

NFL Week 14 Picks

Welcome to Caesar's Picks Everyone! This will be a weekly project where I pick every game from the NFL Schedule. I'll offer my quick thoughts, some stats, and predictions for each game. I'll give a final score for each game as well as a confidence scale. My confidence scale is based not on the winner of the game, but the point spread of the game from the Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. The scale simply ranges from low (games to stay away from), to medium (games that are 50-50, bet with caution), to high confidence (Games to pick). These spreads and picks are made as of Thursday, December 5th, 2019.

After the perfect Thanksgiving slate I strung together, I went 6-7 in the Sunday and Monday games of week 13. I'm right near .500 at 86-88 against the spread, which shows how unpredictable betting can be (that's a warning!). I only went 1-1 in high confidence picks as I didn't feel strong with betting on a lot of last weeks games. 29-20 in high confidence picks put me in a solid position still. There is one month of regular season football left, and that means we should see teams on their A-Game during the final stretch. Let's get into it!

Cowboys 6-6 vs Bears 6-6 (+3)

These two teams have been up and down then up again this season as it's lead to this week 14 game that could either end the Bears season or hurt the cowboys. The Cowboys top offensive unit no longer exists as they have averaged less than 20 points per game over the past three. It won't be any easier as the bears have a 7th ranked defense. That has played well recently. QB Mitchell Trubisky has also played well recently with averaging over 300 yards in the last two games to go with a 68.3 completion percentage. A big part of that upswing has been the rise of WR Anthony Miller, who's averaged seven catches and 90 yards per his last three games. Expect the Cowboys to generate some pressure on Trubisky however as the Cowboys are 9th in pressure rate with 26.5 percent, and will go against an injured and underachieving Bears o-line. The Cowboys haven't shown much on the field to make me feel that they could beat any decent team on the road right now, and when Trubisky is comfortable, the Bears can beat almost anybody. Give me the bears to win at home on Thursday Night.

Bears 21, Cowboys 17/ Medium Confidence

Ravens 10-2 vs Bills 9-3 (+5.5)

The Ravens snuck away with a victory at home against the 49ers last week, but now they will have to travel to Orchard Park and play a Bills team that's peaking at the right time. Buffalo has won three games in a row and QB Josh Allen only has one interception in the last seven games. The Bills are 5th in rushing offense thanks to Josh Allen's athleticism, as well as RB Devin Singletary running the ball well. They have a similar makeup to the beloved Ravens but don't get the same national attention. It makes sense however once you factor in the Ravens going a solid 6-1 against over .500 teams, while the Bills only have one win over .500 to the Titans (keep

in mind, that was with Mariota and not Tannehill). The Bills usually play low scoring games against teams, so expect two rushing teams to try to control the ball against each other. I'm going with the Bills to cover the spread, but the Ravens should win another close knit contest.

Ravens 21, Bills 20/ Low Confidence

Panthers 5-7 vs Falcons 3-9 (-3)

The Panthers have fired Head Coach Ron Rivera after nine seasons and a super bowl appearance in Carolina. Riverboat Ron will probably get another head coaching job from the buzz going around the league, but it was inevitable that his time in Carolina was coming to a close. Perry Fewell will take over as Interim Head Coach. This abrupt change could hurt their preparation this week after losing at home to the Redskins. That make the Panthers 1-5 in the last six games, with Kyle Allen throwing 10 interceptions in that span. Four of them were to the Falcons who have lost the last two but have played tough with their NFC south teams. Give me the Falcons to win and sweep the Panthers this season.

Falcons 27, Panthers 20/ Medium Confidence

Bengals 1-11 vs Browns 5-7 (-7.5)

Well, Andy Dalton came back last week with something to prove! He had 243 yards and a touchdown in the Bengals first win of the season , and will now look to play spoiler against the in-state rival Browns. Cleveland lost to the Steelers on the road last week after a week of trash-talking and "Pittsburgh started it" shirts worn by their Head Coach. QB Baker Mayfield struggled in the second half of last weeks game after his hand injury, and it very well could be a problem in this game. The Bengals held the Jets to six total points last week so their defense has shown improvement and could look to continue that against the Browns. If they can contain Nick Chubb like they did Le'Veon Bell, they could end up getting a second win in a row. I really like the Bengals to cover this spread at 7.5, and I wouldn't be surprised to see them end the Browns season. I wont go that far however as Nick Chubb should have a good game that propels the Browns to win.

