baker	85	WR	44	69	56	13	69	56		
Stacey Robinson	81	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Odessa Turner	83	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Mark Bavaro	89	TE	25	69	31	69	69	44		
Howard Cross	87	TE	25	69	19	56	56	31		
Bart Oates	65	C	25	69	38	50				
William Roberts	66	G	25	69	31	56				
Eric Moore	60	G	25	69	31	63				
John Elliott	76	T	25	69	25	75				
Doug Riesenber	72	T	25	69	31	50				
Matt Bahr	9	K	56	81	81	31	44	63		
Sean Landeta	5	P	25	56	44	31	81	81		
Leonard Marshall	70	DE	25	31	38	56	19	56		

Erik Howard	74	NT	25	31	38	50	19	50
Eric Dorsey	77	DE	25	31	38	50	19	44
Lawrence Taylor	56	LB	44	56	69	75	31	81
Pepper Johnson	52	LB	38	44	56	69	31	69
Gary Reasons	55	LB	25	38	44	38	63	44
Carl Banks	58	LB	38	44	50	63	19	56
Everson Walls	28	CB	38	44	56	31	63	44
Mark Collins	25	CB	31	44	56	50	44	63
Myron Guyton	29	FS	31	38	50	56	44	56
Greg Jackson	47	SS	31	38	50	56	56	56

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.  
 1. S.F. 7. Pit. 13. T.B.  
 2. Rams 8. BYE 14. Cin.  
 3. Chi. 9. Was. 15. Phi.  
 4. Cle. 10. Phi. 16. Was.  
 5. Dal. 11. Phx. 17. Hou.  
 6. Phx. 12. Dal.

### The Giants' Base Offense

QB Phil Simms  
 Power Back Ottis Anderson  
 Speed Back David Meggett  
 WR Stephen Baker  
 WR Mark Ingram  
 TE Mark Bavaro

The New York football Giants won Super Bowl XXV over the Buffalo Bills 20-19, after Scott Norwood's game-winning kick sailed wide right, and, as befits all champions, were rewarded for their tremendous year with a bounty in video game ratings. Some might say the Hall of Fame is the greatest individual honor a player can receive, but how can that compare with being immortalized in the greatest football game of this era, Tecmo Super Bowl? This team gets some serious juice, and the most interesting part of this story is that some believe this team is actually snubbed (Mark Bavaro). Versatile and powerful offense, great special teams, and a lights-out defense make this team the best in Tecmo Super Bowl.

QB Phil Simms is who gets it done here. He doesn't have great receivers so he can't generally force the ball in coverage, but he has been known to throw some nice jumpers, and he certainly has the skills to deliver the ball to his targets. You want to protect Simms some because you really don't have anything meaningful in Hostetler (ironically, he was

the one playing in Super Bowl XXV after all); this team's offense can really bog down with Hostetler taking the snaps. This passing game is about speed - every player on this starting squad with the exception of Bavaro has 50 MS or better, so you don't want to ever think twice about dumping it off because your checkdowns can move the ball good, never mind what happens when you do some sideline games with Simms. Stephen Baker is the key TD threat here, but Mark Ingram and Dave Meggett are nipping at his heels, all of them with 56 MS. When you have to, check it to Ottis, but he does drop on occasion, so don't run your passing game through him. Bavaro is a guy you can throw to when you just need the reception and not any yards after the catch. Backupwise, really Rodney Hampton is your best option if one of your guys goes down, and he can get the ball, but he is not going to get you a big play with any regularity. The rest are terrible, just go with the one in the best condition and REC if you need the passing that badly. All these guys have pretty decent Ball Control and the depth here is good enough because the starters are all so good, so when you get the ball, go for the extra yard.

I must mention this offensive line. They aren't the overall best in the game, but they have two great guys, Eric Moore at RG and John "Jumbo" Elliot at LT, who will often end up taking the defense's best pass rusher, being that they are usually either at LE or ROLB. You can definitely hang in there in the pocket with this team and work the manual QB sneak through the OL.

The Giants have one of the deepest running games in Tecmo, rivaling the Raiders and Bears even, and if you use WR at RB you have a limitless supply of runners. Power back Ottis Anderson is not all that good normally, but if he moves up into EXCELLENT he is even better than Christian Okoye in EXCELLENT. His power is what makes him a viable back. David Meggett, however, can catch and has pretty good speed, so you can't ignore him either. Either of the WRs at RB are just as fast as David. If you have lead blocking sets in your playbook, Ottis must be lead blocking in those because he can make life very painful for the other team. You may want to ease up the load on Meggett if you make him your returner, as Meggett can go down three times a year easily if you just pound him into the turf. However, when you do go to him, just pound it out with him, because every runner candidate on this team has great Ball Control and you don't have to worry that much about getting injured.

If one of your guys goes down, feature the other and put in Rodney Hampton as a fullback to block and get short passes. If you lose another RB, well you're in trouble. Howard "Iron" Cross - if you want to feature one back, he's a pretty good lead blocker who never sees the field normally because of the talented starters on this team. He won't go to the Pro Bowl because he has no speed, but if

you want someone to open it up behind this great blocking offensive line, then by all means set him up and let him blow back the D. Otherwise, if you only play RB at RB, your only option is Carthon, which isn't much of an option at all.

Also, one of the reasons you have Bavaro in there is because he can block. Get him into your fiercest blocking position and let him rip. In addition, make sure to set Ottis out at TE if you go with two fast backs (be it because Ottis goes down to BAD or Baker goes into EXCELLENT), because 88 HP is a terrible thing to waste.

On special teams, the Giants are really good on the return with David Meggett in there. You can go with Rodney Hampton but it won't be quite as good. However, Hampton is a pretty decent returner in his own right, just not anything superspecial in the speed or agility department. Kind of your pick whom you would want returning if you want to preserve Meggett. If both those guys are not an option, Carthon is the next best thing. These guys work since their return teams' blocking is pretty good. On coverage teams, the Giants aren't the best but they can get it done. Matt Bahr is not a great kicker, but Sean Landeta, you don't want to get too risky with this team, because he can move the other team back to their 20 from almost anywhere on the field. Remember, if you are going to use his great punting ability, hold up until the punt rush begins to get the upper hand, then you will have more guys to run 80 yards down the field, or, if you aren't going to win any matchups on the line, free up some boys with Landeta, this way you won't end up totally outkicking your coverage and giving the return man a ton of yards. On field goals...LT is the man. On XPs...LT is the man. Just come flying at them and you will make their lives miserable in a hurry.

Defensively, the Giants are a top unit - they've got skill at every position but on the defensive line; RE Leonard Marshall and the rest won't get blown up often at all on running plays, but don't think that they will get into the backfield often because that's not happening either. A merely sufficient line, but it is more than made up for by the back eight.

ROLB Lawrence Taylor was the NFL MVP in 1986...he isn't so far from it in this game. Not only is he one of the absolute best pure run-stoppers in this game, he plays possessed on top of that. He can cover and catch (31 Interceptions). I don't think he plays quite up to his reputation, but LT can be absolutely dominating nonetheless. Same with RILB Pepper Johnson, though to a lesser extent in the run-stopping. Carl Banks is a pure LOLB so just let him rush the passer, but sometimes he can be possessed himself. LILB Gary Reasons now, this guy is weird. He isn't fast or strong...

but 63 Interceptions never hurt anybody. Sometimes it's really tough to tell what to do with Reasons; if he is not in EXCELLENT or GOOD where he can get some more speed to be able to go anywhere in coverage, you probably don't want to use him. The reason (sorry) for this is simple: this guy picks off anything you throw over his head. You can have a wide-open TE in the middle of the field, the pass is thrown...Reasons jumps and picks it off, or tips it away. You can make pocket quarterbacks move out of the pocket if you let Reasons stay over the middle of the line, so don't be too anxious to use him. However, if he's feeling good and you know it's most likely a pass, then don't be afraid to bring him out in coverage to make plays. The caveat here is not to overestimate his skills, because if LT or Johnson is in EXCELLENT they are just as good in pass coverage because of their speed + their catching ability. All in all, this LB corps is clearly the best in the game and (unfortunately!) a match for many of the defensive secondaries out there.

The DBs are not anywhere near as good as the LBs, but there is definitely some talent here. RCB Everson Walls is the key here, it's a good thing their best pass-coverage player is up on top to cover the team's #1 WR. FS Myron Guyton isn't a good pass-coverage player, but he can stop the run to a certain extent. It's the reverse on the bottom of the field: SS Greg Jackson is the pass man while LCB Mark Collins is a better run-defender, ratings-wise though not position-wise. Everyone here though has some speed and, with the notable exception of Walls (31 HP!), they can all grapple with the opposition, but can't blow them up. When going for INTs, your best option is Walls, but Jackson also has some skills, and don't be afraid to use Guyton if you need some FS run-stopping ability. Collins is kind of the odd man out here, but that's the way it is when you have a great defense like the Giants'.

If you want to talk about great problems to have, talk about what the strategy with this powerful D is. Really, I think you have to try and totally shut down the opposing offense - there is too much talent in the back eight to settle for anything less. Don't ever use the linemen unless there is a very specific tactic you want to use that you know will have a pretty good chance of working: prefer the linebackers in almost all situations because they can cover the pass so much better. When using your LBs, look for the guy who can stop the runs out of the formation the best. What the key is here is to get as many guys into coverage as possible so you can shut down the pass, so you want to maximize the number of pass plays you call by taking out the run with these LBs. If there is a team that can stop the run with the linebackers, this is it. When you have a pretty even choice between guys, try to go for Johnson in preference to LT if you can spare it, because

against the pass, LT is fearsome even against good tackles; there are about 4, maybe 8 left tackles in this game who can stop LT with consistency. Of course, if the game is on the line, go to Taylor and let him make plays. If you need to make a sure stop and you are not confident in your LB play, don't forget about your safeties, as they are decent enough to make a stop on a long third down. If you are covering short against the goal-line pass, Everson Walls is the best because of his tipping ability if you know it's coming, but Gary Reasons is a player you want to use if he's fast, plus he's going to have an easier time with the run and you usually aren't getting tipped on the play early. Against the obvious long pass, use Reasons unless Johnson is clearly better. Always remember with LT: play possessed, blow up as many of their guys on the run as you can on your way to the RB.

#### AGAINST:

When you go to defense, know that the passing game is most fearsome because it stretches the field so well; you can cover their guys if need be, so don't go freaking out about getting 4 guys over down in the defensive backfield. Mind you, it's not a sure process, but nothing is guaranteed against a team with this many weapons.

Ottis can kill you, so don't look at his 50 MS and think he's going to be stoppable, because if the MAN has a great A button you can get a ton of guys tossed, both you and the drones. Against Dave Meggett, though, you want to engage him early in the play instead of trying to get your boys to help out, because he doesn't have great physical strength. Try to work for stops as much as possible, as this isn't a team that fumbles with any regularity (though they can cough it up from time to time), so just making them go 15 plays won't be enough, because if the MAN can execute and be effective running both with his set plays and with Simms - you can just get driven down the field. Plus, you don't have too much of an opportunity to work for the INT against Simms. Try to work against their backs when you think they can get some yards running, but otherwise try and keep Simms from doing too much in the passing game. Their two-back system isn't that good so don't make a mountain out of a large hill by letting 4 guys come open on 3rd and 7 and having Simms run for the first down (that has happened to me too often). Know that they can and will look for the short pass against single coverage deep, trying to get the ball to Meggett or OJ Anderson, so don't overdo it deep. If they are getting into a rhythm going down the field, try and find their key play that they are using, and call it on third down to stop them; this team can be predictable sometimes in their rhythm, because the tendency here is to be pretty conservative and use Simms to make

sure plays instead of laying it all down. You can keep them from making it across with patience and most importantly, the ability to not let them do one thing over and over again to you - that's what opens up their offense which has no one great overwhelming strength.

On offense, LT is a wild beast and sometimes you are going to have a very tough time getting to him even when you run straight at him, because he can just slither out of your way, and then, when you try and get some yards having swung wide, their DBs come up to tie you up or hold you up, and LT comes back around to you and takes you down. One thing that you cannot do, however, is try to avoid him with the sweep down low because he is so fast; in most situations he will just run your back down in the backfield or just take a hard angle to the line and come up facing you two yards deep. Plus he is going to smash some of your blockers, so try and use power personnel to apply against him late in your running plays, that way he can't get a free line to you. The key against this incredible LB corps is to keep blockers close to you early in the play to protect you, if they can take you on one-on-one you are going to be totally stuffed. Keep close to your guys and make them hold off long enough to be able to get some yards. Be aware that there may be no running game there if you have 50 MS backs or worse, and you may have to just air it out. If you can try and pass early, you may be able to get the MAN to start using LILB Reasons, and then you can come with your run against a much weaker MAN opponent. When you go the pass, throw against their most isolated defender deep, except if it's RCB Everson Walls. These guys aren't going to kill you with jumping INTs, but they can stop you if you start getting greedy with the deep ball. Try and reserve it for when you have the credible threat of the run; you don't want to just give this team any easy turnovers to get them going. Your best WR should be on the bottom of the field to try and avoid the pass coverage of Walls, because Walls can put a blanket on your guy. Make sure you are running your QB close to the sidelines, that way he can't be tackled for injury or fumbles. If you can do that, you can start to draw off the short coverage of their LBs, and you will avoid Reasons up in the middle of the line taking shots at your passes. Make sure to send out two deep receivers to get some good jump-ball matchups, but keep some short ones as well, so you don't risk too much against the speed of LT. You can't really throw into coverage too well against this team because even their LBs can intercept. As much as possible, avoid taking risks and work with your strengths in order to beat this all-around solid pass-coverage team. As much as possible, run to hold down the coverage to a reasonable level, and hang on to the ball to try and win it by getting a guy open deep late in the game. If you give this superior team a lot of shots they are going

to find a way to get it done.

## Philadelphia Eagles

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### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	7
Offense	6
Defense	18
Pass D	21
Rush D	16

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
QB Eagles [Randall]										
Cunningham]	0	QB	25	69	56	13	63	69	63	63
Jim McMahon	9	QB	25	69	6	13	38	38	38	38
Keith Byars	41	RB	38	69	31	38	50	69		
Heath Sherman	23	RB	38	69	38	38	31	31		
Anthony Toney	25	RB	38	69	31	38	50	25		
Robert Drummond	36	RB	38	69	38	31	50	25		
Fred Barnett	86	WR	31	69	38	13	50	56		
Calvin Williams	89	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Mike Quick	82	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Kenny Jackson	85	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Keith Jackson	88	TE	25	69	50	63	50	63		
Harper Le Bel	87	TE	25	69	19	50	50	25		
David Alexander	72	C	25	69	31	38				
Mike Schad	79	G	25	69	19	50				
Ron Solt	66	G	25	69	19	38				
Ron Heller	73	T	25	69	25	50				
R.Singletary	68	T	25	69	25	50				
Roger Ruzek	7	K	56	81	81	31	50	25		
Jeff Feagles	5	P	25	56	44	31	50	31		
Clyde Simmons	96	DE	31	44	50	50	19	69		
Mike Golic	90	NT	25	31	38	50	31	44		
Reggie White	92	DE	38	50	56	69	31	75		
Jessie Small	52	LB	25	31	38	44	19	44		
Jerome Brown	99	LB	38	50	56	69	19	63		
Byron Evans	56	LB	25	31	38	44	31	44		
Seth Joyner	59	LB	31	44	50	63	31	75		
Eric Allen	21	CB	38	50	44	50	50	69		
Ben Smith	26	CB	38	50	38	31	50	63		
Wes Hopkins	48	FS	25	31	19	50	56	31		

Andre Waters 20 SS 25 31 19 31 25 19

Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

- 1. G.B. 7. N.O. 13. Phx.
- 2. Phx. 8. BYE 14. Hou.
- 3. Dal. 9. S.F. 15. Gia.
- 4. Pit. 10. Gia. 16. Dal.
- 5. Was. 11. Cle. 17. Was.
- 6. T.B. 12. Cin.

Eagles' Base Offense

- All-Pro QB Eagles
- Featured Back Keith Jackson
- Blocking Back Robert Drummond
- WR Fred Barnett
- Physical WR Keith Byars
- TE Anthony Toney

Eagles' Hands Set

- All-Pro QB Eagles
- Featured Back Keith Jackson
- WR Calvin Williams
- WR Fred Barnett
- Physical WR Keith Byars
- WR Mike Quick

Eagles' Power Set

- All-Pro QB Eagles
- Featured Back Keith Jackson
- Blocking Back Robert Drummond
- WR Keith Byars
- TE Anthony Toney
- TE Harper Le Bel

The Eagles...so close and yet so far. This team has the best player in this game and the worst. They've got All-Pros and All-Waterboys. The talent on this team is just not enough to make it to the Super Bowl, but they can get to the playoffs for sure, even in this tough division.

QB Eagles.....

THIS GUY RULES

You have to protect him by running him out of bounds, because he is basically the Eagles' offense - but mother, if you can't get 100 yards

using the one-two punch of QB Eagles and Keith Jackson (provided you can use Jackson as a ballcarrier on a running play), you have no hope of winning. QB Eagles is a master of the game but his receivers aren't. (Though in my experience, he has a very disturbing trend of choking and hurting his team when the defense starts to close up on him.)

His best WR (besides Keith Jackson) is his RB Keith Byars who, despite being physical with amazingly soft hands, is slow as molasses, and it doesn't get any better as you go down the lineup. Fred Barnett is fast enough and talented enough to start, but otherwise, this is slim pickings. You can either try to max out the speed and blocking with Robert Drummond and Anthony Toney, or try and keep from dropping with Calvin Williams and Mike Quick; either way, no one is going to stretch the field for this team. That is a major weakness. Another major weakness for this team is Heath Sherman - NEVER use him, as he will fumble, and you cannot have turnovers like that when Eagles is one of the best run threats in this game.

#### I WILL SAY IT AGAIN

If QB Eagles gets hurt, this team dies. Moreover, he will fumble, so don't get tackled in bounds for the love of Robert Smith! Jim McMahon is not a geezer you want taking the snaps. Plus, don't get caught behind the line of scrimmage, because your offensive line will dissolve against a good defense. Roll out early and roll out almost always. Taking sacks is not something you can do with this offense, as QB Eagles has to make things happen on almost every down to put the ball in the end zone.

In the running game the Eagles have two options: QB Eagles and Keith Jackson. If you can only give the ball to a RB, forget running with anyone other than QB Eagles and make Keith Jackson your go-to WR. Now, there isn't much to say about QB Eagles' signature sweep, but it is a play one must use and mention because he is one of the few players who can run it well. Shotgun Sweep L is a play that you have to read the blockers on; if there are a ton of LBs moving up at the front line up top, cut it back inside and try to get some yards there, but otherwise, make your opponent confront you in a mess of your blockers, and as always with a player as valuable as QB Eagles, run out of bounds if things start getting hairy.

Now for Keith Jackson. You have to protect him as he is your only real running threat (except if someone else with 38 MS goes into EXCELLENT). However, you have a lot of power, so if the MAN comes down to confront you, you can take him on (if you're all alone) to try and make some big plays. Obviously you don't want to run too much, but you can get some yards if you keep returning to the run and not making QB Eagles do everything. Teams will always call the pass to stop QB Eagles, so you can sneak things in there with some regularity. Try to work outside plays with blockers because your offensive line is terrible and you don't want to be running any offense through them.

Special teams...bleh. Nothing much here, returner by committee, no real talent from your kicker and punter. Kick coverage isn't that bad though.

Defensively, the Eagles have a pretty decent front seven but their back four is just...ick. This line of theirs is anchored by LE Reggie White - he will make the opponent smash the controller. Otherwise they aren't great up front, though do note White's and NT Mike Golic's 31 Interceptions. Their LBs are OK at least, RILB Jerome Brown is the best of them at run-stopping but LOLB Seth Joyner is better in pass coverage because of his 31 Interceptions. Overall, this front seven has some stars that can dominate you. You probably want to use Seth Joyner as the pass defender and let White blow up his man in the pass rush. If you're thinking run, go with Jerome Brown because he's at RILB and he has some pretty nice ratings.

You will spend most of your time defensively trying to cover for three of your DBs, though. RCB Eric Allen is close enough to good to hold up his own most of the time, but it really fades from there. LCB Ben Smith is slower and weaker than Allen, and while FS Wes Hopkins has 56 Interceptions, he is pitifully slow, which makes him close to useless. However, the crown turd in this defense is yet another player Tecmo screwed over, SS Andre Waters. A big (dirty) hitter in real life, Waters is incredibly weak in this game. It's hard to imagine how a player could possibly be rated this poorly and still be considered NFL-worthy. One wonders what the programmers were smoking when they put him down. Really, the bottom part of this secondary is so terrible, you really shouldn't bother too much about calling passes because you will still get burned a lot of the time, especially if Andre Waters gets matched up against a good WR.

The key with this defense is to totally shut down the opponent's run and then just try and do what you can against their passing offense. If you can make them drop back a lot, Reggie White will get in there and make plays, and also you have a better chance of your opponent screwing up and throwing it to Wes Hopkins or something similar. Really, you must get your opponent to try and screw up in the passing game in order for you to win, because they will bring it on a lot of downs against Waters and you just can't deal with that + 100 yards rushing. You can do something about the run, so make sure they can't beat you keeping it on the ground, and once you get them throwing it all over the place in a drive, then you can start calling passes and getting stops and coverage sacks and these things. They will score, but you have some offense while QB Eagles is still upright, so you can definitely pull out some wins with this team.

AGAINST:

Defensively, your first, second, and third priorities are stopping QB Eagles. Eagles' run is the most devastating of his weapons because it gives him a lot of flexibility about what he tries to do with his slow WRs. If he can run it 15 times a game, he is going to get a lot more shots at throwing it deep when guys come open. You definitely want to stop his signature sweep by finding a pass play that works well against it, covering many of their receivers in the process, then you can force him into making some throws he doesn't want to make, and since this team can't beat you throwing into coverage, you can really stifle this offense. The wildcard here is their set running game. If they can use Keith Jackson or if they get Drummond or Barnett in EXCELLENT, they might be able to make some plays with those guys. Now and then, when Heath Sherman goes into EXCELLENT, you will see him out there sometimes; tackle him in bounds if he gets the ball. You have to really temper your desire to stop the set run because Eagles will beat you. If they want to keep Eagles in the stable and try to run Keith Jackson or Robert Drummond, don't freak out about them. If you don't allow Jackson to be the runner, you will see him out on deep routes and that's where all the desperation passes will go - don't let him alone if he's going long. Don't do risky things once the ball is out of Eagles' hands, and make him run around so he can fumble by getting tackled in bounds if he tries to make a play, and also so you can injure him. This way, you get enough opportunities to wear down their defense. Also try to hold him short and then come back for their deep receivers, they aren't fast and a lot of pass defenders will make mincemeat out of them. Make their plays last to get yourself some guys to help you out with Eagles' run. You can add to the fun by freeing up your boys over the C and RG, it is easy to smash those guys into the turf. Of course, if QB Eagles is hurt, happy feasting!

On your own offense, the key is to set up your best receiver on the bottom of the field to match up against LCB Smith and SS Waters. Your follow-up to that is to call runs early in the game, forcing your opponent's playcalling to track your tendency. Then, when you call a pass in a non-obvious situation, Smith will pull up on many run calls, and then you have Andre Waters all alone to feast on with the jump ball. That's the first basic strategy. The second is to use pass plays that hit quickly because LE Reggie White will tear through your line and start riding your quarterback. Either run back away from the line and throw the jumper if the coverage is good, or press up and try to run and get RILB Jerome Brown or LOLB Seth Joyner to overplay the short pass. Try to avoid the top of the screen because a lot of the time, you are taking a risk by throwing up there whereas below, really you have single coverage no matter what. In the running game, just target their defender of choice. Typically you can work some

big plays off that, but be aware that if you dawdle and cut too much, White will come after you and beat you down. If you can, try to use some runs that make them use Ben Smith or Wes Hopkins to defend them well, then you can get some vicious chicken games going. However, that probably won't be possible; you can force your opponent out of White or Joyner, but forcing him out of Brown as well is pretty difficult. Don't be stupid throwing short, Joyner and White can pick you off, so you aren't home free if you get a good matchup.

### Phoenix Cardinals

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	19
Offense	22
Defense	14
Pass D	13
Rush D	13

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Timm Rosenbach	3	QB	25	69	19	13	31	44	38	31
Tom Tupa	19	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Johnny Johnson	41	RB	38	69	50	38	50	38		
Roy Green	81	WR	38	69	44	13	50	56		
Ron Wolfley	24	RB	38	69	38	38	50	25		
Vai Sihakema	44	RB	44	69	38	25	50	31		
Ricky Proehl	87	WR	25	69	19	13	50	69		
Ernie Jones	86	WR	31	69	38	13	50	56		
Darrell Thompson	34	RB	38	69	38	38	50	25		
J.T.Smith	84	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Walter Reeves	89	TE	25	69	19	44	50	38		
Tim Jordan	85	TE	25	69	19	38	50	25		
Bill Lewis	51	C	25	69	31	38				
Derek Kennard	70	G	25	69	25	56				
Lance Smith	61	G	25	69	31	38				
Luis Sharpe	67	T	25	69	50	63				
Tootie Robbins	63	T	25	69	25	56				
Al Del Greco	17	K	56	81	81	31	19	56		
Rich Camarillo	16	P	25	56	44	31	75	81		
Rod Saddler	72	DE	25	31	38	50	19	50		
Jim Wahler	66	NT	25	31	38	44	19	44		
Freddie Joe Nunn	78	DE	31	44	50	56	19	56		
Ken Harvey	56	LB	31	44	56	63	19	63		

Garth Jax	53 LB	25 31 38 31 31 44
Eric Hill	58 LB	25 31 31 38 19 38
Anthony Bell	55 LB	25 31 31 38 31 44
Jay Taylor	27 CB	25 31 38 19 50 31
Cedric Mack	47 CB	25 31 31 38 44 44
Lonnie Young	43 FS	69 31 44 44 56 44
Tim McDonald	46 SS	38 44 56 56 56 69

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Rams 7. Min. 13. Phi.
2. Phi. 8. Atl. 14. BYE
3. Was. 9. Min. 15. Was.
4. Dal. 10. Dal. 16. Den.
5. N.E. 11. Gia. 17. N.O.
6. Gia. 12. S.F.

### The Cardinals' Base Offense

QB Timm Rosenbach  
 Featured Back Johnny Johnson  
 Blocking Back Ron Wolfley/Darrell Thompson  
 WR Roy Green  
 WR Ernie Jones  
 TE Walter Reeves

### The Cardinals' Hands Set

QB Timm Rosenbach  
 RB Johnny Johnson  
 Possession WR Ricky Proehl  
 WR Roy Green  
 WR Ernie Jones  
 TE Walter Reeves

### The Cardinals' Power Set

QB Tom Tupa  
 Featured Back Johnny Johnson  
 Fullback Walter Reeves  
 WR Roy Green  
 Physical Back Ron Wolfley  
 Physical Back Darrell Thompson

Phoenix, like Atlanta, is a team that has some stars who can dominate, but also a lot of "carbon-based life forms" as Paul would say. The key with the Cardinal is to play to your strengths and work solid fundamentals to give your stars a chance to win the game for you.

Your quarterback situation is iffy, to say the least. The conditions typically determine which is the best. Tom Tupa has better Pass Speed, but Timm Rosenbach has 19 MS and better pass quality stats. Rosenbach is a better jump-ball man, and in my view, an overall better QB, while Tupa is a better move-the-chains passer. Basically take your pick. However you have some OK receivers, nothing special but you do have some measure of depth. Roy Green and Ernie Jones can stretch the field but only to a very limited extent. Ernie Jones plays above his stats but don't quote me on that. Ricky Proehl is a pretty interesting player to say the least - slow as bleep, but he can definitely pull the ball in. Still, he is just so slow that you usually don't want him out there because even in the jump-ball game he is just too slow to get down into the end zone before you get sacked. I wouldn't use J.T. Smith because you have some pretty decent backup RBs, and if you really need more than the 25 REC the RBs will give you, try Walter Reeves (never Tim Jordan) because he has more power than Smith for not too much of a REC cost. You can involve Johnny Johnson in the passing game if you need a play to get across the marker, but you need to limit his touches somewhat, so don't start throwing it to him 5 times a drive. The theme of this passing game is to dump it to your backs who have decent speed and can get some yards before the MAN can help out; then, if the MAN cheats up, go to Roy Green and Ernie Jones for a big play. Even though you will have some drops throwing to your RBs 10 times a game, you can't give up on it because otherwise your deep passing game will wither from the MAN being able to blitz up on you and to cheat up on you when you try to take the corner, especially with Rosenbach. Don't dawdle around behind the line; while you have some good tackles, your interior can and will be overmatched against good defensive linemen.

The running game of the Cardinals is quite solid, nothing fearsome but you have some blood flowing here. Johnny Johnson is the focal point of your rushing attack because he has 50 MS, but know that you have 3 RBs with 38 MS, and if any one of them gets up into EXCELLENT they will be good options for you. You want to keep Johnson on the field because of his talent and because you find sometimes that the MAN will key on him instead of a guy like Ron Wolfley, who just pounds it out if he gets up in condition - this you can exploit. However, being paranoid about the center of your offense is going to get you stuffed, so use Johnson as much as you need, and go out of bounds when convenient. Your RBs are also your best blockers, so set them out there in the power sets, and if you need even more power, then go to Walter Reeves (don't use Vai Sikahema however: he's only got 25 HP and he is your best returner, so don't push it with him on double duty blocking). However, don't think that this is a great rushing offense because it isn't: you can and will be shut down if you go up against a great MAN run defender,

but if you have a great A button you may still be able to fight out of the defensive interior. Go off tackle and on sweeps to avoid relying on your interior line too much, while taking advantage of your good tackles.

On special teams, Al del Greco is a positively horrible kicker. On the positive side, however, Vai Sihakema has some return skills and P Rich Camarillo is one of the best in the game. Ken Harvey also has some modest kick-blocking ability.

The Cardinals have to win games on defense, but they have some players who can make it happen, though they also have some guys who are just along for the ride. On the line, LE Freddie Joe Nunn is a player who can rush the passer or stop the run. In the LBs, ROLB Ken Harvey is your great star - don't be deceived by RILB Garth Jax, Ken Harvey should be used at all times if possible, both in run defense and pass coverage. Jax is an Interceptions LB though, he may drop in pass coverage and do something meaningful. Don't worry about LOLB Anthony Bell though, he is useless even if he weren't a rush OLB, so don't try to do something exotic to free him up.

The secondary is where things happen for the Cardinal. RCB Jay Taylor is not that good but he does have the ability to tip passes. LCB Cedric Mack on the other side though, he's nothing to be proud of. The play of the safeties is what makes this defense work. FS Lonnie Young, with his mutant 69 Rushing Speed, has pretty good quickness and closing ability, though he can certainly be overmatched at times, so don't think he's invincible. He is a pretty good pass defender, so he needs to play a part in your defensive gameplan. SS Tim McDonald, on the other hand, he's an all-around good safety, but he can be caught up in the flow of the run at times, so you have to be prudent about him. With this defense you are looking not so much to contain as to make good solid plays against both the pass and the run, and not really looking to make turnovers as much as to sap the vitality and the element of surprise out of your opponent's playcalling. Sometimes it will be the skin of your teeth with this team, but you can hang with a lot of offenses if you design your defensive scheme around making your opponent vanilla with your stars in the front seven, then looking to finish with the safeties. Know that the power dive is your greatest enemy and you must force your opponent out of it, because you really don't have any guys in a good position to be able to stop it, and you won't be able to free up your boys with Ken Harvey in time to stop the advance (you can't free them up period, most of your boys are weak).

AGAINST:

Defensively, the mindset is to make mincemeat of Johnny Johnson and the running game. They do have a little speed at receiver, but it's nothing vicious, and while you will give up a few jump balls, you don't have much to worry about as long as Johnson, Wolfley, Sikahema, and Thompson are running for no gain. QB is the weakness of this offense, and if you can make them pass-reliant, you are going to make the low REC of their players and the accuracy problems of their quarterbacks really blatant, which you can exploit using your pass defender. Do note however, since this passing game relies so much on the dump-and-run, that you can't be doing the automatic dive that Tecmo makes your guy do when he gets close to the defender; you must be able to come up and make the quick stop, because if you give them enough shots at Roy Green and enough chances at the chains, they will be close to your end zone and have a chance to punch it in. Your job is to deny them the TD and make Al del Greco beat you which is not going to be easy for them at any range. Don't give them easy things and let them get 70 yards on a botched run defense when you can just give up 5 per pass to their backup RBs and make them drive drive down the field, and at some point you will get a fumble or they will drop a pass or you will get some good play calls and you will make them bring out "Automatic Al" to try and put some points on the board. Try to destroy their running game early so that they become one-dimensional; if you can focus on the pass exclusively you can shut this team straight down. Know however, that a good opponent won't fall for you selling out against the run and will come back to it later in the game when you try and pressure the pass. Their C and RG are easy prey for you freeing up the boys, so that can help you when you are trying to stop the jump ball and also the run with the front seven.

On offense, you don't want to throw it into their safeties, or RILB Garth Jax. After that, let it fly. Run at ROLB Ken Harvey and take him away, but don't get too caught up in the mind games of which safety to obliterate, just stick to the basics of power running and get your yards before help can arrive. This is a safety-driven defense, so use the power dive to open things up. Run early and run often on both sides to make the MAN have to run all over the field to try and stop you. If PHX gets into a rhythm in the run-stopping game, they can become dominating; you want to set them back in the running game at least once every drive. In this way, you will keep a lot of the pressure off your deep receivers and you can get them open late in the game when you are trying to convert a long third down - PHX will try and drain away your desire to penetrate them, so don't just give in to the pressure that they will periodically apply, don't mistake their few stars for a horde like Pittsburgh's, and take it to them using your strengths.

## Dallas Cowboys

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### Points and Rankings

Category Rank

Subjective

Overall 14

Offense 17

Defense 11

Pass D 15

Rush D 11

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Troy Aikman	8	QB	25	69	13	13	50	44	50	50
Babe Laufenberg	15	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Emmitt Smith	22	RB	38	69	56	31	50	38		
Tommie Agee	34	RB	38	69	25	44	50	44		
Alonzo Highsmith	32	RB	38	69	38	38	50	44		
Robert Perryman	39	RB	38	69	31	38	50	25		
Kelvin Martin	83	WR	31	69	38	13	50	56		
Michael Irvin	88	WR	38	69	44	13	50	50		
Alexander Wright	81	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
James Dixon	86	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Jay Novacek	84	TE	25	69	44	69	50	69		
Rob Awalt	89	TE	25	69	19	56	50	31		
Mark Stepnoski	53	C	25	69	38	38				
Crawford Ker	68	G	25	69	31	50				
John Gesek	67	G	25	69	31	44				
Kevin Gogan	66	T	25	69	19	56				
Nate Newton	61	T	25	69	25	75				
Ken Willis	1	K	56	81	81	31	44	44		
Mike Saxon	4	P	25	56	44	31	56	75		
Tony Tolbert	92	DE	25	31	38	50	19	56		
Danny Noonan	73	NT	25	38	44	50	19	50		
Daniel Stubbs	96	DE	31	38	50	56	19	69		
Ken Norton	51	LB	25	38	44	38	31	44		
Eugene Lockhart	56	LB	31	44	50	56	19	56		
Jimmie Jones	97	LB	31	31	50	56	19	69		
Jack Del Rio	55	LB	25	31	38	38	19	44		
Manny Hendrix	45	CB	38	50	63	50	44	50		
Issiac Holt	30	CB	38	44	56	56	50	63		
Ray Horton	20	FS	31	38	50	56	44	38		
James Washington	37	SS	31	38	50	50	50	38		

## Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Cle. 7. Cin. 13. Was.
2. Was. 8. BYE 14. Pit.
3. Phi. 9. Det. 15. N.O.
4. Phx. 10. Phx. 16. Phi.
5. Gia. 11. Hou. 17. Atl.
6. G.B. 12. Gia.

## Dallas' Base Offense

QB Troy Aikman

Primary RB Emmitt Smith

Secondary RB Alonzo Highsmith

Speedy WR Michael Irvin

All-Star WR Jay Novacek

Third Option Kelvin Martin

## Dallas' Power Set

QB Troy Aikman

RB Emmitt Smith

FB Rob Awalt

Physical WR Jay Novacek

TE Tommie Agee

TE Robert Perryman

Dallas is a team that can be easily misjudged because of the two extremes of their future and their recent past (when this game came out). This isn't a 5-11 squad here but neither is it a 13-3 juggernaut that can dominate throughout the playoffs. There are some great stars on this team, but also some roster spots that need upgrading, so you must know your team well on offense and have mastery of all the ILB and DB positions on defense to make the most out of this team.

QB Troy Aikman is a player who is both strong and weak. He cannot stand up against a top DB and challenge him, because he will get picked off. He can put a solid drive together if he can find his guys and get them the ball at key moments in the play. Even then, however, he will still miss open receivers and throw picks in an eerily Chris Everett way, even in EXCELLENT condition. Caution is required - Aikman throws short better than long without question. Babe Laufenberg isn't a player to really rave about, he can be really flat sometimes, although he can have his moments too. Aikman throws to a lot of guys who can all catch the ball, but none really that well with the exception of his TE Jay Novacek. What you want to do with Novacek is a mystery; to me the trick is finding a place in the offensive lineup where he can use his power to overwhelm the

defender across from him, but to where he can also get out way deep and get jump balls and just stretch the defense with his power after the catch, and force the MAN to go and double-cover. Since in my offense the sweep down low is the key, I put him at WR #2, but he will lose some of his ability to go deep on shotgun plays for example. I think it's even more important to get him deep than it is to get him a great blocking matchup, but if you just leave him totally out of the blocking game you have wasted your best blocker.

As far as Irvin vs. Martin is concerned, Martin is a better receiver overall, but speed is important and stretching the field with Irvin is more of a priority, because you're sending Novacek deep a lot of the time anyway, and you can't force it into Martin against a half-decent coverage anyhow. The other WRs on this team suck, don't bother using them when you have decent backup RBs, and even backup TE Roy Awalt whom you can get some decent blocking out of. The guy I really like out of the backup RBs is Alonzo Highsmith, as he's all around decent at everything he does, but Tommie Agee is your next option for his blocking ability. Definitely find Highsmith a place on the field and then go with the conditions and your style of offense, you can go more open or more powerful depending on what you like to do. About Emmitt, he's a pretty good receiver out of the backfield for a RB, but don't give him a ton of touches - you want his 56 MS to always be on the field.

You can't sit in the pocket at all, roll out and then there, you can stay safe because you've got two pretty good tackles, especially RT Nate Newton. No real mobility running here but hey, Aikman's not Marino (yet).

Continuing about Emmitt, he has speed and a little power and a little Receptions. It's his speed that is what makes him a good back, and you need to get him at least 10 touches a game to try and keep the heat off the passing game - Aikman and Novacek can't do it alone you know. However, going above 15 is a bad idea, because without Emmitt, the threat of the run is substantially though not totally gone, because you can sub in Novacek and then Irvin there (provided you can use WR at RB). Plus, you also have Alonzo Highsmith in there, so you can push it somewhat; but to me, balance is pretty important with this team, because you can definitely get in there to where, you start running a lot with Emmitt, and you get a few drives where you have to start passing for the first down, and you just totally lose your offensive push forward, and you end up wasting a quarter. This is not a quick-strike offense, so even if you end up catching the MAN off-guard with your play-call, there's really no way to guarantee that you are going to get a play commensurate to the risks and the adversity you face trying to move the ball just one way. When Novacek gets a passing TD, Smith gets a rushing TD, and Highsmith gets 40 total yards, that's when this team is really moving well. You have a lot of different weapons, none of whom

can win games by themselves without getting sick numbers of touches, so to try and maintain the stamina of the team, you want to go and spread the ball around. This will also reduce the volatility of Emmitt getting hurt and "Aikma" making stupid plays, as he has an unfortunate tendency to do. Keep the defense guessing so you can release the ball in time and get out of bounds.

On special teams Dallas' return teams aren't the best in the league by any means, and Ken Willis is a guy who reminds you of '70s sitcoms. As far as the return man is concerned, no advice from me, they really aren't that good returning in Dallas - just don't put one of your offensive stars back there, this team is not that deep so you don't want to press your luck.

Defensively the Cowboys are all-around solid, but no one is really a true superstar, so you want to use the best player for a given down and formation and never let your opponent try for a big play by keying on one of your guys. This line is OK, led by LE Daniel Stubbs, but this team is not going to get a huge number of sacks based on pressure up front, nor will they play great run defense. The OLBs are pretty sad at rushing the passer though ROLB Ken Norton can do a small amount of pass coverage. However, with the DBs on this team, you really shouldn't bother about using him, just lump him and LOLB Jack Del Rio in with the defensive linemen, because you aren't going to be hearing about big plays from those guys very often.

However, what makes this defense go is the play of RILB Eugene Lockhart and his (slightly lesser) sidekick LILB Jimmie Jones. These two guys just dominate the interior with tactics against run plays, so you definitely want to get to know and use these guys, because you can get some big plays out of them if you are experienced at taking out the run. Neither has any special coverage ability, go figure.

The DBs are a pretty surprising rock in this defense. None of them has less than 50 Hitting Power, so you can definitely stand tall if some punk wants to try and get his blockers on your CBs, because they are not moving. However, what they can do is move the ball on you, because the top (fast) side of your defense is 44 Interceptions land, and the bottom is 50 Interceptions land. Expect to have to go out and double-cover against top hands receivers. One thing to like though, is that everybody in the secondary can defend the run and also, they have the speed to stay with the players on the field.

My view of the defensive strategy here, is kind of to play with a more spread NYJ set. Try and dominate the run with the ILBs as much as possible, but if you need to, kick out to the best DB to stop the formation. Manny Hendrix the RCB and Ray Horton the FS definitely have some wheels, so you can go after the sweep down low with them. The thing is, you have to get good coverage to compensate for the lack of a

superstar pass defender, so you want to call pass first and then come back and use your versatility to stop the run.

#### AGAINST:

Jay Novacek and Emmitt Smith will present your defense with the major problems, and guys like Highsmith and Irvin can do some damage to you if you totally ignore them, but with competency you can shut this team down. The first rule of thumb is, find their power players and avoid them on the run, because they can end up deploying 3 power guys in their base offensive sets, and if you don't know where guys like Novacek and Awalt and Agee are, you are going to be in for a very long day. Even Alonzo Highsmith and Robert Perryman can give you problems, not to mention Emmitt Smith, as he is not a terrible blocker himself. Trying to smash away their WRs and pounding your way into the RB is not likely to be an effective strategy here. Smith is a guy who can rush for 200 yards on you if you underestimate him and just stick with calling passes, so the first priority is to stop him cold. If they have to make Aikman throw a lot of passes and you have a superstar or a good pass defender, you can get a lot of opportunities for baiting him because he doesn't have good passing stats overall, coupled with a pedestrian Pass Speed. However, it isn't easy pickings here because their underneath men can actually catch and hold onto the ball, and from time to time they can complete it in coverage, so you can't be gambling \_too\_ much there. They can't stretch the field with their speed too much, so you shouldn't freak about them getting down there; try and hold Aikman, especially if you have a pass rush, because you can bring him down and, more likely, force him to throw some inaccurate passes which you can exploit. However, know that their WRs can get deep enough to hurt you, especially Novacek who is going to act as a WR on a lot of plays and go deep. You can't just leave Novacek alone out there, he will make you pay. If you are in an obvious passing down and you need something, you can blitz but it's not necessarily going to be effective. You can definitely free up your boys on the interior of this offensive line though, this line is hurting at C and RG and you can exploit this in a major way.

On your own offense, it really doesn't matter what you do as long as you avoid giving your opponent predictable run looks and trends. The DBs and the ILBs on this team can stop a ton of runs if you just give it away, so you don't want to give them chances to use the right defender to shut you down hard. Against this secondary you can throw; they are fast, but if you like to use the jump ball, you aren't going to get so many better opportunities than this. You want to try and play to your strengths, but pass first if your team can take that, because Dallas will

be taxed by it more than anything else; you won't be able to fluster them often at all by running. Use your open sets against this team, because there really aren't any DBs you can roll by using a blocking TE alone against them, and you want to exploit their pass defense with your hands guys to avoid getting picked off. However, if you have a great blocker like Jamie Mueller, you can definitely take out the OLBs with him.