Browns 26, Bengals 23/ High Confidence

Broncos 4-8 vs Texans 8-4 (-9.5)

The Broncos are two for two in Rookie QB debuts this season. Drew Lock got his first win against the Chargers in a classic Chargers-esque finish. Lock didn't do much but he had two early touchdowns to WR Courtland Sutton and managed the game as people would like to say. Their offense is subpar at best, but their defense should get a jolt of good energy with elite pass rusher Von Miller returning from a knee injury. The Texans on the other side are coming off their biggest win of the season against the Patriots (and then came the annual "Patriots are finished" takes). Credit to Houston however, as they only gave up one Patriots field goal in the

first seven possessions on defense before a late comeback by New England. The Broncos have been good in this spot this year coming off a home win onto the road, while the Texans haven't been so great after an important clash. Give me the Broncos to cover barely as the Texans win.

Texans 28, Broncos 21/ Low Confidence

Lions 3-8-1 vs Vikings 8-4 (-13)

Fun Fact: The Lions are only one of three teams to have a lead in every game they've played this season (the 49ers and Chiefs are the others) . That makes their 3-8-1 record baffling as they should get the job done more times than not. Their last five games especially seem like tough breaks as they have only lost by 5.8 point loss points on average in that span. They play a Vikings team that's 13-2 coming off of a loss in the last 15 games. That's good news for Vikings fans as well as Dalvin Cook's shoulder injury being a minor one. Cook should return and feast against a below average Lions defense. Even with that, I will take the Lions in the spread as they hang around with every opponent they play.

Vikings 32, Lions 26/ High Confidence

Colts 6-6 vs Buccaneers 5-7 (-2)

These two teams are headed in opposite directions as the Colts have lost four of their last five games, while the Bucs have won three of their last four. The Colts special teams unit was anything but special as Kicker Adam Vinetari was blocked twice, with one of them returned for a touchdown in a loss to the Titans. The Colts claimed a new kicker off waivers this week so it will be interesting to see if any improvements are made this week. The Colts are a run first team, but they go against a 2nd ranked run defense in Tampa Bay, so Jacoby Brissett will have to play well and get out of his rut that he's sinker in since returning from injury. QB Jameis Winston had zero interceptions in a game for the fourth time this season against the Jaguars, but we know that the trend is that after a clean game from Winston, the turnovers pile up after. The Defense for the Bucs as broken from the norm as well as they have given up 33 points in two games after being the 31st ranked scoring defense. I shouldn't keep betting on the Colts, but I don't trust the Bucs either, and the Colts have more depth. I'll take another road team in the spread as the Colts win (This is easily going to backfire on me).

Colts 23, Buccaneers 20/ Medium Confidence

Dolphins 3-9 vs Jets 4-8 (-5.5)

The Jets are now in the group with the Bucs and Colts known as the wildlings. After their statement win over the Raiders, they got steamrolled against the then winless Bengals. At 4-8, the season is basically over and HC Adam Gase has to step it up to keep his job. This week will be a chance to beat his old team after failing to the first time, the Dolphins. Miami defeated the Eagles in an upset at home last week thanks to the power of Fitzmagic and his 365 passing

yards. WR Devante Parker had 159 receiving yards and two touchdowns, so expect the breakout talent to get more looks against the mediocre Jets Cornerbacks. The Jets played bad last week, but they are back home and Miami may feel too comfortable with their win against the Eagles. Give me the Jets to win with the points.

Jets 27, Dolphins 20/ Low Confidence

49ers 10-2 vs Saints 10-2 (-2.5)

Arguably the two premier teams in the NFC face-off in the Superdome. The Niners showed why they were the number one defense last week as they held Lamar Jackson to 206 total yards and stripped the ball from him in the second half. The offense however struggled on the road as that was the third time in four road games with less than 20 points scored. The Saints locked up the NFC South last week with a win over the Falcons. They generated nine sacks in the win including four from Cameron Jordan. The offense wasn't lighting up Atlanta but they controlled the ball and set up the defense to have a good game. This will be an interesting game to watch, but I will go with the Saints as they get the extra rest and are at home.

Saints 24, 49ers 19/ High Confidence

Redskins 3-9 vs Packers 9-3 (-12.5)

Don't look now but the Redskins have won two games in a row. Ok I'm still not looking, but at least they have shown some passion on the field that was missing in some earlier games. Running backs Darrius Guice and Adrian Peterson destroyed the Panthers run defense with 238 yards on the ground combined. The Packers run defense has struggled this season, so expect the Redskins to come out with a similar game plan from a week prior. The Packers run game struggled last week with only 79 yards in total, and only 18 from Aaron Jones. Washington has a bottom five run defense, so the Packers have an opportunity to clean it up and get the run game going again. I'm not a fan of this Washington team, but they should be able to run the ball on Green Bay and hang around for a little while. Give me the Redskins to cover with an obvious Packer win.