### Chicago Bears

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	17
Offense	23
Defense	4
Pass D	1
Rush D	6

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Jim Harbaugh	4	QB	25	69	13	13	44	25	56	25
Mike Tomczak	18	QB	25	69	13	13	44	31	31	38
Brad Muster	25	RB	44	69	25	94	50	56		
Neal Anderson	35	RB	50	69	63	50	50	50		
Mark Green	31	RB	38	69	31	25	50	25		
Johnny Bailey	22	RB	38	69	56	25	50	38		
Ron Morris	84	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Wendell Davis	82	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Glen Kozlowski	88	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
Dennis Gentry	29	WR	25	69	19	13	50	50		
James Thornton	85	TE	25	69	25	63	50	25		
Cap Boso	86	TE	25	69	19	44	50	31		
Jay Hilgenberg	63	C	25	69	50	63				
Mark Bortz	62	G	25	69	44	69				
Tom Thayer	57	G	25	69	38	50				
Jim Covert	74	T	25	69	31	50				
Keith Van Horne	78	T	25	69	31	50				
Kevin Butler	6	K	56	81	81	31	38	50		
Maury Buford	8	P	25	56	44	31	31	25		
Richard Dent	95	DE	31	44	50	63	44	75		
William Perry	72	NT	38	31	19	69	19	56		
Trace Armstrong	93	DE	31	44	50	63	19	69		
Jim Morrissey	51	LB	25	31	38	44	31	44		

Dan Hampton	99	LB	25	31	38	56	19	63
Mike Singletary	50	LB	38	50	56	75	19	81
Ron Rivera	59	LB	25	31	38	44	31	44
Lemuel Stinson	32	CB	38	44	56	50	69	56
Donnell Woolford	21	CB	31	38	50	44	63	63
Mark Carrier	20	FS	38	44	56	50	81	69
Shaun Gayle	23	SS	25	31	44	44	56	44

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Min. 7. BYE 13. Mia.
2. T.B. 8. G.B. 14. Det.
3. Gia. 9. N.O. 15. G.B.
4. Jets 10. Det. 16. T.B.
5. Buf. 11. Min. 17. S.F.
6. Was. 12. Ind.

### Bears' Base "Offense"

RB Mike Tomczak  
 RB Johnny Bailey  
 FB Brad Muster  
 WR Ron Morris  
 Deep Threat TE Neal Anderson  
 Blocking TE James Thornton

### Bears' All-Muscle Offense

RB Mike Tomczak  
 RB Johnny Bailey  
 FB Brad Muster  
 Deep Threat TE Neal Anderson  
 Trick Play TE Cap Boso  
 Blocking TE James Thornton

The Monsters of the Midway...in this game, they are the Munsters of the Midway, because their offense is a total joke. While this team does have a dominating defense, there is almost no passing game whatsoever, and you end up running the ball 25 times a game instead of trying to pass it to players who have no better than 50 REC and getting picked off. Good luck winning the Super Bowl with this team.

I think Jim Harbaugh is EVEN WORSE than Steve Gorgon. Think about it, Grogan can at least throw a few jump balls right? The only balls Harbaugh throws are interceptions to the MAN. Make no mistake, that 56 PA is only there so the DBs can pick it off more easily. 6 MS Jeff George moves a team down the field better than this atrocious excuse for a quarterback.

Against a MAN controlled Bears team, I set what must be an all-time serious play MAN vs. MAN record of 28 INTs in 16 games, of which Harbaugh played about 14 whole games. Near the end of the year, Harbaugh REFUSED to throw to wide-open receivers; instead, he just threw it out into space, or better yet, to one of my guys.

DO NOT EVER THINK about using Harbaugh, this guy will kill you every time. Every rose may have its Thornton, but I can assure you, every time Harbaugh touches the ball, it's an INT waiting to happen.

Tomczak...let's just move on. One thing you do have with him is at least a little Pass Speed, so you can throw the ball to Muster short. Do not throw to Neal Anderson whom you are setting at receiver, this is disaster if he is covered. The only reason you put Neal Anderson out at receiver is so that if he goes uncovered, you can stretch the field out all the way to get your 7 yard dump pass off. You can't throw anything into coverage with this team, and while Tomczak can have his moments, he can melt down in a couple possessions, so don't start getting cocky with him. Your short options are Johnny Bailey and Brad Muster: use Muster when you need to go through guys and Bailey when you want pure speed. Muster has some pretty sure hands, so if you need a reception in the clutch, Muster can and will come through for you when it counts.

I would not advise throwing to Ron Morris except if he's wide open, nor to James Thornton if you can avoid it; Thornton is good at blocking so you need him, but he's not anything you want holding the ball for extended periods of time. If you need more receivers, Wendell Davis is OK and Glen Koslowski is a hard-working receiver, but Glen just doesn't have any talent whatsoever. Run as much as possible with Tomczak and step out of bounds to avoid having Harbaugh enter the game; believe me, you don't want Harbaugh to defy physics while the ball is lofted towards the MAN.

The running game is where the Bears have to make their money and there is some talent here. Brad Muster is a good option if you are going up against a team with a lot of weak players, he can smash the lights out of any chump he touches. Nevertheless, Muster in this offense is at his best when he is blocking and catching dump passes and going down in a pile of 5 people once he gets the ball, because this guy can give out concussions with his strength. He is a natural fit at WR, but you may end up using him at fullback if you throw to the fullback a lot - in any case, get someone for him to blow up. Neal Anderson is a pretty good back for this team, he's a top back with 63 MS, 50 HP, and 50 REC. However, you need his talents most at receiver, so you really don't want him back there, although if Bailey gets hurt (and he will if you use him on special teams), Anderson is a runner you want to try and take the corner with. Still, you can go anywhere on the field, especially on the power dive behind Muster, because that is a double

load screaming through the hole. If you want to block for Muster or Bailey though, or run a two-back system with Bailey, you can do that just as well, because NA's no pushover. Anderson's talents in this O, though, are best used blocking and receiving because the receiving is what this team needs. Johnny Bailey, on the other hand, can supply any remaining needs this team has. He has 56 MS so he's no slouch either, and while he is not the back Neal Anderson is, if you need Anderson to run the ball for you, you are in real trouble because nobody is going to respect Tomczak throwing to Bailey's 38 REC on the deep ball. My view of this personnel schema is to set up Muster where he can block on running downs and get short receptions on passing downs, set up Neal Anderson where he will go deep on the pass and get a good block on the outside sweep, set up Thornton to block, and then either get Cap Boso in there for super muscle or Ron Morris to at least \_try\_ and make the MAN think there's a pass threat there, and then put Bailey back there to get the takes, subbing in Anderson at RB whenever Bailey goes down. This way you can get the most out of this miserable WR and TE corps.

On special teams Johnny Bailey can bring it all day. You may have some success with others but Bailey is the key attraction as the return man. The coverage teams are definitely at least passable but the kicker and punter...ick. LILB Mike Singletary however, using a little trick, can rush the kicker though, so this team isn't all thumbs anyway.

Chicago's defense must keep the scoring down to allow a lucky running score or jump ball to get the lead, then close it out at the end of the game by preventing the jump ball and the big run. Fortunately, this team has some of the absolute best pass defenders in the game, and one of the best lines as well, so you can definitely at least stop the big pass plays and, with LILB Mike Singletary, you have a pretty good chance of stopping runs as well.

This defensive line is dominating, but one fact that is not well known is that RE Richard Dent has 44 Interceptions. You definitely have to bring this guy out on passing downs if you can, as he is much better than Mike Singletary at stopping the pass. Even though you are going to give up a little pass rush, 44 Interceptions + 50 MS + one of the best pass coverage secondaries in football = domination.

Avoid the LBs. They are the Achilles heel of this defense. None of them are any good except for Singletary, and to add insult to injury, the Interceptions LBs are the OLBs who rush the passer (and can't do that worth a tobacco spittoon). Use Singletary when you feel like you can stop the run: he is one of the strongest defenders in the game, so you can throw some drones for sure, but he is not all that good in pass coverage especially compared to your other options. However, you can't be too conservative, because your other run-stopping options don't have

much strength (save for your D-line).

The DBs are guys who need to go out in coverage as much as possible to take advantage of their hands. RCB Stinson and FS Carrier together make the worst side in football to try and throw on. Carrier doesn't play up to his reputation and no one in the secondary is that fast, but they can still tear it up in a hurry if the MAN starts playing it fast and loose by throwing it on that side. The other side with Woolford and Gayle has "only" 63 and 56 Interceptions. Start the defense by calling run to make them throw. If you can make them throw even once every three downs you are in pretty good shape. Any MAN will think twice (except me, I have ice in my veins and fire in my eyes) about throwing it even into single coverage by Carrier, let alone a swarm of Bears defenders. The next key is to find out what runs you can contain for 5 or less yards if you get them backed up. Singletary or Dent or whoever, if they can make the stop, it frees you up to call more passes. Sooner or later, they will throw it at one of your guys, and that is when you will burn them by pulling down the ball. Be tenacious and make the QB run instead of doing any passing, as you can make him miss open receivers if you just flat out stop him 5 times or more, because he will just want to take off instead of trying for a big play.

The difference between the Bears and a lot of lesser defensive teams is that, instead of trying to make them pound it out in the running game and making tackles all around, you want to make them pound it out in the passing game and get interceptions. However, don't just let them run twice and get the first, bring them to third down to make them want to try and open up a big play with the pass, instead of keeping it on the ground and not getting your playmakers involved.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, don't do anything stupid to let them spring their running backs. Know who their power guys are and avoid them, as the blockers are usually slow. If they bring a receiver or two, or Johnny Bailey or Mark Green is making a block, then smash through them. The easiest way to give up a big play against this team is to get caught up by one of their power blockers, then the back burns your defense with speed.

You can easily make them run 20 plays in a full drive if you know what you are doing. Let them take underneath stuff instead of letting guys go wide open, but if there is coverage down the field, just frustrate them short and make them run Tomczak even more and get their yards-per-snap down. If you can make them just sit there and throw it every two downs to try and get things going, that just tests Tomczak's accuracy to the limit, and they are not going to be

able to keep that up over four quarters. You put those two things together, and it makes their ability to string together 15 plays to get into the end zone very limited. One thing you must do in the red zone is to focus on the run, because they are not going to be able to pass it in if you have any kind of a defender out there - if you can just get the single coverage, you've won the battle. If you can make them kick field goals and not let them into the end zone you are halfway to beating the Bears, because they are not going to be able to get that far consistently if you make them flow their offense through the passing game and force them to settle for 4 yards a normal run snap. It's when they start getting 14 points on the board that things become hairy, because then you have to punch it in against their defense.

On long 3rd downs, watch out for the jump ball to Ron Morris; he can and does make an occasional play deep. At the end of halves, watch for this tendency also. However, the Bears will try the run before anything else, and only when the pass play is sour or the final ticks are coming off the clock will the Bears use this method.

On offense, run against LILB Mike Singletary and take him, their best run defender, right out of the game. If you have him out, then you are a pretty good way towards getting some room to run, which is what you want to be doing against this defense. You must employ speed at RB to work against the DBs, to make them keep their corners up and allow you to get some open guys whom you can hit without fear of interception. One thing you must remember is that this team does not have any true burners who can peel in from way off and make a play on your guy, so if you have a ton of deep guys out there, you often have a safe move you can make on your short man. Roll out to avoid this pass rush and to run the ball if no one comes open; however, try to get a man open behind Singletary, because Singletary is fast enough to come after you and take you down. Likewise with RE Richard Dent, who can pick you off as well, so don't try any funny business with him. If you catch the MAN cheating up on you when you've got guys open deep, you can definitely throw it over their heads because they don't have the speed to get back there consistently (if FS Carrier pulls up, for instance). DO NOT be throwing the ball deep against solid coverage unless you are in a long third down and you have no chance of kicking a field goal and you are close enough that you can take a shot into the end zone without getting caught by the pass rush, because if you throw it up, sometimes it's as good as gone. Prefer the run to everything else, so that when you go to pass, you will have some space in which to work. Don't run through the line unless you have a powerful offensive interior, you will get smacked down by their defensive linemen.

## Detroit Lions

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### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	9
Offense	7
Defense	17
Pass D	20
Rush D	15

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Rodney Peete	9	QB	25	69	31	13	38	44	31 25
Andre Ware	11	QB	25	69	25	13	44	38	31 44
Barry Sanders	20	RB	38	69	69	25	69	44	
Aubrey Matthews	83	WR	25	69	19	13	50	50	
James Wilder	34	RB	44	69	31	25	50	25	
Mel Gray	23	RB	38	69	56	19	50	50	
Richard Johnson	84	WR	25	69	19	13	50	75	
Robert Clark	82	WR	38	69	44	13	50	69	
Willie Green	86	RB	38	69	38	13	50	31	
Jeff Campbell	87	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44	
Terry Greer	89	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44	
Mike Farr	81	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44	
Kevin Glover	53	C	25	69	31	44			
Eric Andolsek	65	G	25	69	31	50			
Ken Dallafior	67	G	25	69	31	38			
Lomas Brown	75	T	25	69	38	56			
Harvey Salem	73	T	25	69	25	50			
Eddie Murray	3	K	56	81	81	31	31	50	
Jim Arnold	6	P	25	56	44	31	50	56	
Dan Owens	70	DE	25	31	38	56	19	56	
Jerry Ball	93	NT	31	44	44	69	19	69	
Keith Ferguson	77	DE	25	31	25	31	19	31	
Michael Cofer	55	LB	38	50	56	50	31	56	
Dennis Gibson	98	LB	25	31	31	31	19	25	
Chris Spielman	54	LB	31	44	50	56	19	56	
George Jamison	58	LB	25	31	31	25	19	25	
Leroy Irvin	47	CB	25	31	25	25	38	50	
Ray Crockett	39	CB	31	38	50	50	50	50	
Bennie Blades	36	FS	25	31	38	50	44	38	
William White	35	SS	38	44	56	56	56	56	

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Was. 7. BYE 13. Min.
2. G.B. 8. S.F. 14. Chi.
3. Mia. 9. Dal. 15. Jets
4. Ind. 10. Chi. 16. G.B.
5. T.B. 11. T.B. 17. Buf.
6. Min. 12. Rams

Detroit's Base Offense

QB Rodney Peete

RB Barry Sanders

RB Mel Gary

Deep Threat Robert Clark

Third Option Terry Greer

Possession WR Richard Johnson

Detroit is a team that has a pretty decent offense - they're not centered around Barry as much as you might think, but the defense that tries to back it up is just not good enough for this team to win the Super Bowl.

The quarterback situation in Detroit gives you some options as to what you want to do. Neither Rodney Peete nor Andre Ware is a great passer, but Ware has 25 MS, while Peete has 31 MS. This definitely urges you to get out there and run it with them, but you can't neglect these receivers: Robert Clark is a pretty decent receiver, and while Richard Johnson isn't the greatest thing since sliced bread, he has some wicked hands. Plus, both Mel Gray and Barry Sanders have some catching skills, so you aren't going to have many drops with this team. Stretch the field with Robert Clark or Mel Gray and then dump it underneath or run it. You can go with the deep pass with this team though, even though the QBs aren't all that great.

In that regard, Peete will complete more passes (to your guys and to theirs), while Ware tends to be a hot-and-cold type of quarterback that can falter sometimes when being asked to throw 3 touchdown passes a game. Your fifth man out there is a matter of debate, whether you go with Willie Green who has some speed, or Terry Greer who has better hands. Just check the conditions to see who to sub in in the passing game if someone goes down.

My personal opinion here, but I think, over the course of a season, Ware is a better passing QB than Peete by far; I have had some extremely hot games with Ware in the lineup - but if Peete gets into EXCELLENT, he is a pretty fearsome runner at 44 MS, and you don't want to forget about him if Ware struggles. Peete requires a lot more discipline to play with because the temptation to run the ball is so great, and a lot of times, you end up falling behind in the chains and not taking advantage of good matchups

deep down the field when you play with the conservative tendency that Peete often inspires. You must remember to seek the big pass play to Robert Clark and to find ways to get Richard Johnson matched up against poor pass defenders deep, and you must also utilize your RBs coming out of the backfield, since they can hold the MAN up short, allowing you to get an easy TD on 3rd and long.

The running game in Detroit is pretty well set, though the offensive line can cause some problems. Barry is the second-best back in the game, but for all he's worth, he can be stopped cold in some games. Mel Gray is a fearsome RB as well, as 56 MS never hurt anybody. I think you have to go with the split backfield and work the outside sweeps to take advantage of the speed + no power in the running game - the best blocker on this team is James Wilder, but even he has only 25 HP. You definitely want to try and look to cut back, because against a great run defender who can blow up your whole team, essentially, you want to try and get him to overpursue and blow right past you and then get some yards streaking right up in the heart of the defense. Plus, you want to get the best plays in there regardless of the back they use, and when you go with the two backs, you get some fearsome threats who can really keep the heat off Peete and Ware when the defense tries to close on them in the QB running game. Unpredictability is what you want to stress with Detroit, because with all your ballcarriers, you can't force it in with power but you have speed, so you can just move the ball running down the field if you can keep the defense on its heels and not allow them any time to get in position to make drive-stopping plays. You don't really need to protect any of your runners, but going out of bounds is still a good idea if you are going to run a ball-control offense, especially since you won't be able to fight your way out of any big struggles with the CPU. If either back goes down, replace them with Willie Green to get some speed in there and to not totally disrupt the rhythm of your offense, as he can catch a little as well, then shift your playbook to a one-back set. James Wilder, if he gets into EXCELLENT, you definitely want to try and set him up in your backfield because he is a power blocker then, and you need power on this offense at all costs. You can then split Mel Gray out to WR to stretch the field deep.

On special teams, Mel Gray is one of the better returners in this game. Beyond him, I can offer no advice as to whom to use. Mike Cofer can rush the kicker somewhat, but don't expect your own footmen to be able to do anything; Eddie Murray is a joke.

Defensively, the Lions are thin and don't have any true superstars, so they are going to have problems keeping the offense out of the end zone. RE Dan Owens and NT Jerry Ball are pretty fearsome on the line, but Keith Ferguson is one of the absolute worst in the game, so don't expect anything out of that

LE spot; he's not even good for tactics. However, Ball is the only lineman who has the speed to cover, as Owens is just plain slow.

You've got two good LBs and two schmucks. ROLB Mike Cofer is the best because of his 31 Interceptions, but LILB Chris Spielman is pretty decent in his own right, use whichever one you need for a given run defense.

In the secondary, your bottom is strong and your top...ick. Leroy Irvin is just flat out awful, he is going to get burned a lot. FS Bennie Blades is better, but he is still a bad pass defender, as his 38 MS means he's not getting there in time. However, LCB Ray Crockett is an all-around decent defender against the pass and the run, while SS William White is the best defender on this team, an upgraded Ray Crockett by 1 notch in each rating. However, White isn't capable of dominating a lot of players on the opposing offense, so you are still vulnerable somewhat.

The key strategy with this team is to use the front seven to stop the sweep down low and White + Crockett to stop everything else. If you can free your DBs up with your playcalling, that will really help you. Mike Cofer is the all-around man to go for against the run, because he can recover and stop the pass, but if Spielman is the right man for the job, use him to totally stuff the sweep down low. The key is to be careful about the pass, because if they can get you to use the LBs, they can toast the top side with a speed WR all day long. You definitely want to go for big plays and just let them by without giving up too many yards if you guess wrong. You want as much coverage as possible, so you might also try starting against the pass, then using Cofer to stop the run. However, you won't be able to force many interceptions then, but it is a more solid defense if Cofer is able to make the plays he needs to make in the run defense.

#### AGAINST:

On defense, your key is to not let guys get open downfield. No matter how much you want to stop Barry, these QBs are too fast for you to go down the field and let them dump it to their backs or just run it themselves. You don't want to allow this team to play a very conservative game, you want to test their QBs' passing ability, because that is this offense's only weakness. Try to anticipate their tendencies to force them into longer downs where you can try and blanket their receivers deep. You have to pick your poison with this team, either the RB run or the QB run, and you want to take away the QB run to give yourself a chance on 3rd and 5. The best part about this though, is that they have NO ONE who can stop a great (i.e. strong) run defender. Take your most powerful defender and just whail away on their blockers; they won't be able to take you, not a single one of them, unless one of their RBs is in EXCELLENT. If they do have one or two players who can block, see if you can still toss them - the best they can muster is 38 HP, so you still do have a chance with some elite run defenders to blast them to kingdom come. In this way, you have a pretty good shot at stopping their set running game. They won't scorch

you in coverage, but they can get some jump balls so, while you should just leave your guys in single coverage deep, you want to come back and help them out if possible. Freeing up your boys (C and RG are the weaknesses) can also help you especially since you are using your strongest player; you most likely won't get rolled, especially against RG Ken Dallafior, an easy mark if I ever saw one.

On offense, you must look to take advantage of their terrible RCB Leroy Irvin. If your WR gets single coverage on him you MUST throw it up to him, it's just too good there. Put your speed WR there and wait until your guy clearly burns him, then throw it and watch the TD celebration. One player you must also target is ROLB Mike Cofer; he is a decent pass defender, so you want to run at him and take him out of their gameplan. However, know that if you do this a lot, the defense will counter with SS William White who is a better pass defender, so just do it enough that you can strike at them while the MAN is using Cofer, and that way you can get some big plays out of it. Their defensive line is pretty good, so don't just sit back there in the pocket looking for an opportunity, as Jerry Ball can grab you if you aren't watching for him. Try and put the defense in a hard place between William White and Mike Cofer and use that to energize the running game, then, when you have them forced to stop your run, go over the top and score the passing TD. Even FS Bennie Blades is an iffy pass defender, so you still have some room to work with him. Finally, when you get them totally exasperated trying to stop your big plays, you can move in with your QB run and your short pass to seal the deal and avoid turnovers.

### Green Bay Packers

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	25
Offense	20
Defense	26
Pass D	27
Rush D	25

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Don Majkowski	7	QB	25	69	25	13	38	50	50
Anthony Dilweg	8	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31
Keith Woodside	33	RB	38	69	44	31	50	31	
Michael Haddix	35	RB	38	69	25	94	50	25	
Darrell Thompson	39	RB	38	69	38	31	50	19	

Herman Fontenot 27 RB 38 69 38 25 50 38  
 Sterling Sharpe 84 WR 38 69 50 13 50 75  
 Perry Kemp 81 WR 31 69 31 13 50 50  
 Charles Wilson 88 WR 25 69 25 31 50 50  
 Jeff Query 85 WR 31 69 31 13 50 50  
 Ed West 86 TE 25 69 31 50 50 38  
 Jackie Harris 80 TE 25 69 25 44 50 31  
 James Campen 63 C 25 69 38 38  
 Rich Moran 57 G 25 69 38 44  
 Ron Hallstrom 65 G 25 69 25 50  
 Alan Veingrad 73 T 25 69 31 44  
 Tony Mandarich 77 T 25 69 19 63  
 Chris Jacke 13 K 56 81 81 31 56 38  
 Don Bracken 17 P 25 56 44 31 25 50  
 Robert Brown 93 DE 25 31 38 38 19 44  
 Bob Nelson 79 NT 25 69 38 56 19 56  
 Matt Brock 62 DE 25 31 38 44 19 44  
 Tim Harris 97 LB 38 50 56 50 19 63  
 Johnny Holland 50 LB 25 31 31 31 31 25  
 Brian Noble 91 LB 25 31 31 31 19 31  
 Scott Stephen 54 LB 25 31 31 31 38 31  
 Jerry Holmes 44 CB 25 31 44 38 50 38  
 Mark Lee 22 CB 25 31 38 38 31 31  
 Chuck Cecil 26 FS 25 31 38 44 38 31  
 Mark Murphy 37 SS 25 31 44 44 50 38

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Phi. 7. BYE 13. Ind.
2. Det. 8. Chi. 14. Atl.
3. T.B. 9. T.B. 15. Chi.
4. Mia. 10. Jets 16. Det.
5. Rams 11. Buf. 17. Min.
6. Dal. 12. Min.

#### Green Bay's Base Offense

QB Don Majkowski  
 RB Keith Woodside  
 FB Michael Haddix  
 WR Sterling Sharpe  
 Physical WR Ed West  
 Blocking TE Jackie Harris

#### Green Bay's Open Set

QB Don Majkowski  
 RB Keith Woodside

RB Herman Fontenot  
Go-To WR Sterling Sharpe  
WR Perry Kemp  
WR Jeff Query

Green Bay isn't as bad of a team as some think, especially on offense, but this team is still terrible: this defense is just flat out awful and it will be all day for you even if you play smart. Gamble on offense to hopefully outscore the other team.

Green Bay must win the game on the offensive end, and they are just not good enough to get this done. The Majik Man, Don Majkowski, he's got some wheels with 25 MS, but he is a slower passer who isn't really all that good throwing the ball. (Avoid Dilweg at all costs.) However, Don has got some strings he can pull with his superstar WR Sterling Sharpe, if you choose to put him out at WR. He is a game-breaker, but you may very well need him to run the ball for you, particularly if Woodside is feeling miserable, plus Woodside isn't a good runner to begin with. Throwing jump balls to Sharpe is a big part of this offense. You can also get some pretty good room to run underneath as Sharpe clears out.

The rest of this passing offense is dictated by the physicality of the running game, what you want to sacrifice in terms of # of WRs out there who can't do a diddly in blocking vs. powerful players who will drop the ball. Perry Kemp and Jeff Query are the WRs you can use, but RB Herman Fontenot definitely deserves a look if you need more, because he has more speed underneath.

The Packers don't have much of a running game, but at least it isn't totally lifeless. Keith Woodside is who you start with; if he doesn't work, you go to Sharpe if you can play WR at RB. Otherwise, give up. Michael Haddix is a guy you can try against a weaker team to smash open some holes, but he doesn't have any speed, so it's not going to be easy to try that approach. It is worth mentioning as well, that with his 94 HP, you can let him lead block, but you definitely want to try and get him matched up against a drone that you can throw, because this guy can hit. Ed West is a decent blocker and he can catch a little too; he is one of the faster guys on this team. You definitely want West in there at all times. For additional power you can go to your reserve TE Jackie Harris, he is a downgraded West but he still has 44 HP, which is at least two notches better than anyone else on the team. After that, you are left with guys like Darrell Thompson who really aren't worth it unless you have a lot of guys hurt. If Woodside goes down, try Sharpe but if you can't do that, go with Herman Fontenot or Darrell Thompson; try not to feature Haddix unless the conditions dictate it, because you have no big-play threat at all with him unless he's in EXCELLENT.

The special teams of the Packers isn't great, they have a lot of similar

returners in ability and some of them are decent but not spectacular. Make sure not to use your starters on the return. Tim Harris can rush the FG kick. Chris Jacke is a decent kicker but nothing more.

I will let Paul describe this defense:

"NT Bob Nelson and OLB Tim Harris are the only glimmering points in this dismal defense. Offenses can have their way with the Green Bay D, because other than these two, every player is below average, and more than half are horrible."

The way to play with this team is to gamble on the pass with NT Bob Nelson and just try to survive the run with ROLB Tim Harris, because the offense is going to run at those two guys all day long. You have two Interceptions linebackers, but one of those is LOLB Scott Stephen and he's basically worthless in pass coverage. Nose tackle dive, blitz, whatever, you have to do something with Bob Nelson, one of the all-time great Tecmo legends - his Rushing Power gives him incredible burst. When you try for pass coverage (heaven forbid), you want to leave back behind the best matchup of Tim Harris vs. the LT or Bob Nelson vs. the C, because you need every last bit of pass rush you can muster with this miserable secondary and pass defense. Freeing up your boys: you almost have to do this because you need something, anything, to keep them from picking you apart. Watch for SS Mark Murphy and RCB Jerry Holmes to go up in condition; if they can get up into EXCELLENT, you might be able to do something about the pass, and they can add a whole other dimension to your run defense. You must focus on trying to bait the offense and calling their plays because you are not going to have any solid part of your defense they can't just hammer straight through without your guys being in EXCELLENT. As much as possible, avoid giving up big plays when you guess wrong, because you need every tackle you can get.

AGAINST:

Defensively, attack Majkowski. He will make life painful if you just let him rear back and find Sharpe, plus he can run it if you let him stretch out your defense with Sharpe. One easy way to do this is to free up your boys, as their entire left side is weak (C, LG, LT), so if you have anybody over there with speed, then free them up and let them go after Majkowski, especially a guy over the LT, as he will contain Majkowski and not let him roll to the top of the screen where he usually tries to hit Sharpe with a jump ball. That's the first key, but the second is to get short coverage as opposed to deep coverage, because this offense wants to throw to Sterling so much and you need to be back deep to try and cover him. This isn't to say you shouldn't get any deep coverage, because you should; but if you can get your drones to stop up and cover short and you have a guy pressuring Majkowski, you can go deep and double cover Sharpe to take away their big plays. Finally, you want to

try and work against the run using tactics. Green Bay isn't a great running team, but they have some power and they may be able to move the ball down the field if you just sit there and let them do whatever they want. If you can isolate only two big running plays that you have to guard, it backs them up when they try to focus a running game to keep from having to pass with the Majik Man so much. Getting Green Bay into longer yardage where they must pass allows you to just get after their passing game and shut them down in a series instead of having to take a lot of chances against Sharpe.

On your own offense, POUND THE ROCK. They have no one who can stop you if you just run at ROLB Tim Harris and NT Bob Nelson - so as long as you don't get too predictable, you will eat them alive. When you go to pass, look for big plays against LCB Mark Green, he can't catch worth a bleepety-bleep; so as long as SS Mark Murphy isn't double covering, you can really work him. As long as you keep using the run to get big plays and then burn them passing (don't get too greedy) you can smack this defense around.

### Minnesota Vikings

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	12
Offense	18
Defense	7
Pass D	7
Rush D	7

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Wade Wilson	11	QB	25	69	13	13	44	44	44	38
Rich Gannon	16	QB	25	69	13	13	25	38	25	31
Herschel Walker	34	RB	38	69	44	63	50	44		
Rick Fenney	31	RB	38	69	38	38	50	25		
Jessie Clark	33	RB	38	69	31	31	50	25		
Alfred Anderson	46	RB	38	69	31	31	50	25		
Hassan Jones	84	WR	31	69	31	13	50	63		
Anthony Carter	81	WR	44	69	56	13	50	75		
Leo Lewis	87	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
Cris Carter	80	WR	31	69	31	13	50	50		
Steve Jordan	83	TE	25	69	38	44	50	44		
Mike Jones	82	TE	25	69	19	50	50	25		
Kirk Lowdermilk	63	C	25	69	38	63				

Randall McDaniel 64 G 25 69 50 69  
 Todd Kalis 69 G 25 69 25 50  
 Gary Zimmerman 65 T 25 69 31 69  
 Tim Irwin 76 T 25 69 25 50  
 Fuad Reveiz 7 K 56 81 81 31 44 63  
 Harry Newsome 18 P 25 56 44 31 25 44  
 Chris Doleman 56 DE 31 44 50 69 31 69  
 Henry Thomas 97 NT 25 38 44 50 19 63  
 Al Noga 99 DE 25 31 38 50 31 56  
 M.[Mike]Merriweather 57 LB 31 44 50 56 44 69  
 Keith Millard 75 LB 38 50 56 69 19 81  
 Scott Studwell 55 LB 25 31 31 31 19 31  
 Ray Berry 50 LB 25 31 31 31 19 31  
 Reggie Rutland 48 CB 31 38 50 38 44 50  
 Carl Lee 39 CB 38 50 63 56 50 69  
 D.[Darrell]Fullington 29 FS 31 38 50 44 38 44  
 Joey Browner 47 SS 38 50 63 56 69 69

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Chi. 7. Phx. 13. Det.
2. Atl. 8. N.E. 14. BYE
3. S.F. 9. Phx. 15. T.B.
4. N.O. 10. T.B. 16. Rams
5. Den. 11. Chi. 17. G.B.
6. Det. 12. G.B.

#### Minnesota's Base Offense (RB at RB)

QB Wade Wilson  
 RB Herschel Walker  
 WR Cris Carter  
 Go-To WR Anthony Carter  
 WR Hassan Jones  
 TE Steve Jordan

#### Minnesota's Power Set (RB at RB)

QB Wade Wilson  
 RB Herschel Walker  
 FB Rick Fenney  
 WR Anthony Carter  
 TE Steve Jordan  
 Blocking TE Mike Jones

#### Leif's Crazy Set (what I would do)

QB Rich Gannon  
 Scatback Anthony Carter

FB Rick Fenney  
Hands WR Hassan Jones  
Physical Specimen Herschel Walker  
TE Steve Jordan

Minnesota is a team driven by star power but undermined offensively by a lack of talent at the QB position and a lack of speed. The key to mastering Minnesota is to get the most out of the limited offensive talent you have and then to close the game out with this powerful D.

QB Wade Wilson isn't the worst in the game, but it always seems to me that he's prone to meltdowns and choking. Conversely, while Rich Gannon's ratings look terrible, I find that he plays above his stats on a consistent basis, especially when he runs; he is quite a load to try and take down when he crosses the line of scrimmage. However, Rich's worst days far outdo Wilson's worst days. Take your pick.

In any event, throw it to Anthony Carter, as he is one of the top receivers in this game. He can stretch the field and he is a threat to pull it down at any time. Hassan Jones is not fast, but he has good hands. Cris Carter is your best third option, but I wouldn't bother with Leo Lewis at WR, as Mike Jones has much more power if you need another body. If you use Anthony Carter at RB (recommended but not required), then I would kick Herschel Walker out to block somebody because he's the best on this team at that, and try to get him going deep some, since he's then your speed WR. I would, as per usual, roll out with these guys, but you can hang in the pocket as well because of this pretty good offensive line. Steve Jordan may be able to do something in the deep passing game, but I wouldn't rely on him, the QBs have trouble throwing jump balls and Jordan's lack of speed means that if the QBs overthrow him, he won't even be close, and if the ball is underthrown, Jordan doesn't have enough Receptions in order to keep the ball out of the DB's hands. However, Jordan will make some plays for you, so don't forget about him.

In the running game, if you are allowed to use WR at RB, go with Anthony Carter for his speed, and zero in Herschel Walker on a weak guy. AC at RB is fast and can catch great, but he is not going to hold up in a struggle for any real length of time, so get him some help from Steve Jordan firstly, then Rick Fenney at the FB spot. Mike Jones can help if one of those guys is injured. If Herschel has to make the start, then know that he is powerful but not fast, but still not powerful enough to overwhelm the defense, so you are mainly going to use his strength in the context of MAN vs. MAN struggles. Again, protecting him is recommended, but none of the blockers on this team can just blow a guy straight up, so you are just going to tie guys up - that's still pretty decent though. If you have to go deeper than Herschel, either Rick Fenney or

Steve Jordan will do "nicely". You can run through the middle untouched with this team because of their powerful offensive line. Don't test speed too much in this running game, because with the exception of AC, none of these guys is going to get it done by sweeping outside. Try and feature the power dive if at all possible, both in order to minimize the speed required, and also to get your decently powerful blockers directly involved in this offense.

On special teams, Leo Lewis is a good punt returner but not a good kick returner. Mike Merriweather can get in there and block kicks pretty well, and the Minnesota coverage teams are solid to good. However, FUAD is a less-than-sufficient kicker, so don't rely on him to win games.

The Minnesota certainly has enough stars and quality players to make life painful for your opponent, but they are not invincible, so you can't gamble too much. RE Chris Doleman is the best of these guys; he can really lay a LG out, and he does have 50 MS and 31 Interceptions, so he's not a terrible cover man if you need someone. However, if you drop him into coverage, your pass rush will really suffer, so I can't recommend that course of action. The other two guys on this line aren't great but they are good enough to hold their own against most lines. LE Al Noga has 31 Interceptions, but he's not any kind of a pass defender, especially compared to the guys in the secondary, so don't bother about dropping him back to cover guys, as your recovery ability will be severely affected by his lack of speed.

The Minnesota LBs are half and half: half great guys and half losers. ROLB Mike Merriweather is a pretty good all-around defender, he's better than your FS Darrell Fullington AND your RCB Reggie Rutland in every way; and with 44 Interceptions, Merriweather can make you pay for trying to dump it to your backs. RILB Keith Millard is no slouch himself, he's not a great pass defender but he is a disruptive force against the run. Typically you won't find that Merriweather is going to be able to blow up his man, so you can drop him into coverage pretty regularly. You obviously want to use Merriweather as much as possible, but if Millard is the right man for the job, you aren't giving up all that much by going to him, so just be content to smack down the run in lieu of trying to totally suffocate the pass. Don't bother with the two losers at LILB and LOLB, Scott Studwell may have gotten screwed ratingswise even though he had a good career by then, but he still sucks. Likewise for Ray Berry.

The Minnesota secondary isn't very good at all, RCB Reggie Rutland has some speed but little else. FS Darrell Fullington is better at hitting but worse at catching and is still not what you expect out of the FS position as far as being a good MAN player to use against the run. The keys to the Minnesota secondary are their LCB Carl Lee and their great SS Joey Browner. Joey Browner is a beast with good speed, HP, and 69 Interceptions, and

Carl Lee's only dropoff is in the Interceptions (50). You definitely want to go to Joey Browner here and let the CBs cover, because they aren't going to get straight up beaten very often.

As far as the general strategy of the defense is concerned, you want Joey Browner whenever you know he's not in substantial danger of getting run at, and Mike Merriweather if he's not going to get beat up too badly, then Keith Millard if you have a particular run play that you know he can just shut down. If you have an obvious passing situation, then what you do is not too clear, because Browner is the better pass defender, but you can drop 5 guys into coverage if you use Merriweather. I would definitely go with Merriweather if I need general pass defense, but down in the red zone you want to go with Browner, because he can force the turnover you need to keep the offense from scoring. Know that no player on your team, unless they are in EXCELLENT (except for Chris Doleman) is a total beast against the run, so you will have to do some run defense. However, you have to find ways to shut down the run with those good LBs. If you can do that for a formation or two, you can call passes and get this decent secondary out there to cover, and that will make it close to impossible to get any rhythm other than jump balls in the passing game. With Merriweather going short you have a lot of options as to what you want to do with your coverage patterns - you don't have to worry much about the short pass as long as you get the deep coverage, so you want to watch for coverages that will get 3 guys going deep, and that will give you a pretty good opportunity to stall the offense.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, you want to kill the running game and force them to throw to win. The Pass Speed and the speed of the receivers isn't dominating except for Anthony Carter, so take away Carter with your coverages and then use your best pass defender to try for the rest. Neither QB is going to be that accurate throwing deep along the sideline, so if they try to run, you can often leave one guy open deep on the other side of the field and catch the QB, as long as you don't do it too often. If they have to throw it 25 times a game, they are in major trouble, even with Anthony Carter. They have some power in their runs so you will need to target them with playcalling somewhat, but they won't break too many big ones, so you don't need to be obsessed with that - covering the deep receivers is more important. Watch the run up the middle, they can get guys to come clean through the line with their powerful blocking up front. Herschel is powerful, so don't expect to take him down with a weak CB. Don't rely on drops, this team can catch out of the backfield, so just keep tackling them and make the offense pay for every yard.

On your own offense, throw against the top of their defense, they won't be able to pick you off very often if you put your hands receiver up there. DO NOT challenge SS Browner in the passing game, but do run at him if the other team starts trying to use him on every down. A key to beating the Vikings is

not to let ROLB Merriweather make any big plays; he is going to put a blanket on your short receivers, so prefer to run the QB over making the short pass, because he can both tip and intercept. Try to run at him as well to go for some big plays, because running to that top side takes you away from the strength of the secondary when you are trying to break out. Know that RE Chris Doleman may own your LG, so don't rely on a cohesive pocket, and roll out to the top to try and get your LT involved in blocking him, since the LT will often be free from having to block Merriweather who drops into coverage frequently. Know that the LBs are going to try and put a muzzle on your run, so targeting them is going to make them kick it out to Browner if that's what you want to set up. Doleman is a wild card in the running game; if you run to the bottom, the MAN may take him and try to blow up your guys down low, so make the MAN get away from him if you don't have any power blockers.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

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Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	21
Offense	16
Defense	21
Pass D	14
Rush D	21

Name	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Vinnie Testaverde	14	QB	25	69	31	13	31	56	44	44
Jeff Carlson	7	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Gary Anderson	40	RB	38	69	50	25	50	50		
Reggie Cobb	33	RB	44	69	25	94	50	44		
Bruce Perkins	32	RB	38	69	31	31	50	25		
John Harvey	26	RB	38	69	38	25	50	25		
Mark Carrier	88	WR	38	69	44	13	50	63		
Bruce Hill	84	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Danny Peebles	83	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44		
Willie Drewry	87	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Ron Hall	82	TE	25	69	38	44	50	44		
Jessie Anderson	89	TE	25	69	31	44	50	31		
Randy Grimes	60	C	25	69	38	31				
Carl Bax	75	G	25	69	25	38				
Ian Beckles	62	G	25	69	25	44				
Paul Gruber	74	T	25	69	25	50				
Rob Taylor	72	T	25	69	25	38				
Steve Christie	2	K	56	81	81	31	69	75		

Mark Royals	3	P	25	56	44	31	38	69
Jim Skow	71	DE	25	31	38	31	19	44
Tim Newton	96	NT	25	31	31	50	19	44
Reuben Davis	79	DE	25	38	31	50	19	38
Kevin Murphy	59	LB	25	31	38	31	19	25
Winston Davis	58	LB	25	31	31	31	31	38
Eugene Marve	99	LB	25	31	31	31	19	25
Broderick Thomas	51	LB	25	31	38	38	19	56
Wayne Haddix	45	CB	44	56	75	44	75	69
Ricky Reynolds	29	CB	25	31	38	31	50	38
Harry Hamilton	39	FS	25	31	44	44	56	50
Mark Robinson	30	SS	31	38	50	50	56	44

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Jets 7. BYE 13. Gia.
2. Chi. 8. N.O. 14. Mia.
3. G.B. 9. G.B. 15. Min.
4. Buf. 10. Min. 16. Chi.
5. Det. 11. Det. 17. Ind.
6. Phi. 12. Atl.

### Tampa Bay's Base Offense

QB Vinny Testaverde

RB Gary Anderson

FB Ron Hall

WR Mark Carrier

Physical WR Reggie Cobb

TE Jessie Anderson

Tampa Bay, thanks to Hugh Culverhouse, was a laughingstock of a team, always having some talent, but never any kind of consistency to it to get this team into the playoffs. Unfortunately, Lee Roy Selmon is gone, so this team is just absent up front, and the offense will have to use the rushing skill of Vinny Testaverde and a consistent unpredictable offensive attack to slow the game down, while scoring enough points to cover for the "thin" defense.

QB Vinny Testaverde is not a Hall of Famer, but he has 31 MS to complement his decent passing ability, so you definitely want to get him out and running early. Do note however, though Jeff Carlson is not a terrible backup, this team relies on Testaverde's ability to make plays; if you lose him, you lose the punch in your offense, so protect Testaverde and grind away. WR Mark Carrier is the nicest WR of this bunch by far; not an unstoppable playmaker, but he can torch a defense on any given Sunday.

Whom you pair with him is questionable: Willie Drewry is the best of the pure pass-catchers at WR, but TE Ron Hall and RB Gary Anderson are better than he is, not to mention the powerful and soft-handed Reggie Cobb. Really, this offense is dictated by the power run, so you want to get your big guys out there instead of marginal players like Drewry and Bruce Hill. Don't even mention Danny Peebles to me.

The running game of Tampa Bay is what gets them into the end zone by not allowing the defense to get any big easy plays; they will really have to bring their game to stop you. RB Gary Anderson is not a great back, but he has some measure of speed, so you want to feature him as he's the fastest player on your team. If he goes down, Mark Carrier is probably going to be the best bet, but otherwise, if the conditions are saying Carrier isn't in great shape, you look to John Harvey and Ron Hall next, followed by Jessie Anderson, Bruce Perkins, and Willie Drewry. The RB-only progression is Anderson->Harvey->Perkins. Reggie Cobb is a massive blocker, but he has no speed, thus he's only a desperation back unless you are going to try and smash him into a weak front seven to spring him. However, you must find a way for Cobb to hit some weak defender in the blocking game, because this guy can tear through a defense if his game is on. He can catch as well, so he is a good fit at WR if you have a particular drone corner you can focus in on, despite his slow feet. Ron Hall and Jessie Anderson can get some measure of blocking done and can catch OKish, so you want them to be in there most likely. You have to run outside though, this offensive line is terrible - \*\*\*\* sandwich is all I can say about C Randy Grimes, while LG Carl Bax and RT Rob Taylor are the fries and soda.