Packers 30, Redskins 20/ Medium Confidence

Chargers 4-8 vs Jaguars 4-8 (+3)

Fun Fact: The Chargers have lost all of their eight games by seven or less points. At this point it's truly a talent how they always find a new way to lose a game, last week being an unnecessary pass interference. They get the Jaguars who have lost to the Chargers 6 of their last 7 meetings. The Jags have to go back to Minshew Mania after Nick Foles flopped in his three games back from a collarbone injury. Gardner could provide a second wind to a Jaguars team that looked bored and deflated in the blowout loss to the Bucs. It won't be easy as the Chargers have the 4th ranked pass defense. At this point, it's guaranteed to be a close game with the Chargers

involved, and I'm not going to predict them to win until I see it. Give me the Jaguars to bounce back.

Jaguars 28, Chargers 24/ Low Confidence

Chiefs 8-4 vs Patriots 10-2 (-3)

The Patriots are struggling on offense as Tom Brady has shown his age recently with a bad first half against the Texans. The run game hasn't helped New England either, and that will hurt in this matchup as the Chiefs can air it out all game. Patrick Mahomes is having another good year that hasn't been as pronounced with Lamar Jackson and Russell Wilson taking the spotlight. The Pats will counter that with a top defense and playmakers in Stephon Gilmore, Jamie Collins, Kyle Van Noy, etc. They did however fail to create a turnover against the Texans, marking the first time this season with no turnovers for the Pats defense. The Chiefs have the right coaching and personnel to re-create that success this week. I rarely pick against the Patriots but I can keep blindly ignoring the evidence that the Patriots aren't prepared for dynamic quarterbacks like Lamar Jackson, Deshaun Watson, and Now Pat Mahomes. Give me the Chiefs to win on the road.

Chiefs 31, Patriots 24/ Medium Confidence

Steelers 7-5 vs Cardinals 3-8-1 (+2.5)

The Cardinals look to be running out of steam as they got manhandled at home by the Rams. That loss marked five in a row for the Cards as they are now just playing for pride against a Steelers team that currently controls their own destiny. After a bad first quarter, the Steelers outscored Cleveland 20-3 the rest of the way for a win as QB Duck Hodges had some nice throws in the win. The main catalyst for the win was of course the defense as they registered five sacks, a forced fumble, and a game-winning interception. The Steelers look rejuvenated since the arrival of Hodges, and Mike Tomlin has the players in the right mindset to compete every game (I feel bad for forgetting him in the Coach of the Year Discussion). Give me the Steelers to win.

Steelers 23, Cardinals 13/ High Confidence

Titans 7-5 vs Raiders 6-6 (+3)

The Raiders went from a sleeper team to a fraud in the football fans eyes over two weeks. They looked abysmal in their two road games against the Jets and Chiefs respectively, getting outscored 74-12 in those games. They lost the turnover battle 5-1 to the Chiefs including two defensive touchdowns by Kansas City. Now they will play a Titans team with good momentum as they they have won three game in a row. Last week had a lot to do with the the two blocked field goals that put the Titans over the top. Even without that, RB Derrick Henry still provided stability on offense with 149 rushing yards. The Raiders at this point have lost my trust in

picking them to win. The Titans look like a complete team right now and I like them to win and cover easily.

Titans 35, Raiders 23/ High Confidence

Seahawks 10-2 vs Rams 7-5 (PK)

The rare pick'em game sees two NFC West rivals battle as the Rams season is on life support with a loss. The Rams had their best offensive game of the season against the Cardinals last week as Jared Goff had 424 passing yards and two touchdowns. RB Todd Gurley also ran for 95 yards and scored a touchdown. Seattles defense has been average this season, so the Rams could find a way to string another solid performance at home after the close loss to the Hawks the first time around. If they do put another good performance together, expect Russell Wilson to answer the call as he's coming off a four touchdown performance on Monday night. Running backs Chris Carson and Rashaad Penny combined for 176 rushing yards and two touchdowns as well, continuing the trend of balance for Seattle. This is a tough game to pick, but I'm going with the Rams in a small upset over the Seahawks as they are the more desperate team.

Rams 29, Seahawks 27/ Low Confidence

Giants 2-10 vs Eagles 5-7 (-9.5)

The Eagles leaky secondary reared its ugly head yet again after taking a hiatus for a few weeks. They gave up 365 yards to Ryan Fitzpatrick in a loss and are still a game behind Dallas for the division. They play a Giants team without Daniel Jones as he is out with an ankle sprain, which means Eli Manning returns to the lineup with his 116-116 record shaken up. The Giants will also most likely miss Evan Engram as well as Golden Tate. The Giants defense has struggled all year but last week they were able to slow down the Packers run game. If they can do that against the Eagles, then this can be a close contest. I however don't trust the Giants in that situation, and the Eagles have the perfect opponent to get themselves going (then again you could've said that about the Dolphins). Give me the Eagles at home and the spread.

Eagles 33, Giants 20/ Medium Confidence