On special teams, Danny Peebles can certainly return the ball. No FG blocking to speak of here, but K Steve Christie is a good one, and you may need him in the clutch.

The Tampa Bay defense has 4 players and then 7 writhing carbon masses moving in an amoeba-like fashion towards the ball (that is, if they don't all get blown up by the team's power blockers). It's not worth it to talk about the front seven except to say that they all suck for anything sane; unless you can get tactics to work, these guys aren't worth touching, and they can't cover the pass worth a pigeon stool.

The DBs are where this team has to make its money. LCB Ricky Reynolds is bad; he can catch a little, but he's pretty slow and will be prey for both power runners and speed receivers. FS Harry Hamilton is better, and you can use him generally to a limited extent, but he isn't a burner or dominator by any means. SS Mark Robinson is a step up from Hamilton and is a decent safety, certainly. However, this defense lives and dies by the plays of RCB Wayne "Crack" Haddix, the best cover corner in this game. The key is to figure out how to stop the run - generally you are going to try and go to Mark Robinson if Haddix is in any major danger, in order

to stop the run without getting caught totally short. Also, you can try and protect Haddix by calling runs if the offense can't stretch the field, or you can come up behind the run. One thing to remember is that Haddix only has 44 HP, so you aren't going to be able to just run right in there and play possessed in order to stop the run; you have to discipline yourself and not allow the big running play, you want to give yourself a chance for fumbles and for Haddix to make big plays. Stopping the run at Haddix is important but not paramount, because you need for your guys to cover deep in order to give yourself a chance at stopping the QB run game; your front seven is not going to get the job done at all in any way, so it's basically the secondary that's responsible for the entire defense. Dissuade them from running at Haddix, then get drone coverage deep in order to keep the scoring to a minimum.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, you must take out Vinny Testaverde. If you don't do this, you will suffer. Testaverde is the heart and soul of this team, and if you let him perform his part of the running game, you are just going to get killed by a thousand cuts. You want to take away Carrier deep with coverage schemes, and then go and stop the run with whatever you have left. Against a team that wants to move the ball gradually down the field, you want to try for big plays, especially as far as calling their run plays; it's nice to call their passes, but they definitely have some power in their runs, so it's not going to be a simple matter necessarily to beat their run with just your LBs. If you can get them into longer yardage, now you can work against Carrier in a big way and force Testaverde to try and do things himself, and it gives you a cushion against his QB run. Plus, since you can free up all your boys on the line (even your ROLB, if you can beat down a 50 HP lineman), you can make it very difficult for Testaverde to get his runs started, and importantly, you can get him tackled in bounds which is going to wreak havoc on their offensive rhythm, forcing them to throw the ball more into coverage, which is an opportunity to make a big play should they manage to drive you into the red zone (and they can certainly do this if they stay unpredictable). Don't give them one thing; make them get lucky a lot in order to beat you, because no part of their offense is that potent, but considered together, they do have some stuff.

On offense, the key strategy when passing is to catch them in a run call, wait wait wait until RCB Haddix has to leave the screen and cover deep, then throw it short and run for the first down. Start by running at Haddix, see if they are going to try and protect him from the get-go. If they are, then throw it until you start drawing some coverage, then run right back again at Haddix (once). If you got smashed on that run, you know that the entire focus of the run defense is on protecting Haddix and not on a sweep down low or anything. Thus, you can then pound on the sweep down low for most of your

runs thereafter, and only occasionally run at Haddix. Otherwise, balance your runs both left and right so they don't get a pattern which they can then smartly exploit. Use power in the running game to keep Haddix and SS Robinson off you - they won't be able to contain you if you don't give them any favors by putting a bunch of WRs out there. If you must throw deep, throw it on the bottom side of the defense; you will encounter Robinson, but the LCB Ricky Reynolds will get beat by a speed receiver, so keep the pressure on that side. If you can make the corners pull up, Haddix may be forced to try and peel all the way over to that side to cover him before you can fire off the deep throw, which gives you a great opportunity for a quick QB run for a first down or somesuch. You are safe in the power dive up the middle, particularly if you lead with a great blocker, because you will just flat out tear up the ILBs. Just don't get in a sick predictable pattern and you should be OK to score 21 a game.

### San Francisco 49ers

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	2
Offense	2
Defense	3
Pass D	T-3
Rush D	3

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Joe Montana	16	QB	25	69	19	13	56	81	81	75
Steve Young	8	QB	25	69	25	13	56	44	50	56
Roger Craig	33	RB	38	69	50	25	50	44		
Tom Rathman	44	RB	44	69	25	94	50	56		
Dexter Carter	35	RB	38	69	44	19	50	38		
Harry Sydney	24	RB	38	69	44	25	50	31		
John Taylor	82	WR	38	69	50	13	63	69		
Jerry Rice	80	WR	44	69	69	13	81	81		
Mike Wilson	85	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Mike Sherrard	88	WR	38	69	44	13	50	50		
Brent Jones	84	TE	25	69	38	69	50	69		
Jamie Williams	81	TE	25	69	19	38	50	31		
Jesse Sapolu	61	C	25	69	38	63				
Guy McIntire	62	G	25	69	31	50				
Harris Barton	79	G	25	69	25	56				
Bubba Paris	77	T	25	69	19	69				

Steve Wallace	74	T	25	69	31	63
Mike Cofer	6	K	56	81	81	31 56 56
Barry Helton	9	P	25	56	44	31 19 38
Kevin Fagan	75	DE	25	31	38	50 19 44
Michael Carter	95	NT	25	31	38	69 19 56
Pierce Holt	78	DE	31	44	50	69 19 50
Bill Romanowski	53	LB	31	44	50	50 19 63
Keith DeLong	59	LB	25	31	38	44 19 44
Matt Millen	54	LB	25	38	50	63 31 63
Charles Haley	94	LB	38	50	56	63 19 75
Don Griffin	29	CB	31	38	50	38 50 50
Darryl Pollard	26	CB	25	31	44	44 38 44
Ronnie Lott	42	FS	44	56	69	69 50 75
Dave Waymer	43	SS	38	50	63	50 69 63

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Gia. 7. Atl. 13. Rams
2. S.D. 8. Det. 14. N.O.
3. Min. 9. Phi. 15. Sea.
4. Rams 10. Atl. 16. K.C.
5. Rai. 11. N.O. 17. Chi.
6. BYE 12. Phx.

### San Francisco's Base Offense

QB Joe Montana  
 RB Roger Craig  
 FB Tom Rathman  
 Jump-Ball WR John Taylor  
 In-Coverage WR Jerry Rice  
 TE Brent Jones

### Leif's Crazy Set

QB Joe Montana  
 Scatback Jerry Rice  
 FB Tom Rathman  
 Deep Threat John Taylor  
 Physical WR Brent Jones  
 Third Option Roger Craig

The 49ers dominated the NFL in the '80s and come pretty close to that standard in this game. The lethal passing game of the 49ers is what makes them such a frustrating team to play, and they have a top defense that can make games very ugly very quickly for an inferior team.

Both QB Joe Montana and QB Steve Young are mobile, Young with 25 MS and Montana with 19 MS. You don't really need to move them around much if you don't want to though, this offensive line is one of the best in the game. You want to keep Montana from getting gratuitous hits, but you aren't losing all that much with Young, so eat away at their defense with the QB run when John Taylor (possibly with Jerry Rice) stretches the field. If you need a jump ball, go to John Taylor; Jerry Rice is too fast, he'll just run right up to the ball. However, Rice can make some sick catches in coverage, so it's not as though he's a total wash. Rice can stretch the field a lot better than Taylor, but you may end up using him at RB for his great speed. Tom Rathman is slow, but can the guy catch. Same way with Brent Jones, he's not a bad option at all. Roger Craig and Mike Sherrard are two guys who can both catch and run. In a pinch you can use Dexter Carter to catch passes; he's not going to drop many balls from Montana, although he can drop some from Young. Surprisingly, this team is not good at jump balls at all, as the speed of the receivers combined with the accuracy of Montana makes it a lot more difficult to get a huge play when everyone is covered.

Focus on passing quickly and getting yards after the catch, especially with Montana->Rice. However, if nothing is available immediately, the speed of Taylor and Rice will create a mismatch against lesser defenders, and you will be able to complete deep passes when they create separation.

The 49ers' running game is not as good as their passing game, but they have some talent here too. If at all possible, use Jerry Rice at RB, his 69 MS makes him eminently qualified. However, Roger Craig isn't a \_terrible\_ back, just not a very good one when it comes to pure running. If Craig goes down, put in Dexter Carter and then Harry Sydney to get the takes. The power in this running game is in the starters: Rathman is an explosive fullback, and you need to find him someplace where he can knock some heads, because he can take two guys off their feet on any given play. Brent Jones is no slouch at blocking, but he isn't the terror that Rathman is. Your options past those two starters aren't really appetizing, as Jamie Williams is just too slow and too weak to really make his mark in anything but blocking, and with the amount of talent and depth on this team, that starter spot is better used somehow else.

The special teams of the 49ers are pretty good. Mike Cofer is a decent kicker, while Bill Romanowski can certainly block some kicks in a given season. The coverage teams are outstanding, and John Taylor is one of the best punt returners in the game. Harry Sydney and Mike Sherrard have some return skills as well. However, the shameful P Barry Helton keeps these special teams from being the second best in the game to Pittsburgh.

The 49ers' defense is overshadowed by their offense, but there are at least 15 head coaches in this game who would kill to get this kind of talent.

This line is vicious: RE Kevin Fagan isn't that good, but NT Michael Carter and LE Pierce Holt will evaporate their men in a hurry. Holt is a pretty fast guy with closing ability. Just let these guys work, they can get it done and you have some dang good LBs you can cover with.

ROLB Bill Romanowski isn't the best LB for the 49ers, but he does have some run-stopping skills. RILB Keith Delong isn't a terrible LB, but he is not worth using except for a very specific tactic. LILB Matt Millen is the best all-around LB here with 31 Interceptions. However, LOLB Charles Haley is the best run-stopper, but don't expect him to come free on a lot of plays, as he is going to get skunked by the sweep down low. Typically you want to use Millen out of this set, unless there is a specific run which you can shut down cold with the OLBs.

The secondary is hot and lukewarm. RCB Don Griffin is a decent cover corner, but LCB Darryl Pollard is just flat out ick. He is the one weakness of this defense, and you have to find a way to keep him from being exposed. However, the two safeties here are the best tandem in the league. FS Ronnie Lott plays possessed, and despite having only 50 Interceptions, he is one of the best all-around defenders in the game. SS Dave Waymer isn't as good against the run, but he can certainly strangle the pass. The key here is to try and use Lott mostly, both because he's not as vulnerable to the run, and also to try and protect Darryl Pollard by having Waymer stay over the top or pick up the receiver.

Overall, the strategy is to stop the run cold with the LBs who can do almost anything in that regard, then go with Millen on passing downs and force them to dump it short of the first down marker. If you want to try for turnovers, then go with Lott or Waymer. Being aggressive is the best thing with this defense, because CPU-controlled Lott and Waymer can certainly clean up on any runs that get past the LBs. Plus, they can't stretch the field on you too much because of the pass rush you will get.

#### AGAINST:

Single coverage. You heard me right, single coverage even on Rice. Of course, you want to try and get back there to help out, but the thing is, the 49ers are going to rip you apart underneath if you just go and freak about Rice. Rice is not invincible and you can hold him down provided the MAN doesn't go to him every single time. The key here is to make the 49ers pass and have them make mistakes and let your coverage make plays. If the 49ers can get a lethal passing game AND a good-enough running game going, you are toast. I have held the 49ers to 14 points using the Cardinals - they are not invincible by half, as long as you throw down their running game. That is easier said than done, but you want to try and key in on their running game first, and in longer yardage, try and call their pass play to avoid their jump balls and passes in coverage to Rice. Your playcalling is what will win or lose you the ballgame, so definitely focus on patterns they have instead of trying to get just general coverage or

general run defense - you will give them a lot of chances at deep passes if you don't try and call 10 of their plays in the game. If they bring Rice into the backfield, you must go all-out against the run. Stay solid and don't gamble against their run: frustrating their ability to get big plays will send more deep passes into coverage that they shouldn't be making, and that impatience will help you stop them. Just stay disciplined and let the odds come to you; don't go freaking out if they screw you over in the first quarter, just keep playing good, solid, fundamental defense and you can contain this team.

On your own offense, Ronnie Lott is a disaster waiting to happen. Avoid him at all costs. Throw the ball against LCB Darryl Pollard but NOT against SS Dave Waymer, he can make you pay too. Be totally unpredictable in what you will do, even if you have a play that is working well; the 49ers have the personnel to stop almost anything you do if you do it a lot, so make them work against your QB run and your short passing game. Keep sending receivers deep even though they may be getting covered, so that the MAN doesn't start getting bold and bringing the safeties in close - you will go three-and-out every time if Lott gets to patrol the short middle.

Always roll out to the top so that you can avoid NT Carter and LE Holt. Keep in mind though, Romo may lie in wait for you and blitz you straight off the snap, so don't be lulled into a sense of security. Avoid throwing it into coverage short, because one of those guys may be LILB Matt Millen and that is not a matchup you like. Once you get into field goal range, come away with points, as this will force the 49ers' offense to score touchdowns, and that will pressure them into doing stupid things with their passing game. The 49ers will win the luck battle with Montana-Taylor and Montana-Rice, so don't give them the game by not at least establishing a threshold that they have to pass in order to beat you. Use the sidelines and run out of bounds, because you are going to be in trouble if you let them tackle you all 40 snaps of your offense.

### Los Angeles Rams

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	22
Offense	9
Defense	25
Pass D	25
Rush D	26

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Jim Everett	11	QB	25	69	13	13	56	63	50	44

Chuck Long	16	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	31	38
Cleveland Gary	43	RB	38	69	50	38	38	38		
Curt Warner	21	RB	38	69	38	31	50	25		
Gaston Green	44	RB	38	69	44	25	50	25		
Buford McGee	24	RB	38	69	44	31	50	50		
Henry Ellard	80	WR	44	69	50	13	50	81		
Willie [Flipper]										
Anderson	83	WR	44	69	56	13	50	75		
Derrick Faison	89	WR	25	69	25	13	50	44		
Aaron Cox	84	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Pete Holohan	81	TE	25	69	19	56	81	56		
Damone Johnson	86	TE	25	69	19	44	81	31		
Doug Smith	56	C	25	69	38	63				
Tom Newberry	66	G	25	69	31	50				
Bern Brostek	61	G	25	69	25	56				
Irv Pankey	75	T	25	69	25	63				
Jackie Slater	78	T	25	69	31	63				
Mike Lansford	1	K	56	81	81	31	19	25		
Keith English	8	P	25	56	44	31	19	50		
Brian Smith	96	DE	25	31	38	38	19	31		
Alvin Wright	99	NT	25	31	38	50	19	31		
Doug Reed	93	DE	25	31	38	44	19	44		
Mike Wilcher	54	LB	25	31	38	38	19	31		
Fred Strickland	53	LB	25	31	38	38	19	25		
Frank Stams	50	LB	25	31	38	31	19	25		
Kevin Greene	91	LB	38	50	56	69	19	69		
Bobby Humphery	48	CB	31	38	50	31	56	31		
Jerry Gray	25	CB	25	31	38	31	38	38		
Anthony Newman	26	FS	25	31	31	44	44	31		
Vince Newsome	22	SS	31	38	50	31	56	44		

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Phx. 7. S.D. 13. S.F.
2. Gia. 8. Rai. 14. Was.
3. N.O. 9. Atl. 15. Atl.
4. S.F. 10. N.O. 16. Min.
5. G.B. 11. K.C. 17. Sea.
6. BYE 12. Det.

### The Rams' Base Offense

QB Chris Everett/Chuck Long

RB Willie Anderson

FB Pete Holohan

Go-To WR Henry Ellard

2nd WR Buford McGee

Punk Cleveland Gary

The Rams' 2 Minute Offense  
QB Chuck Long  
WR Derrick Faison/Aaron Cox  
Underneath WR Pete Holohan  
WR Henry Ellard  
WR Flipper Anderson  
WR Buford McGee

The Los Angeles Rams can light up the scoreboard, but so will their opponents, with this pitiful defense. In order to get past .500, you must play great defense and avoid turning the ball over with Chris Everett and Chuck Long (not to mention Cleveland Gary!).

Which QB to use here is a mystery. Everett can really smoke a defense if he's in EXCELLENT, but I have always seen him do nothing but choke and melt down in AVERAGE. I personally prefer Chuck Long because he plays above his stats, but he's not that great either, though Long can really get hot. Whatever decision you make, you are going to want to stretch the field and throw it deep to Henry Ellard and Flipper Anderson, those two can really get it done. However, you may have to take one of them away for the sake of the running game, which is this offense's weakness. Pete "Hologram" Holohan can make some clutch catches in coverage to score the football, but he doesn't have tremendous big-play ability due to his slow speed. RB Buford McGee actually has some skills, both with his legs and his hands. Whether Derrick Faison or Aaron Cox is better is a matter of debate: Faison can get his game on when seemingly no one else on this team can, but Cox has better ratings. After that, if you're in the mood for a heart attack, you could always put Cleveland Gary in there - he's the last real pass-catcher out there, but boy, can he lose the ball.

The running game is the weak link of this offense by far; if you can, use Ellard or Flipper to jump-start the ground game. Otherwise, feature Buford McGee and follow him up with Gaston Green should he go down. Curt Warner is then your emergency back, good luck...the power in this running game comes from Holohan, Cardiac Gary, and if you want extra beef, Damone Johnson. However, unless you are being wracked by injuries, Johnson doesn't have any place out there with the talent of the starters. At least you have a good offensive line to run behind.

The Rams' special teams...ick. Terrible kickers, no ability to block kicks. Returners, maybe Faison or Cox is worth something, just don't put any starters, Gary, and maybe not even Curt Warner back there, special teams can only be miserable for the LA Rams...

The Rams are defensively challenged in every way. Eight spots on this roster are pitiful, talking about them would make no sense. You do have two secondary defenders - RCB Bobby Humphery is one of my favorite guys, but he is just a cover corner, and you can't use him against the run without a superstar A button. Likewise with SS Vince Newsome. Only against the obvious pass should you be using either one of those DBs. At all other times, defense begins with LOLB Kevin Greene; he is a big bulls-eye for the sweep down low, but he's all you've got. Not a great pass defender but he can stop the run provided it's not coming at him (which it usually is). Just stick in there and try at all costs to protect Greene against the run, because he is your only real hope defensively against the run and he has to be upright for this to happen. Don't use him if you are scared about the run to his side, but in all other running situations you must be able to use him effectively. He's got pretty good power, so you can hit some weak WRs and such. Having thus sold out against the run, you are pretty much in for a ride with the pass, just try not to give up big plays, but you will, it's a fact of life when you have to just hang on for dear life with Kevin Greene. Try to call their passes, that's much more effective than trying to slug it out with Humphery and Newsome. And remember...the best defense is a good offense. -\_^

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, take away the deep ball and make them work it underneath. They do have some power in that regard, but the Rams' deep ball is what gets them hot. If you can make them throw to Holohan and McGee, you are halfway there. The second priority is to snuff out the Rams' running game; beat their WRs when you charge in, but if Holohan or Johnson is in the way, you may be in for a ride. Make them grind it out and get tackled in bounds so that they will fumble. The Rams may try the QB run, but you can deal with Everett or Long running - if they have to run the ball every down and you are calling passes to keep their receivers in coverage, you are going to hand them a long third down sooner or later. Make Everett and Long put it up 25 times a game, of which only 5 or 7 will be to Flipper and Ellard. Most importantly, don't let them get any quick scores, because if this offense can get enough chances, they will put points on the board and threaten to beat you by outscoring you. Control the tempo of their offense and make them beat your defense all the way down 80 yards to score.

Offensively, don't throw it into huge coverage. Try to avoid SS Newsome and RCB Bobby Humphery, but really, your key here is to stretch their defense so far apart with the pass that you have them at your mercy. Put your speed receiver on the bottom of the field and let him work, but using both sides of the field is important because neither one has

great pass defense and you get more opportunities for deep balls. You don't want to be too slow in your offensive attack, because enough hits by LOLB Kevin Greene, and now they have a chance for a fumble. Run near the sidelines to preserve your possession, once you've squeezed most of the yards out of the play. Kill Kevin Greene if your play won't get called, otherwise pass - pretty simple.

### New Orleans Saints

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	24
Offense	24
Defense	23
Pass D	24
Rush D	22

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4
Steve Walsh	3	QB	25	69	13	13	44	38	50 50
John Fourcade	11	QB	25	69	13	13	44	44	31 38
Craig Heyward	34	RB	44	69	25	94	50	31	
Dalton Hilliard	21	RB	38	69	50	25	50	25	
Reuben Mayes	36	RB	38	69	44	25	50	31	
Gil Fenerty	22	RB	38	69	44	25	50	31	
Eric Martin	84	WR	31	69	38	13	50	69	
Brent [sic-Brett]									
Perriman	80	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50	
Lonzell Hill	87	WR	25	69	19	13	50	44	
Floyd Turner	88	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44	
Hoby Brenner	85	TE	25	69	19	44	50	38	
John Tice	82	TE	25	69	19	38	50	31	
Joel Hilgenberg	61	C	25	69	44	50			
Jim Dombrowski	72	G	25	69	31	69			
Steve Trapilo	65	G	25	69	31	50			
Kevin Haverdink	74	T	25	69	25	56			
Stan Brock	67	T	25	69	44	69			
Morten Andersen	7	K	56	81	81	31	56	69	
Tommy Barnhardt	6	P	25	56	44	31	63	44	
Renaldo Turnbull	97	DE	31	44	50	63	19	63	
Jim Wilks	94	NT	31	44	50	56	19	69	
Wayne Martin	93	DE	25	31	38	44	19	44	
Pat Swilling	56	LB	31	44	50	63	19	63	
Vaughan Johnson	53	LB	31	44	50	69	19	31	

Sam Mills	51 LB	25 38 44 50 19 31
Rickey Jackson	57 LB	25 31 38 38 19 56
Toi Cook	41 CB	25 31 38 38 44 38
Robert Massey	40 CB	31 38 50 44 56 50
Gene Atkins	28 FS	25 31 38 44 44 50
Brett Maxie	39 SS	31 38 50 44 44 38

#### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.

1. Sea. 7. Phi. 13. Atl.
2. K.C. 8. T.B. 14. S.F.
3. Rams 9. Chi. 15. Dal.
4. Min. 10. Rams 16. Rai.
5. Atl. 11. S.F. 17. Phx.
6. BYE 12. S.D.

#### The Saints' One-Back Offense

QB Of The Day

RB Dalton Hilliard

FB Craig Heyward

WR Eric Martin

Backup WR Reuben Mayes

TE Hoby Brenner

#### The Saints' Two-Back Jamboree

QB Of The Day

RB Dalton Hilliard

RB Reuben Mayes

WR Eric Martin

TE Hoby Brenner

TE Craig Heyward

The New Orleans Saints hadn't won any playoff games before 1991, and thanks to the lack of stars on this team, it won't happen in 1991 either. The players on this team are good backups and depth guys, but most of them can't cut it as starters and that is why New Orleans must battle to get to .500 on the year.

Steve Walsh...carbon-based life form. John Fourcade...not much if any better. The difference between these two guys is that while Walsh has more ability to throw jump balls and complete passes in coverage, Fourcade typically throws less interceptions, although he's not exactly Joe Montana either. Eric Martin is really the only target worth throwing to if he's not wide open, these receivers just suck. Go with the power of the running game instead of the molasses of the passing game, save for Martin of

course - he can get 5 for 255 sometimes even if the D humps him. Knowing when the QB can throw it to Martin and get a jump ball is a big key to winning games. Know that when you try to throw it to anyone else, that they are going to drop the ball now and then, so look for the big play if you have a good chance, in order to stay ahead of the chains and keep whichever QB from throwing too much. However, the speed underneath is pretty decent at RB, so it's not as though you are lost on a desert island; just don't expect to be able to throw 10 passes a drive and get away with it on a consistent basis.

The Saints however do have at least one way of scoring. "But Ironhead, what's this?" RB Dalton Hilliard's career was cut short by knee injury, but in this game he is not an absolutely terrible ballcarrier. Massive FB Ironhead Heyward can blow up a lot of defenders; you have got to get him somewhere to smash open the hole for Hilliard, because he's neither a good runner nor a good receiver. The backups on this team are pretty decent: Reuben Mayes is your first option because you want Fenerty for special teams, but if Gil is feeling happier than Reuben, give Fenerty the takes. If all else fails, Hoby Brenner can carry if you need him that badly, but know that your running game is toast in that event. The power in this running game comes from Heyward and Brenner; John Tice is too slow to justify putting him in over a guy like Mayes. This will make you a little vulnerable to the powerful run defenders, but not to the extent that it'll wipe you out. Your offensive line isn't terrible, so don't be afraid to run 20 times a game.

The special teams of the Saints just kick \*\*\*. K Morten Andersen and P Tommy Barnhardt are both good players, the coverage teams are decent, but the crown jewel here is the return teams, specifically the kickoff return team. Gil "The Thrill" Fenerty is a wild animal when he takes the kickoff - I have returned at least four kickoffs for touchdowns against a MAN in my 30ish games in the last year with New Orleans, against a MAN - this guy is half the Saints' offense. I would even go so far as to say that you might not want him on your punt return team, because his kickoff ability is that good. Reuben Mayes can back up Fenerty, and you might try using one of the useless WRs like Floyd Turner on the PR or KR as well. A lot of guys on this team can rack up yards like nobody's business on kicks and punts.

The Saints' D is not that good because they don't have a great pass defender who can shut you down, or even two decent DBs, but the overall quality of the unit means the opponent isn't just going to be able to waltz into the end zone. The line is decent: RE Renaldo Turnbull and NT Jim Wilks rush the passer and play the run well, while LE Wayne Martin won't let you down too much.

The LBs are two up and two down: RILB Vaughan Johnson is the best of them and ROLB Pat Swilling is not a terrible player either, but you want Johnson because Swilling is also going to rush the passer and the RILB doesn't,

plus Johnson is slightly stronger. LILB Sam Mills isn't a terrible player either, but he's not dominating in this game, while LOLB Rickey Jackson is not worth using.

The DBs are less than good. RCB Toi Cook WILL get you killed against a great receiver (or a good receiver in great condition), although he does have a little defensive talent, enough to shut down bad receivers. FS Gene Atkins can't make it happen either. LCB Robert Massey is the best pass defender on this team by far, but SS Brent Maxie is not going to be able to hold the fort for long periods of time. Basically, check the conditions here, but you definitely prefer Massey because he can pick off the opposing QB, while the others are kind of average LBs playing DB. None of these guys can stop the run with any consistency, so if you need that ability, you had better go with Johnson or Swilling.

Overall, the defensive strategy is to use Johnson to play possessed, and use Massey when it's an obvious pass. You want to stop them quickly as opposed to letting them grind it out, because they can burn you with the jump ball pretty easily. Look for big plays against the run in the early downs, then stop the QB run on 3rd and 5 if at all possible.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, Eric Martin can and will burn you if you leave him alone or even in single coverage, but no one else can. Get a single man on him and double up deep when you know the short pass is not a threat. The running game is what you must shut down though; they can get some yards on you, so just put them straight down in the running game and make the miserable Saint QBs beat you. They are kind of powerful in the running game, so you will have to use some playcalling to achieve this, but overall, this is not a potent offense by any means. Use your best pass defender if possible, because you can force the QBs to turn it over pretty easily if they start to try and dump it short, plus you have Martin to think about, plus you are stacking against the run with your playcalling. Overall, this offense is not a big challenge; to shut them down hard, take out Hilliard because he gives them a little big-play ability. However, even if you break his kneecaps, Mayes and Fenerty can fill in pretty well, so don't go freaking about tackling Hilliard in bounds.

Offensively, pass first against the top side; RCB Toi Cook and FS Gene Atkins are not going to get it done in any way whatsoever, and if you put your hands receiver up there, you are going to score with little risk of turning it over. The only guy you really need to avoid in the passing game is LCB Robert Massey, but he isn't terribly fearsome. If you pass the ball quickly to the receiver on the top of the screen, Massey simply isn't going to be able to stop you and that is going to wreak all kinds of havoc with their pass defense when the MAN tries to adjust.

When you go to pass, watch out for RE Turnbull, NT Wilks, and ROLB Swilling.

Try to stretch the defense and run out of bounds to avoid taking too many hits from their powerful right-side LBs, because those guys are the only ones who are going to make the tackle on you. Going to run, run on their side - if you can run at those top LBs they have (which will also consume their good linemen in the process), you are going to get some big plays and you are going to make life very easy for yourself in the passing game, because the DBs that the MAN can use are not going to get it done if you are playing smart. Don't do stupid things, because you should be able to score every time down the field against this team, and if you give them any turnovers, you are letting the Saints back into the ballgame.

### Atlanta Falcons

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#### Points and Rankings

Category	Rank
Subjective	
Overall	16
Offense	15
Defense	19
Pass D	17
Rush D	19

Name	# Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	
Chris Miller	12	QB	25	69	13	13	31	44	50	31
Hugh Millen	7	QB	25	69	13	13	38	38	38	38
Mike Rozier	30	RB	38	69	50	25	50	31		
Michael Haynes	81	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Steve Broussard	34	RB	38	69	38	25	50	31		
Keith Jones	38	RB	38	69	38	31	50	25		
Floyd Dixon	86	WR	25	69	25	13	50	50		
Andre Rison	80	WR	44	69	63	13	50	75		
Tracy Johnson	43	RB	38	69	31	50	50	25		
George Thomas	89	WR	31	69	31	13	50	44		
Shawn Collins	85	WR	44	69	50	13	50	50		
Gary Wilkins	87	WR	25	69	25	31	50	31		
Jamie Dukes	64	C	25	69	19	50				
Houston Hoover	69	G	25	69	19	44				
Bill Fralic	79	G	25	69	44	50				
Mike Kenn	78	T	25	69	31	38				
Chris Hinton	71	T	25	69	31	69				
Greg Davis	5	K	56	81	81	31	25	50		
Scott Fulhage	17	P	25	56	44	31	63	69		
Tim Green	99	DE	25	31	38	50	19	56		
Tory Epps	97	NT	25	31	38	56	19	44		

Mike Gann	76 DE	31 44 50 50 19 56
Darion Conner	56 LB	25 31 38 38 19 31
John Rade	59 LB	25 31 38 38 19 31
Jessie Tuggle	58 LB	25 38 44 38 19 50
Michael Reed	95 LB	25 31 38 38 19 31
Deion Sanders	21 CB	44 56 75 56 56 50
Charles Dimry	22 CB	25 31 31 31 50 25
Scott Case	25 FS	25 31 38 31 50 25
Brian Jordan	40 SS	25 31 25 44 50 19

### Schedule

Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp. Wk. Opp.  
 1. K.C. 7. S.F. 13. N.O.  
 2. Min. 8. Phx. 14. G.B.  
 3. S.D. 9. Rams 15. Rams  
 4. Rai. 10. S.F. 16. Sea.  
 5. N.O. 11. Was. 17. Dal.  
 6. BYE 12. T.B.

### The Falcons' Conventional Base Offense

QB Hugh Millen  
 RB Mike Rozier  
 RB Steve Broussard  
 WR Andre Rison  
 WR Shawn Collins  
 TE Tracy Johnson

### Leif's Base Offense

QB Hugh Millen  
 Fast-But-Loose RB Andre Rison  
 Pass-Catching RB Steve Broussard  
 Go-To WR Shawn Collins  
 Speed WR Mike Rozier  
 TE Tracy Johnson

### Leif's Power Set

QB Hugh Millen  
 RB Andre Rison  
 FB Tracy Johnson  
 WR Shawn Collins  
 Backup WR Steve Broussard  
 TE Keith Jones

The Atlanta Falcons are the most schizophrenic team in this game.  
 They can break games wide open or they can get totally shut out. They can

run for 200 yards or for 35 yards. They can dominate the opposing offense or get a major spanking. The reason for this is the heavy reliance on the stars, which means that you must master them in order to advance in the playoffs. This is a team that can give all kinds of readings to all kinds of different people - you really have to play with them for a while to know if you can tolerate their inconsistency. As a result, a lot of the ratings I give these players are controversial, so you should not necessarily take me as the last word on these guys, especially in Preseason.

QB Chris Miller...he is just not going to cut it. The chemistry he has with this team is just terrible; he never seems to be in sync with his receivers and that really hurts this team, because these guys have some good WRs and that is the strength of this offense. Therefore, you should use Hugh Millen, who, while being as schizophrenic as any Tecmo QB, can be a clutch player late in the year and can put on some dominating performances in the deep passing game, thanks to jump balls pulled down by Shawn Collins, his favorite receiver.

It seems as though no QB on this team can throw good jump balls to Andre Rison, but Rison has great speed and Receptions. However, in my view, Rison is a choker with a severe case of fumblitis. I personally think Rison is best at RB because he can make an impact there, whereas the QBs here aren't suited to his talents at all. Shawn Collins on the other hand, if Hugh Millen can throw him a good jump ball (and he can in the season games), he will absolutely destroy any secondary. This guy has pulled down more jump balls in more key situations than I have seen any Tecmo WR pull down in his entire career. Shawn Collins can easily catch 2 balls for 117 yards in any given game. Don't rely on him in Preseason though, Millen is not any kind of a QB in Preseason. Know also that you have to have quick feet with your QB, because the left side of your line can evaporate against a strong pass rush from the ROLB and RE. However, I wouldn't recommend moving Collins to the bottom that much because he really seems to thrive up top; however, if you are just getting owned up there, sacrificing Collins to the QB running game is not a bad option.

The other receiving options aren't good. RB Steve Broussard is by far the best of the remaining options, he will kill the defense underneath and he has a knack for making clutch plays. Past him, you have slow and not good receivers like Michael Haynes, faster but lacking hands guys like Mike Rozier and George Thomas, and you have (relatively) powerful guys like Tracy Johnson and Keith Jones who can't catch at all. I would definitely recommend filling out the rest of your roster with Rozier for his speed, then Tracy Johnson because he has power which will help you in your running game. However, don't expect to be able to throw to either of those guys, because they will certainly drop the ball with regularity.

The running game of the Falcons lacks power to some degree but is not terrible, especially if you can use Andre Rison at RB. Rison at RB is a speed demon, but

he can fumble and you want to protect him, so run out of bounds with him. If you can't use him, Rozier has some speed and is kind of a natural RB, can't catch, can't block, but can run a little bit. Failing him, if you can spare it in the passing game, Shawn Collins is an option, but if you can't use him, then go to Broussard, who is a hard-working back but doesn't have much talent at pounding the rock. If all else fails, Keith Jones or Tracy Johnson has to be doing something in terms of their condition. Jones and Johnson both are your power blockers, Johnson is by far the better of the two but Jones usually won't get rolled by a strong run defender. The left side of the offensive line is flat out bad (LG, LT) but fortunately you can find some room to run on the right side.

The coverage and return units in general aren't anything special, Broussard is a pretty good KR but not a good PR. Rison is a good PR...but do you want to give up a touchdown every time he fumbles? No advice past that. K Greg Davis is just awful, try to avoid using him by getting big pass plays.

The Falcons' defense is basically 4 guys you might ever hear about, and then 4 guys who will get by, and then 3 chumps mooching off Jerry Glanville. The line is solid but not great. Every DB but RCB Deion Sanders is slow but can get a pick now and then, and the LBs...the only "Midnight Rade" these guys will be making is a heavy assault on the team fridge. Check conditions frequently if you plan to use any no-name player.

Now as to the names on this D. LILB Tuggle is mentioned but he's slow and not good for much of anything except tactics. FS Scott Case has a real tendency to jump up and bat balls down, he's the second best DB on the squad. LE Mike Gann has 50 MS and 50 HP so you can use him to cover in a pinch, and he can also be used to help stop the run. The key to this defense, though, is RCB Deion Sanders, one of the better cover men in the game. His biggest strength is his speed (75 MS) but he can cover the run and intercept to a certain extent as well.

Stop everything you possibly can with Deion, because you don't want to have to use Mike Gann or Jessie Tuggle to cover passes. If that means calling runs, so be it. Use Deion's speed to harass the opposing running back, but Deion isn't a powerful player; you can't throw people with him. If they try to run at him, Case or Gann will probably be able to stop whatever they are bringing. Call passes to try and get your guys in coverage; they can cover better than one might think because they tip so many balls. However, the run comes first because Deion can cover a lot of the field. If you can make them hold the ball, you have an outside chance of Gann or NT Tory Epps getting pressure.

#### AGAINST:

Defensively, don't bother trying to double cover Shawn Collins or stop the jump ball, it's not going to happen. However, Rison can be double covered - typically, he will end up catching it in stride, thus you

can get the extra guy on him. Their running game is undermined by the amount of pass-catchers and playmakers they want to deploy, so try and focus on them with a powerful run defender, while calling passes to get the deep coverage you need to stop them from stretching the field and opening up Millen's run or Broussard's catches underneath. Know that if you leave open any guy but the WRs and Broussard, that you have at least an OK chance for a drop. Don't let them run the ball; if they can get the running game going, Millen will have a lot of options and you aren't going to be able to stop the jump balls and QB sneaks at all. Make sure to tackle them in bounds because Atlanta is known to fumble the ball. Keep them out of the end zone by playing it safe and make them use their terrible K Greg Davis to score.

Offensively, avoid Deion. Run at Deion. Do anything, but make it impossible for Deion to make any plays. Deion is their defense and you don't need to really fear anyone else, but don't throw it into their DBs unless you really like the matchup - they can tip balls with some regularity. Run early and run often against the LBs because they are all weak - the power dive is a great play to use against this team. Try to get your power personnel matched up on Deion in the running game, as you can get great success that way. However, don't rely too much on the sweep down low, because Deion has great speed and he can make the play down there if the MAN knows how to use him. Play to your strengths because other than Deion, this defense has none.

### AFC Pro Bowl Squad

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#### Roster

Name	Team	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total	Perc.
QB Bills [Jim Kelly]	Buf.	0	QB	25	69	13	13	56	81	81	81	419	96
Warren Moon	Hou.	1	QB	25	69	19	13	69	75	75	63	408	93
Bo Jackson	Rai.	34	RB	38	69	75	31	81	19			313	99
Thurman Thomas	Buf.	34	RB	38	69	63	25	75	50			320	96
Bobby Humphrey	Den.	26	RB	38	69	63	38	50	38			296	96
James Brooks	Cin.	21	RB	38	69	56	31	50	38			282	93
Andre Reed	Buf.	83	WR	25	69	56	13	56	69			288	90
Drew Hill	Hou.	85	WR	44	69	63	13	81	75			345	97
Anthony Miller	S.D.	83	WR	38	69	44	13	50	69			283	86
Ernest Givins	Hou.	81	WR	44	69	56	13	81	75			338	96
Rodney Holman	Cin.	82	TE	25	69	38	69	50	56			307	90
Ferrell Edmunds	Mia.	80	TE	25	69	38	56	50	50			288	82
Kent Hull	Buf.	67	C	25	69	38	69			201	92		

Mike Munchak	Hou. 63	G	25	69	31	63						188	80
Steve Wisniewski	Rai. 76	G	25	69	44	69						207	99
Anthony Munoz	Cin. 78	T	25	69	38	75						207	99
Bruce Armstrong	N.E. 78	T	25	69	38	69						201	92
Nick Lowery	K.C. 8	K	56	81	81	31	81	81				411	96
Rohn Stark	Ind. 3	P	25	56	44	31	75	56				287	79
Bruce Smith	Buf. 78	DE	44	56	69	75	25	81				350	99
Dan Saleaumua	K.C. 97	NT	38	31	25	56	19	56				225	55
Greg Townsend	Rai. 93	DE	38	50	56	63	31	69				307	95
Derrick Thomas	K.C. 58	LB	44	56	63	69	19	81				332	98
David Little	Pit. 50	LB	38	44	56	50	31	63				282	86
John Offerdahl	Mia. 56	LB	28	50	56	44	31	50				269	75
C.[Cornelius]Bennett	Buf. 97	LB	38	50	63	63	19	69				302	93
Rod Woodson	Pit. 26	CB	44	56	75	69	63	75				382	98
Albert Lewis	K.C. 29	CB	31	38	50	56	50	69				294	76
Steve Atwater	Den. 27	FS	31	38	50	69	31	63				282	71
David Fulcher	Cin. 33	SS	44	56	69	75	69	75				388	99

#### NFC Pro Bowl Squad

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#### Roster

Name	Team	#	Pos.	RS	RP	MS	HP	C1	C2	C3	C4	Total	Perc.
Joe Montana	S.F.	16	QB	25	69	19	13	56	81	81	75	419	96
QB Eagles [Randall													
Cunningham]	Phi.	0	QB	25	69	56	13	63	69	63	63	421	98
Barry Sanders	Det.	20	RB	38	69	69	25	69	44			314	98
Earnest Byner	Was.	21	RB	38	69	50	25	81	38			301	87
Emmitt Smith	Dal.	22	RB	38	69	56	31	50	38			282	93
Johnny Johnson	Phx.	39	RB	38	69	50	38	50	38			283	86
Jerry Rice	S.F.	80	WR	44	69	69	13	81	81			357	99
Andre Rison	Atl.	80	WR	44	69	63	13	50	75			314	97
Sterling Sharpe	G.B.	84	WR	38	69	50	13	50	75			295	92
Gary Clark	Was.	84	WR	38	69	50	13	81	75			326	93
Keith Jackson	Phi.	88	TE	25	69	50	63	50	63			320	96
Steve Jordan	Min.	83	TE	25	69	44	63	50	56			307	90
Jay Hilgenberg	Chi.	63	C	25	69	50	63					207	99
Randall McDaniel	Min.	64	G	25	69	50	69					213	99
Mark Bortz	Chi.	62	G	25	69	44	69					207	99
Jim Lachey	Was.	79	T	25	69	31	69					194	86
Jackie Slater	Rams	78	T	25	69	31	63					188	80
Morten Andersen	N.O.	7	K	56	81	81	31	56	69			374	79
Sean Landeta	Gia.	5	P	25	56	44	31	81	81			318	96

Chris Doleman	Min. 56	DE	31	44	50	69	31	69	294	88
Jerry Ball	Det. 93	NT	31	44	44	69	19	69	276	87
Reggie White	Phi. 92	DE	38	50	56	69	31	75	319	98
Lawrence Taylor	Gia. 56	LB	44	56	69	75	31	81	356	99
Mike Singletary	Chi. 50	LB	38	50	56	75	19	81	319	97
Pepper Johnson	Gia. 52	LB	38	44	56	69	31	69	307	96
Charles Haley	S.F. 94	LB	31	44	50	50	19	63	257	92
Darrell Green	Was. 28	CB	44	56	75	44	44	31	294	76
Carl Lee	Min. 39	CB	38	50	63	56	50	69	326	88
Ronnie Lott	S.F. 42	FS	44	56	69	69	50	75	363	97
Joey Browner	Min. 47	SS	38	50	63	56	69	69	345	96

#####  
Drafting  
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There are a few main considerations in drafting players from the original Tecmo Super Bowl in a 28 team setting (for other drafts, the specifics will vary as far as draft strategy but the same principles apply - although when you have very few teams drafting it makes strategy basically irrelevant):

1. What players do I need to win the championship?
2. What angles should I take with respect to trading up or down?
3. How does the draft board look at each round?

With respect to the first, you need to pick up enough players to have a passing game, a running game, competent special teams, and good defense. Simple enough, but getting all those things in the first 8 rounds of the draft is not as simple.

For a pure 1 pick per 1 player draft, you just go down the charts of which players you need, and what you are willing to give up to get them. If you can trade away 2 good WRs to get a great DB and you will be nearly unstoppable on D with that great DB, then move up when the time is right or even make a draft-and-trade deal. Remember though, you can only get a few great players, so you must not require 5 superstars on your team. It starts with a good plan based on your needs (do I need a powerful player, do I need a gross amount of speed, do I need high Pass Control) and then augmenting your team to enable you to beat the other teams' units. One good way to do this is to identify the absolute bare minimum of ratings you need in each player and then to classify each player by which tier such a player will be found.

For a draft where some positions are aggregated (for example, you draft defensive lines as one unit), you then take the value of the highest

priority player on that line that you need and strip away all the units that don't have that type of player. Then you go down to the next player, etc. until you have taken away all the draft units that are unacceptable for your needs in those positions.

For drafts that don't allow you to move players (like switching CB sides, or moving WR to RB), you modify your algorithm by selecting units that match the profile of your alignment or player position requirements.

Another way to think about it is to examine the types of teams that will come out of the draft, and to then draft players that will set you up to exploit the weaknesses and playing styles of those teams. Such a strategy is useful when you draft late in the first round and basically take the best available player. In this case, you will have seen two rounds worth of players come off the board, and you can thus analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each team (especially in your division) well enough to formulate a draft strategy for your picks that can neutralize each team's attack. Such a strategy will rely on your ability - for example, one might choose to accumulate pass defense if most of the teams are focusing on QB and WR and to stockpile RBs and power players on offense, if you play a conservative style. Other players might want to make deals and overload on one side of the ball in order to cover up their own weaknesses, and then to make it work on the other side with one or two star players.

I won't put information here that is sure to become stale about programs or files that you can use to sort these things, a spreadsheet is always nice if you can get the player data file dumped (and you can) as far as sorting and marking is concerned. I am also not going to waste space here going through a whole file's worth of players who are all the same, so you can get the file and do it yourself, you'll like it a lot better.

Trading up is for when you can get a player in the next tier if you can move up 20 or so selection spots. If you have to move to a whole other round, the only rounds where it can really help you is to move into the second or third rounds where a lot of the top players are still on the board, but you won't be overpaying for the privilege. Elevating your third round pick is a very good strategy if you don't need a lot of good teammates in a lot of places, especially on defense. Tecmo is a game of impact players, so you want to get as many as possible. On the other hand, you also need to make sure to get some decent supporting cast so your opponent can't just pick on you completely when it comes to playing defense and choosing which offensive players to stop. You have to make the other guy pick his poison - one batch may be weaker than another, but you still must dispose of him by the time 20 Tecmo minutes are up. Breaking apart a fourth-round or fifth-round pick to get some a couple OK players is a good way to round out your starting WR corps, and is very helpful on LBs and DLs where you just

want a minimal competency. Another reason to trade down is when you just want a player in a certain tier (top DB for example), and you are fine with moving down 4 or 6 spots if it can get you a 5th rounder or somesuch.

I could continue, but basically it boils down to moving to the bottom of the tier in which you wish to select a player and moving no lower. Nothing is worse in the top rounds of the draft than going too low and missing out on a key piece of the puzzle. I think you can see the strategy I will be conveying here.

Finally, knowing what the draft board will actually play out as is a very useful thing to know if you are offering or are offered a chance to trade down out of the "assured level" in the draft in which you will get a player from the tier you want to be in no matter what. If another team wants to offer you a huge bounty in the mid-rounds you can really make out, but this is still a game of impact players. Knowing what the board will be like will tell you which players will probably still be on the board by the time the lower pick comes around, and then you can gamble and see if you can get more value out of it.

Once you know these three things, now you can devise your draft strategy.

### Draft Strategy

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Going into the draft war room (which may be your bedroom, kitchen, etc. :) you now have your list of players for each position which satisfy your requirements and a general idea of the priority each one holds. You also have a decent idea of what the other people want out of the draft (asking around or looking at old Tecmo draft webpages is a good idea) and thus where people expect to pick players.

Make sure beforehand to establish lines of communication, whether it happens to be a separate draft message board, instant messaging, etc. to each and every team drafting the players. This can't just be something you do right before you want to make a move, because not only will you be in danger of missing the opportunity that has presented itself, you will also be panicking and hurrying to try and do things, and end up making stupid mistakes in the process. YOU, not they, must be in control of your draft. You want to make sure and do this now so that you have a current, functional line over which you can communicate and negotiate your draft picks, draft-and-trade, or just chat up other people about what they want so that you can later make deals involving them that can benefit you.

Now that you are plugged into the other teams and to the draft board, now you make out a list of each team's draft picks as they go along. Have one sheet for each team so you aren't cramped for room and you don't end up misreading your handwriting or doing something stupid like that. Amend it every time a player is traded from that team to another team. A small table is not helpful here.

#### MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE RULES OF THE DRAFT AND THE ORDER OF DRAFTING. They

should have it online somewhere, so open it up and leave that window displayed the entire time. Also, keep a sheet of the draft picks traded so that you know what the distribution is and what time you need to be making a deal.

Now, you have the draft order, the draft selections, the draft picks and moves, what you want, what they want, how people are going to try and get what they want, and the means to get what you want.

If you want the first picks in the draft (QB Eagles, Bo Jackson, etc.) now is the time to discuss the parameters of a deal because they will go fast. They will ask for your first rounder and 50% (weighted) of your other picks - in short, half your team. I would never go for these players because the cost of trading up (unless you are in the Top 5 picks) is so great that you don't have any real shot at putting together a competitive team, especially when you have a few 63 MS backs out there. In particular, QB Eagles is not worth the price you will pay for him. Unless you can restrict the picks you hand out to just offense or just defensive degradation, you are courting disaster. You are putting together a team, not hiring one player.

Once the first few picks have opened up, for each team, note their drafted player and the position they have drafted. If they drafted defense, expect an offensive pick to follow. If they drafted QB, expect defense or a WR or a RB, and for a RB, expect defense or a QB. Note down these tendencies in the next round's board. This will give you a rough idea of how many players can go off the board in the next series of picks. Unless a player is in an interesting spot, don't expect them to draft a position twice in the first 5 rounds.

Once you get outside the basics (great players + notable players), usually sometime around the end of Round 4, basically anything can happen and your own draft board is about as good as anything as far as telling who will go in the next rounds. The key here is seeing which teams have which weaknesses, and proposing trades with them that can substantially improve them in a weak area that they have prioritized. Don't offer a trade immediately; instead, wait for the draft board to

dwindle off at that position and see if you can get every one of the players which that team wanted off the board. Right then when they are wondering what to do, that's when you propose a trade. Don't make it outlandish, make it beneficial for you and helpful for them. This will make it much easier that a slightly one-sided deal will go through.

One other key moment to trade is right before you go on the clock, because then, if you still have players at that position that you can live with on the board, but you have another player already at the position to which you would like to trade, right then you can make a swap for your higher-quality player whom you don't really need, and improve your team in an area that you can use more. Another way you can use this is to "advertise" a player to a potential drafter later in the round, and to offer the opportunity to move up to take that player in exchange for swapping draft picks, players, etc.

If you are offered a trade, the first thing you do is switch right over to the draft boards to check in which tiers each of the players fall in. If you aren't getting any higher tier players out of it and they are moving up multiple players that way, then why bother? Also check how many tiers of the players you are being offered are still on the board. If they are offering the type of players that you can still draft, then it's also worthless. If they are moving up one of your tiers but taking away others, you have to look at it as an opportunity, but one you may not want to take. Essentially, when you trade during the draft, you are redrafting, especially when multiple players are being offered. You have to take a look at the team as a whole as it would be after the trade, then take a look at how the team would be filled out without the trade, and compare the two. If you are clearly better off then pull the trigger; otherwise stand pat. When they offer picks, look to see which players they are standing to get by the picks, and what players you will then end up with. If you are getting the short end of the tiers you want, then screw it. On the other hand, if the boards have gone such that you have two tiers, one for the other team's and one for your own, that you can both gain by a trade (maybe you get an upgrade at a key position or you get extra draft picks in the middle rounds) and you aren't going out of the tiers you want to be in by making the trade, then go ahead.

One piece of advice: don't bother about late round picks (14 etc.) where you are getting into trading. People don't care about Rob Moore vs. Jojo Townsell, so don't waste your time and their patience. If you are having trouble pulling the trigger on a trade, then a swap in the low rounds isn't going to do it for you. Likewise if they

have problems with the trade, then a low round pick isn't going to make them feel secure either. I may care, but that doesn't mean the rest of the world does. You can swap those but do it with caution.

After the draft, fill out each team's roster (the commish may do this for you). This is in many cases the last practical time you can make a trade before people become set in what they have, so make fairer offers than before and during the draft. Of course, if someone is desperate, then play them on a little bit and raise the price to a level where you can be absolutely sure you are making your team better, then execute the trade. Just don't dilly dally about that, because sometimes another team may strike a deal before you do.

During the year you may get a bonus if someone finds their team isn't making it, but you have to gauge what you are getting by taking a team's players that they haven't had success with. You may be damaging the strength of your own team by making a trade with such a GM. If you have the opposite problems then maybe it can work, but that usually isn't the case in this game, where defenses and offenses are so much alike and the depth of teams at given positions is so similar, due to the drafting methods.

#### Player Tier Criteria (Sample)

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I just listed down here some pretty common and then some not-so-common tiers one might go about ranking the players. Of course, use your own judgement when making out your tiers, these are not even guaranteed to be correct, they are just here for purposes of demonstration.

One thing you might want to add is their ratings so that you can easily compare them at draft time, but that may clutter your papers too much. Again, use your judgement, and also, since I hope you are using an automated tool to make these, keep that tool open during the draft to make things easier.

Also, I have mentioned what to do for certain types of positions that don't have a clear difference between players.

MVP: These are the players who have unique and powerful talent. Expect them to be gone by the 5th pick.

1. QB Eagles, QB-Phi.
2. Bo Jackson, RB-Rai.
3. Barry Sanders, RB-Det.

Elite QB: These are QBs who deliver the ball on target with some promptness. Expect these to be gone by the 20th pick.

1. Warren Moon, Hou.
2. QB Bills, Buf.
3. Joe Montana, S.F.

...

Elite DB: These DBs can intercept and also punish a ballcarrier. They can be gone anywhere from the 20th pick to the 50th pick, depending on how the board flows, RB. vs. QB. vs. DB.

- T-1. David Fulcher, Cin.
- T-1. Rod Woodson, Pit.
- T-1. Wayne Haddix, T.B.
- T-2. Ronnie Lott, S.F.
- T-2. Dave Waymer, S.F.
- T-2. Richard Johnson, Hou.

...

Elite LB: Power and speed makes for a lethal combination. Expect them to be gone by pick 40, but you never know.

1. Lawrence Taylor, Gia.
2. Derrick Thomas, K.C.

...

Elite RB: Very good speed, or good speed and great power. Pick 40 at the latest.

1. Thurman Thomas, Buf.
2. Christian Okoye, K.C.

...

Elite WR: Can beat any coverage. Pick 40 at the latest.

1. Jerry Rice, S.F.
2. Willie Gault, Rai.

...

Elite DL: Speed comes with power here. Gone anywhere from pick 40 to 60.

1. Bruce Smith, Buf.
2. Howie Long, Rai.

...

Some other categories:

Nice Arm QB: Good PS + PC + PA.

Safe Throw QB: PS + PC.

Accurate QB: High PC + some PA.

QB Browns: High PC.

Elway QB: Great PS and MS (for a QB).

Cannon QB: Great PS, but little PC or PA.

Jump Ball QB: Throws it long and overthrows just a bit.

Mobile QB: Can run the ball without completely flaking.

Slow QB: Too slow for his own good.

Awful QB: High PA without high PC, or nothing whatsoever.

Power Blocker: Is powerful enough to take on the weakest defender and blow them up, moving on to others (at least 88 HP recommended).

Superstar RB: Great MS, or good MS and great HP.

Triple Threat: Good MS, some HP, and REC.

Double Threat: Good MS and REC.

Decade Runner: Good MS and some HP.

Speed Back: Good MS.

Power Back: Decent MS and at least 44 HP.

Receiving Back: Decent MS but also at least 44 REC.

Generic Starter RB: Decent MS.

Third-Down RB: Can catch and also run a little if needed.

Backup Blocking Back: Some HP.

Generic Terrible RB: Blah Blah. :)

All-Everything WR: Has MS, HP, and REC all in one package.

Prototype WR: Has MS and REC in abundance.

Ballcarrier WR: Has only MS and HP.

Deep Threat WR: Stretches the field, can get jump balls and such.

Physical WR: Has some HP and MS and REC.

Pure Burner WR: Great MS.

Force WR: Great REC.

Generic Terrible WR: Slow and 44/50 REC. :)

Superstar TE: Exceptional qualities. I would evaluate these under WRs if they are for REC ability, or RBs if not.

Good TE: Good HP + MS + REC.

Receiving TE: At least 44 HP, but better speed and hands.

Blocking TE: Enough HP to stand in there and overwhelm a CPU defender.

Bad TE: At least 44 HP, but not much else.

Elite OL: Can take even a top DL for a few seconds without difficulty.

Good OL: Can take most DLs for a few seconds without difficulty.

Bad OL: Gets blown up a lot.

Penetrator DL: Gets through average OLs quickly and attacks the ball.

Power DL: Blows up his man consistently.

Pass-Coverage DL: Can be dropped into pass coverage effectively.

Sufficient DL: Has enough HP to keep back the OL for a little while.

Bozo DL: Gets tossed fairly often.

All-Time LB: Great HP, good MS and PI.

Prototype LB: Great HP and good MS.

All-Purpose LB: Good MS and HP.

Run-Stopper LB: Has PI and HP enough to execute most LB tactics.

5th DB LB: Good MS and PI.

Gap-Pluggler OLB: Can take on most offensive linemen and win, great HP.

Sufficient OLB: Has enough HP to keep back the OL for a little while.

Burner LB: Great MS, not necessarily anything else.

Worthless LB: No MS or HP.

All-Time DB: Great MS and PI, good HP.

All-Purpose DB: Good MS, HP, and PI.

Run-Stopper DB: Suitable for stopping runs (MAN usage), good MS and HP.

Pass-Coverage DB: Suitable for defending against the pass, good MS and PI.

Sufficient Power DB: At least 44 in MS, HP, and PI.

Sufficient Cover DB: At least 44 MS and PI.

Wannabe LB DB: Good MS and HP, but poor PI.

Stump DB: Poor PI, but good MS.

All-Hands DB: Great PI, nothing else.

Stone DB: Only decent HP.

Chump DB: Poor PI, nothing else.

Anomalies: Players who are just totally warped which causes performance to be affected.

Sam Graddy, WR-Rai.

Lonnie Young, FS-Phx.

Bob Nelson, NT-G.B.

Other Matters:

Punters: Just pick the one with the highest KA. You can figure out the rest. I would pick this about the time the backups begin to drop off the board, so that you don't end up leaving a player who can make a real contribution to your team on the table.

Kickers: For online play, since it would appear in online leagues that there is a lot of lag, I would pick these around punter time, unless you can deal with whatever lag will be presented, in which case you have to make sure you aren't leaving any impact players on the table. After that, draft away, especially if your offense needs this help. KA first, but also look at AKB and if there is a humongous difference, then use your judgement.

#### My Personal Team Needs

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Now I'm going to just go on about what I would do if I were trying to choose or put a team together.

Quarterbacks:

If you can get a GREAT rushing quarterback (Cunningham-type, or slower, but with 88-range hitting power), then he is worth gutting your running game and downgrading your passing game. If you can muster a back with a little speed (44+ Maximum Speed), then you probably want to trade for such a player as you will find in a rushing QB. You can put in a backup TE as the FB, or, if you're running two-back systems, simply put in your fastest guy (no matter the position) left over from the WR slots (and possibly TE) at RB#2. Your power set and your offensive line is the key here; if they are poor, you are going to have major trouble running, and you need to look to upgrade these positions (shouldn't cost much for a couple power blockers).

However, if you have only mediocre rushing QBs available (Vinny Testaverde/Rodney Peete-caliber), don't go specifically for them unless

they also have great other ratings.

As far as normal QBs is concerned, the rating you want to look at is Pass Speed, and then look for good supplementary Pass Control, some Maximum Speed to avoid getting sacked and to run for key first downs, and finally Pass Accuracy to get passes in coverage. Don't even bother with Avoid Pass Block, because there are distinctions enough with the four main criteria, unless there is some kind of humongous drop-off between two candidates.

Your replacement QB is usually going to stink anyway, so go with the usual Speed/Control/Accuracy test and get one you can afford. Watch and try to get a high MS backup QB, because then you can use the running game more often.

**Power Blockers (NON-BALLCARRIERS):**

Great at TE if you can get them. At least 88 HP, and REC never hurt anyone. If you don't need a lot of receiving talent, you can find uses for such handed players at one WR position. Typically these guys are listed under RB and TE, try to see if you can get at least one - they are great values, particularly if you can play one at WR #2. Even a 88+ HP guy with no hands can still be used at TE. However, don't blow the bank for 81- players who don't contribute much other than blocking. Watch for the rules of your league, they may not like these uses. These guys are not to be acquired if other talent of more impact is available (i.e. this is a hole-filling type of player, not an acquisition priority), but when players who can do other things at your position become scarce (when all the 44+ MS RBs are off the board, for example), then getting one is a great way to make something out of a TE or WR #2 position where you don't have any use of the other players available.

**Running Backs (BALLCARRIERS ONLY):**

Your best bets on these are very fast backs (63 MS+), because these can carry a whole running game for most of the season. If you have demons (at least 50 MS + 94 HP) available, they are better than a 56 MS back, but know that they won't be that effective against a very good or very fast linebacking defense.

Depth is an issue here; as long as you have enough MS and HP in the rest of your backs to pose a significant run threat in the absence of the star, you're covered. When you go for running backs, make sure you have one with 56+ Max Speed if at all possible as your star, and then whoever is a good enough compromise between HP and MS to make the cut (for examples of how not to acquire running backs, look at the Eagles' running backs - they are quite mediocre, despite having relatively even point totals).

If you can get a 38/88 back, he is definitely better than a 44/19 back, but a 31/88 back simply is not going to cut it. You are not looking for guys who can make the MAN fear you because you won't find them unless the draft is very rich in RBs; rather, you are looking for guys who can make

the MAN actually care about your run and use run-stopping tactics (and the key thing, run-stopping personnel) to stop you. Furthermore, you want to at least have the threat of the run down on the goal line, so that you can get somebody open and throw to them if the MAN sells out on your QB run. That is the main thing.

However, there are some other considerations with depth. For one thing, a half-decent receiving backup RB may also be used in the WR category. Therefore, you should be looking at backup RBs and backup WRs in roughly the same light in that regard. In addition, if the overall quality of your offensive starters is not good, your "backup" RB will be starting, so you want some quality there in that case.

If you can, try to get backs with 25+ HP at least so that they can't get flattened by strong defenders all the time (more so if you have a good or great thumb and can take down your opponents with mediocre hitting power guys), but put speed first.

My backup \_ballcarriers\_ should at least have 44 MS, or 38 MS with 88+ Hitting Power.

#### Wide Receivers:

It's all about Receptions and Maximum Speed. Whosoever has the best of these is your pick, at least as far as you have the ability to acquire. REC is more important than MS, but if your WR can burn up the road, then he can be deficient in Receptions to a certain extent. With receivers, you need a star for bombs and coverage problems, and then another who can haul the water well enough to require looking after. In my view, a star should be at least a 44/63 type of player, although if a 50/75 or 50/69 type of player is available, you definitely want to look into that type of player.

Backup receivers, even the best, don't really do a whole lot for you, so that's a place that you can starve if you please. If you can play WR at RB, you definitely want to get guys who can play at either position, and, if you see a fast WR with little REC, he is a great-valued pickup for the RB position. Try and get such a player when you are through with critical needs and don't have any gaping holes.

If you can get Hitting Power in this position, do so, but if you are giving up a lot otherwise, then don't make that kind of a deal.

#### Tight Ends:

You want a certain amount of Hitting Power (44+) and after that it's MS and REC. Get whatever mix you like; it depends on how much dump vs. deep passing you're doing as to what one you want more. These are the guys to pinch on, unless you can get a skilled one to use for depth in the RB category, or when you can use him as a deep threat in a shotgun set or somesuch.

Remember that you may not play a traditional TE set, depending on how much passing you are doing, so don't go and get a true TE for the heck of it - make sure you are going to end up using his blocking talent in a major way. Again, if you can play TE at RB, look for a guy who can play both, and also

ask the commish if you can play TE at FB, even if TE at RB is disallowed (i.e. non-ball-carrier). It may raise your draft priority for them if you like to run with one back, but lead block for him, and then use the blocking back in the passing game.

#### Depth:

I would have at least one Team Area (not starter) person who could fill in at either RB or WR (either a backup ballcarrier with hands, or a WR with 44+ MS); a person who could fill in at either FB or TE (if I had a fullback in my play system) who could simply be a normal RB with 38+ Hitting Power or a formal TE; then my third guy would be a "best value" player at the time I choose to pick the third backup, whether he is a WR or a RB or a power blocker type.

You can always just blow off a couple guys on your roster, because situations where you have three starters injured almost never happen, and your team is screwed anyway if you have three guys go down (either that, or by some miracle, your starting RB and your good WR are not injured - yeah right!).

The QB depth is almost always a problem; getting two decent QBs is not cheap, and to furnish a whole team after that is not easy. I would simply get a not-bad QB, not necessarily a good QB, as my backup, since anything will be a drop-off after your starter. Definitely look for backup QBs with high speed because then you can use the running game more, instead of passing it with your low Pass Control and Pass Accuracy.

My philosophy towards depth is "fake it until the real players return" and I think it shows. Since you usually don't have guys injured for more than three weeks, this can work for you, but you can get guys injured right after they come back.

Remember also that you are going to want to have one or more of those guys return the kicks and punts, so don't skimp on Ball Control for the guys you want to assign to the returns. DO NOT try to make your starters return if at all possible - if you can avoid that by spending money/draft picks here, then do it.

#### Offensive Linemen:

Hitting Power. You don't need exorbitant amounts of it, but anything less than 50 is worthless. It's most important to have a strong overall quality in your line, rather than having some stars and some candy bars. If everyone is above 50 HP, you have the kind of line you want. It may be expensive to get all of your guys above 50 HP, but it makes your life so much easier when you don't have to worry about defensive linemen breaking free and running after you when you're trying to pass, not to mention what guys can do to you on the run. If you can get a great guy on the line, that's nice, but it's more important to avoid horrible guys than it is to procure John Alt-type players who can muffle anyone.

If you are faced with a choice between two or more linemen with different Maximum Speeds, then choose the one whose MS corresponds with how you want them to behave, i.e. if you like to explode out there on the sweep, get a fast one,

but if your RB isn't that good, go with a slower one so you won't be getting left behind by your blockers.

#### Defensive Linemen:

DLs in Tecmo toil in anonymity and don't really do all that much (provided, of course, your line isn't so bad that the OLs in the league are breaking through your guys). If you want a star to break through the line for you while you do something else, get one. If you want a manual rush, then you want to place him at NT, and if you want an automatic rush, place him at LE since the LE comes in handy for stopping certain plays. A star has decent speed and at least 63+ HP. However, don't lose your lunch on DLs because they can be problems to play against strong runs. A slow lineman is more than okay if that frees up resources for other defenders or the offense. The star is good; but don't waste money on more than one, unless you know that in your league, you will have at least two interior linemen on a given team that you can bust up.

However, make sure that your left end has some speed and HP. Otherwise, some plays will work (Pitch L Open) that you could otherwise easily stop, and that will cause all kinds of problems.

You do need 50 HP for your other linemen though, so that the offensive line won't break through and start knocking your other people around (56 HP would probably be a safer bet than that). The only thing you really need for DLs that you won't control is Hitting Power, because that will keep them in place on running plays instead of getting chipped down by the runner or other blockers, not to mention knocking down their offensive lineman. The right end can fade on speed, unless you use him in coverage.

One key note is that if you are playing in a league and you pick up a guy with great Hitting Power, look to play him against the team's weakest lineman. You can wreak havoc this way.

#### Linebackers:

You want a star to control in either the linebackers or the defensive backs.

If you want to stop runs, go for the linebackers, and if you want to intercept, either get a defensive back or get an great Interceptions linebacker (but don't waste resources on getting one if you can acquire an upgraded defensive back, who will be covering passes all the time). If possible, get both, but have a star linebacker if you can have a solid secondary.

Your star should have a Hitting Power of 69 or greater, Maximum Speed of 50 or greater, and sufficient Rushing Power to get around the field.

You can let the rest fade if you like as long as you have defensive backs that can cover the run as well as the pass. If you have specialized pass coverage secondary, though, you will want to make sure you've got Hitting Power enough for the linebackers to beat WRs in some sane time, and not to get thrown by the OLs coming at them. "Faded" LBs should at absolute minimum have 44 HP, but you really want something more like 50 HP for this position.

There is another view of this, though. If LBs aren't scarce by the time you end up coming to getting backups, there are some considerations here - primarily, the

role of the LOLB, who is constantly attacked and involved in the sweep down low. If he is very powerful, he can really hurt the other team, and even if he's just a good linebacker, he can still make a big impact when you try to free up your boys. Furthermore, in pass coverage, the LOLB is a pass rusher, so in that regard, one should view him as a DL. However, he is not just any DL; he is a DL on the outside of the blocking on many plays, and gets involved in the action from the get-go, whereas most DLs typically end up being sandwich meat for the offensive line, and can't effectively attack the QB for the amount of ratings that they have, since the QB often rolls out. If the LOLB frees up, however, he is in good position to cover the QB down low, and this can help tremendously in some situations. Therefore, if you can acquire a LB with pretty good HP (56+) to be your LOLB, even if he is going to be CPU-controlled most of the time, and thus you end up wasting the MS he will probably come with, this may be a very good thing to do, because he will make things interesting. If you can find a pure power LB, then, if he is around when the pickings become slim, he will really help you out.

In addition, you may be interesting in acquiring "5th DBs", and placing them at the ILB slots. However, such a 5th DB must either be fast (so you can control him), or he must have very high Pass Interceptions for a LB (63+ PI). This type of player is definitely worth acquiring, especially if you can also use him in run defense, but don't go wild for one if he isn't the real deal. In my view, compared to LBs who are just as good as he is in run defense, you pick the 5th DB two rounds higher. You can try one round higher, but you are risking tradeups and such. If you decide to go for a "cover LB-5th DB" :) then you can't fool yourself by thinking a guy with low HP is going to help you that much against the run.

Note also, that if you find a fast LB for a good value, even if you have a star already, putting him at ROLB is going to make life very difficult for anyone trying to kick field goals against you.

The LB corps is where you pool your resources that you can't spend anywhere else (other than picking up better backups for your offense).

#### LB Star Placement

Where should you place a star? You should put him wherever you think you want to stop the most powerful runs from. A lot of times you want LILB, but sometimes you want RILB, other times ROLB. I've even seen systems best shut down with a great LOLB. Take a look at your run-stopping ability and what you can do with your individual players, and set yourself up to stop the most runs in the playbooks that you will see. Sometimes you may want to set your LB to ROLB to block FGs, so that is a major consideration as well. You must know what you can do with your other players as well, so if it turns out that you have a guy who can do something against certain systems (and he is not your star), then that gives you some leeway to take some riskier moves with your star. Definitely find out if your opponents can change around the playbooks to attack your guy - if they can do that, it definitely affects your choice, particularly if you wanted to put your star at the ROLB spot.

General Recommendations (with and without run-stoppers at topline DB positions):

- 1 Star (alone) - ROLB
- 2 Stars (alone) - ROLB, RILB

3 Stars (alone) - ROLB, RILB, LOLB  
1 Star (topside DB) - LOLB  
2 Stars (topside DB) - LOLB, ROLB  
3 Stars (topside DB) - LOLB, ROLB, RILB

#### Defensive Backs:

These you want, more than any other group, to all be fast, to all have some measure of Interceptions, and to all have some Hitting Power. This is the one group to waste resources on, because a slow secondary can't keep up with receivers, a handless secondary can't get the crucial turnovers that make and break games, and a powerless secondary will get bowled over by fullbacks and blockers, letting running backs go home free. Having a group of people that you can count on to keep people covered is very convenient for pass coverage; a group that will end your defense is even better; and one that can stop the runs is boss. If you have a star, you probably want him at RCB or FS to stop runs and passes. He should have good speed, good Interceptions, and great Hitting Power. If you don't have any good or great linebackers, then you should seriously consider putting your star at RCB for tactics. A great RCB can be absolutely dominating in the right hands. A great FS however is dominating as well. It depends on the opposing running playbook. Go with FS if you can't decide which one to use.

The rest of your DBs need to have at least 44 MS and 50 PI, if at all possible. Avoid weaknesses rather than trying to get two superstars and two schmos. If you come into two star DBs, trade one if the quality of the rest of your secondary is not par.

Kickers: If you can get a great kicker, that's great. If you have a mediocre offense, you can get enough points to win games if you have a good kicker, whereas a bad one won't be able to kick the long field goals that you would try to kick two or three times a game (if your offense is shoddy). It should be worth paying for a good kicker if your league system is sane at all, but it may not be worth the upgrade to a great kicker. If you're not going to kick 70-yard field goals, you don't need a great kicker. But if you're going to kick 50-yard field goals, you will need a good kicker.

Punters: You can get about 10-20 extra yards on a punt with a great punter vs. a bad punter given the same power bar. Do you want to pay for 10-20 extra yards? If you're always punting when you're deep in your own territory, yes. But if you don't usually punt from your own 10 or 20 yard line, you won't need a good punter. However, a great punter can keep you from having to worry about shanking the punt, since you won't need to hit it to full with a great punter in order to get a good kick. If you can get a good punter at a good value, and without forsaking other parts of your team such as defensive backs and depth, get him. Otherwise, don't waste your money and/or your draft picks on a punter.

Kick/Punt Returners: Nobody knows how the returning game really works in Tecmo,

so your mileage may vary, but the #1 thing you CANNOT do and win games is to fumble the ball on a punt return. Those fumbles go for touchdowns half the time, and end up with an opposing score the rest of the time.

Thus, you need a guy who will hold onto the ball over anything else (not even necessarily a great Ball Control guy, the return game is that messed), both on those critical punt returns, and on kick returns as well. After that, it's always nice to have some Maximum Speed and Hitting Power, but really, you have to be able to test out your guys beforehand, so that you don't get a terrible guy. Your kick and punt returners are your Team Area people (I hope!), so you want to make sure you're covered in case your returner gets injured, because returners get injured from time to time. They aren't wide receivers that may go the whole season without a trip to the hospital - I've seen returners get injured three and four times in a season. Get that Ball Control under control and deal with whatever procurement/financial constraints you have afterwards with your backups.

#####  
Tecmo Passing Study  
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Originally, I worked this up in order to support an argument for Dan Marino as the best strict passer in Tecmo. But, this proved so instructive and insightful that I could hardly let it languish like that (by the way, I still think Marino is the best pure passer, even after seeing the results of my tests, which did not say a whole lot for the skills of Marino in coverage).

I played some COA games with Washington as the coached team. I picked each play and had the coached Washington defense call all of the other pass plays in the book two or three times each, excluding the ones where the QB can't get the pass off and repeating in many cases the plays where the ball was wild or the player clinched or was uncovered. All of these tests were in a Preseason, no-boost environment.

Here are the results, only counting the ones where there was coverage - the computer is so stupid - and where the pass got to the receiver, but not counting blocked passes and jump interceptions from the defense that players could have done little about. For the purposes of this study, 1 defender

slide that touches the receiver is counted as .5 coverage:

Montana-Rice

Passes	Receptions	Interceptions	Coverage
1	0	0	2
2	0	0	2
3	0	0	1
4	0	0	1
5	1	0	3
6	2	0	3
7	2	0	2
8	3	0	2
9	3	0	1
10	3	0	2
11	4	0	1
12	4	0	1
13	4	0	2
14	4	0	2
15	5	0	2
16	5	0	2
17	6	0	2
18	6	0	2
19	7	0	1
20	8	0	3
21	8	0	.5
22	8	0	2
23	9	0	1.5
24	10	0	1
25	10	0	1
26	10	0	1
27	11	0	1
28	12	0	1
29	12	0	2
30	12	0	2
31	12	0	2
32	12	1	1
33	12	1	1
34	13	1	1
35	13	1	2
36	13	1	1
37	13	1	3
38	14	1	1
39	15	1	1

40	16	1	1
41	16	1	2
42	16	1	1
43	16	1	2
44	16	1	2
45	16	1	1
46	16	1	2
47	16	1	2
48	17	1	2

Reception %: 35.41%

Interception%: 2.08%

Average Coverage: 1.60 defenders

Comments: I think it's quite interesting that for this test, Rice performed much better on triple coverage passes than on lesser coverage. It might be a statistical error. For those of you who are wondering what Rice's actual reception rate is, it's somewhere around 20% of the passes that were actually thrown to him, with wild throws from Montana and Rice not catching up to the ball or other things included, and also jump balls included.

#### Moon-Oilers' Receivers

Passes	Receptions	Interceptions	Coverage
1	1	0	1
2	1	0	2.5
3	1	0	2
4	2	0	1
5	2	0	2
6	2	0	2
7	2	0	1
8	2	0	2
9	2	0	1.5
10	3	0	1
11	3	0	2
12	3	0	3
13	3	0	2
14	4	0	2
15	4	0	1
16	5	0	1
17	5	1	1

18	5	1	3
19	5	1	2
20	6	1	1
21	7	1	1
22	8	1	.5
23	8	1	2
24	9	1	2
25	9	1	1
26	9	1	2
27	9	1	2
28	10	1	1
29	11	1	2
30	12	1	2
31	12	1	2
32	12	1	2
33	12	1	2
34	13	1	1
35	13	1	2
36	14	1	1.5
37	15	1	1
38	15	1	3
39	16	1	1
40	17	1	2
41	17	1	2
42	17	1	2.5
43	17	1	2
44	17	1	2
45	17	1	2
46	18	1	3
47	18	1	2.5
48	18	1	1.5
49	19	1	1
50	19	1	2
51	19	1	2
52	20	1	1
53	20	1	2
54	20	1	1
55	21	1	2
56	21	1	2

Reception %: 37.50%

Interception%: 1.79%

Average Coverage: 1.74 defenders

Comments: These guys could not catch nearly as well as Rice in double or triple coverage, but

they were very consistent in single coverage.

### Marino-Dolphins' Receivers

Passes	Receptions	Interceptions	Coverage
1	0	0	1
2	0	0	2
3	0	0	2
4	0	0	2
5	0	0	2
6	0	0	1
7	0	0	2
8	0	0	2
9	1	0	2
10	1	0	1
11	2	0	1
12	2	0	1
13	2	1	2
14	2	1	1
15	2	2	1
16	2	2	1
17	2	2	1
18	3	2	1.5
19	4	2	2
20	5	2	2
21	6	2	1
22	6	3	1
23	6	3	1
24	6	3	1
25	6	3	1
26	7	3	1
27	7	3	1
28	7	3	1
29	8	3	1
30	8	3	1
31	8	3	2.5
32	8	3	1.5
33	8	3	2
34	8	3	1
35	8	3	1
36	8	3	2.5
37	8	4	1
38	8	4	1
39	8	4	.5
40	8	5	1

41	8	5	2
42	8	5	2
43	9	5	1
44	9	5	1
45	10	5	1
46	10	5	2
47	10	5	2
48	10	5	1
49	11	5	1
50	11	5	2
51	11	5	.5
52	12	5	1
53	12	5	2
54	12	5	2
55	12	5	2
56	12	5	1
57	12	5	1.5

Reception %: 21.05%  
Interception%: 8.77%  
Average Coverage: 1.39 defenders

Comments: Mark Duper accounted for at least four and maybe all of the interceptions. Interestingly enough, he is WR #2, the same position as Rice. That was where all the higher interception rating people on the Washington defense were. Martin Mayhew had a 69 Interceptions. I guess Marino's lower Pass Accuracy and Duper's lower Receptions (both 63, incidentally) had something to do with this. Not surprisingly, Mark Clayton, with a 69 Receptions, had a higher receptions percentage, but he seemed to account for more than 60% of the total receptions. That much is quite unexpected, and it really doesn't say much for Duper. It seems to me that maybe the rate of interceptions as well is affected by the Receptions rating a player has, and not just the Pass Accuracy and Control of the quarterback.

#####  
Extended Miscellaneous Discussions  
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Who's the best player in Tecmo?

I think only as far as defense is concerned, David Fulcher is the best. His ratings are almost unbelievable and his utility is vast. However, players in better positions for a human to control, such as Rod Woodson, Lawrence Taylor, and Bruce Smith, are better in light of the whole defense and deserve honorable mentions. As far as offense and all of Tecmo is concerned, best player without a doubt is QB Eagles (Randall Cunningham) who can pass pretty well and can run better than a ton of running backs, receivers, and tight ends. He alone makes Philadelphia's offense one of the best, threatening a significant run and yardage gain with every pass play called, which makes defending against the Eagles' run game harder (which is good, because Byars and Sherman are pretty lousy) because of the need to circumvent the open man/open QB dilemma by calling more pass plays.

What's the best team in Tecmo?

The best team is the Giants. There are several reasons for this. On offense, the passing game is not as good as others, but works well enough. The running backs are a great combo, with Ottis Anderson a fast and powerful fullback and David Meggett even faster. These two could carry a running game alone, and together they make the Giants' ground attack a powerful threat - a top-notch running game in the league at least, and certainly a rival for the Raiders and the Lions. The Giants' defense is where they truly pull ahead, with the best linebacker corps in the game - Lawrence Taylor the demi-god; Pepper Johnson, a notch weaker but in a better position; Gary Reasons, who has the highest Interceptions (63) of any linebacker; and Carl Banks, just a tad worse than Johnson. With this, you can stuff almost any run with fast and powerful guys in several positions, top and bottom. The one man who can't do that so well, Reasons, isn't in a crucial spot, and doubles as a defensive back for the medium and

short-range pass where coverage seems to be lightest at the worst times. He can jump up and pick off a pass coming over the middle easily. Not only does Reasons handle pass coverage, but Taylor and sometimes even the other guys rush the quarterback hard in ways that Bruce Smith would applaud. Even though their line could use some work, their defensive backs are all solid and competent. This, the best defense in the game, will never get injured, adding to its value. On special teams, Bahr is not that good (though he does have a decent Avoid Kick Block...^\_^) but Landeta's powerful punts will fly nearly anywhere on the field. Add in Lawrence Taylor's ability to block even extra points against a human and his tendency to tackle holders on field goals and you have the best team in Tecmo Super Bowl.

Honorable mentions must go to: the Chiefs, almost the best but for want of a notch-better defense (really, just a couple of great defensive backs) and a more diverse passing game plus a spike of speed to Barry Word; the 49ers, whose defense is almost as good as that of the Giants, but whose running game is impotent against a great defender and competent defense (Bears, Giants, Chiefs, Bills, Eagles, and some others, moreso if they have condition spikes), with a really bad race defect in Tom Rathman and Brent Jones, dragging down the incredible passes; to the Bills, who almost have it all with Kelly, Thomas, Reed, Smith, Bennett, and solid offense and defense otherwise; and to the Raiders, who who need a more juiced linebacker and could really use some quarterback accuracy. Special mention must go to the Eagles, where Randall Cunningham just isn't enough to pull up the straddling running backs, the passing wide receivers, and a spotty secondary epitomized by Andre Waters, who has the interceptions of a lineman, the power of a wide receiver, and the running ability of a turtle, just as green as Andre himself. Think about that - the best offensive player in the game and the worst defensive player in the game on the same team.

What's the worst team in Tecmo?

The worst team category has three main contenders: the Colts, the Patriots, and the Seahawks. Of these, I believe the Colts to be the absolute worst. The reasons for this are as follows:

The Colts have a passable offense, but absolutely no defense to speak of, with only around two players even able to touch a fullback without bouncing off, and the slowest defense in the game. Two of the worst linebackers in the AFC hail from this team, as one example. They have absolutely no stars whatsoever.

The Patriots have a horrid offense to start, and it will barely become 75% percent of that of the Colts with substitutions like moving the tight end Marv Cook, placing him at running back. Their defense, however, can actually stop runners, and they feature stars Ray Agnew at left end and Ronnie Lippett at cornerback who can be taken by human players to stop the opposing passing offense.

The Seahawks have a better initial offense than the Patriots, but with substitutions they end up around the same - just a little better because of depth. Their defense is weaker than that of the Patriots, but their star, Jacob Green, is better than any rival player on New England; however, he starts at left end. Even so, they don't approach the Colts' horrible defense.

Here's how games of Tecmo work: the person who can score the most points wins (duuh). There are two ways of doing this:

- a) overwhelm the opposing defense with a strong offense that can come on the field and score reliably (or very quickly) to offset the opponent's own efforts with the ball;
- b) stop the opposing offense from putting up more points than you do by taking teeth out of the opposing offense with good coverage and/or strong run defense, thus bringing their ability to score in line with or below your own.

While Tecmo Super Bowl happens to be an extremely balanced game in terms of offense and defense, the advantage, just like in real football, lies with the defense, because of all of the tactics that are available to defenders in Tecmo, as well as the tough returns in

man-to-man games where kick returns beyond the twenty are few and punt returns of more than twenty fewer. The burden in Tecmo is always on the offense to score, especially with a human player's intelligence that can anticipate a play and neutralize it, in addition to ad-libbing to make up for faulty intuition. Close games don't come down to who has the ball last in Tecmo; the keys to victory in hard-fought games lie in turnovers (that usually can't be controlled) and in crucial drives, ending in scores, with big plays playing a minor role (unless both teams have terrible offenses).

The offense has very little margin for error when a great stopper and a great scorer butt heads. Big plays won't come very often with a consistent and successful scheme for shutting down the opposing offense, whether it focuses on using great players to stop the run or great cover guys to contain the pass. Seeing everything on the field won't help when everything is covered as the QB drops back or incoming linebackers take down runners before they can turn the corner.

In addition, that slow game where each team has to fight for every first down plays into the hands of the less-prolific team that sees lucky scores endure through nearly scoreless quarters.

The one exception to this rule is the Eagles and Randall "GOD" Cunningham, who are simply unstoppable on offense if played correctly.

With this in mind, we can look at how these three teams will do in this situation.

Seattle, when faced with the tough defense, will be hard-pressed to move upfield, but it will eventually strike, if on nothing else than third-down punt-bombs from Dave Krieg to Tommy Kane or John L. Williams. When it comes up against a powerful offense, it has an outside chance of containing the drive and coming up with a fourth down before the end zone with the relatively passable secondary and Jacob Green.

New England, when coming up against the tough defense, will have lesser chances of coming up with points since desperation bombs won't work terribly well with either Steve Grogan or Marc Wilson. However, against

even the best offense, it can make a stand with a called run or pass play that moves the offense back four or five yards, due to the overall quality of the players and due to the two-pronged attack of Ray Agnew and Ronnie Lippett on pass coverage + prevent run defense that can hold the line on single-play yardage gains for the other two (non-called) downs.

Indianapolis, when faced with the tough defense, can grind it out to a fair degree, with good receivers, Jeff George with 50 Pass Speed, and Albert Bentley with 44 Maximum Speed. However, if consistency becomes a problem with George missing passes or general turnovers, this offense won't have the strength to consistently make quick strikes and take it downtown. But on defense, there will be no stopping a determined offensive campaign. If the offense has a good fullback, the opponent will run him for all he's worth, beating down not only the computer players who make futile attempts at tackles, but also the human player who gets into a struggle but is overwhelmed by the huge hitting power difference. If the offense has a demon (and two teams do), then it's lights out for the Colts. With a fast back, the Colts won't be able to prevent four and five yard gains on most plays, not to mention the inevitable breakouts. This is just the rushing. If the opposing team starts passing, the only hope is the nose tackle dive, because open men will be everywhere, and if by some miracle every man is covered, then the quarterback can just run for five yards without any difficulty. What's worse, the opposing quarterback can throw into coverage deep if he's any good, since the Indianapolis secondary will not pick off the ball in most situations, even if they are not challenged by a receiver in the area.

Because Indianapolis will not be able to stop the opposing team from scoring, the best they can do is a shootout, and the worst they can do is a blowout where fast QB-WR tandems just throw long on every down and make huge yardage on every play. Other teams have chances, however slim they may be, because they can stop the opposing scores long enough to make their own. Indianapolis has no such refuge. With such long odds guaranteed by a defense that even at

its best won't be good enough, Indianapolis is the worst team in Tecmo Super Bowl.

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