



*STATS NFL Game Notes*

*Tennessee Titans at Dallas Cowboys*

*Friday, August 21, 2009 – Preseason*

Last season saw the average NFL game produce the most points in any season since the AFL-NFL merger. Passers produced the highest passer rating and lowest interception rate in NFL history, though all those completed passes didn't gain a ton of yardage.

**NFL League-Wide Numbers, 2008 Regular Season**

Points/Game	44.1 (highest since 1968)
Completion Pct	61.0 (2 <sup>nd</sup> highest all-time)
Yards/Completion	11.4 (4 <sup>th</sup> lowest all-time)
<b>Passer Rating</b>	<b>83.2 (highest all-time)</b>
<b>Interception Pct</b>	<b>2.8 (lowest all-time)</b>

For the fifth straight season, the league established a new record for field-goal accuracy.

**Highest League-Wide Field Goal Pct, All-Time**

(FG Pct recorded since 1938)

<b>2008</b>	<b>84.5</b>
2007	82.8
2006	81.4
2005	81.0
2004	80.8

How unpredictable is the NFC these days? Only one NFC team, the Giants, made the playoffs in both 2007 and 2008. And not one '07 NFC division champion repeated in 2008.

**NFC Playoff Teams – Last 2 Seasons**

2007	2008
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Giants	Giants *
Cowboys *	Eagles
Redskins	Vikings *
Packers *	Panthers *
Buccaneers *	Falcons
Seahawks *	Cardinals *

\* division winner

In the entire NFL, only Pittsburgh and SD won division titles in both 2007 and '08.

Overall, only five teams reached the postseason in both 2007 and 2008. One of them was the Titans.

**Current Streaks - Consecutive Seasons Reaching Playoffs**

Colts	7
Giants	4
Chargers	3
<b>Titans</b>	<b>2</b>
Steelers	2

To slice it another way: half of the NFL's *last-place* teams in 2007 made the postseason in 2008, and five of the eight finished with winning records.

**Last-Place Teams in 2007 - Records in 2008**

Dolphins	11- 5 *
Falcons	11- 5 *
Ravens	11- 5 *
Eagles	9- 6-1 *
Bears	9- 7
Texans	8- 8
Raiders	5-11
Rams	2-14

\* reached playoffs

Going into any season, teams obviously strive to win their divisions, and, ideally, gain their conference's No. 1 seed for the postseason. However, in this decade, the No. 1 seed seems to be more a curse than an advantage, as more wild card teams have won Super Bowls than top seeds.

**Super Bowl Winners, 2000-2008 Seasons (with playoff seed)**

2000 Ravens	4 *	2005 Steelers	6 *
2001 Patriots	2	2006 Colts	3
2002 Buccaneers	2	2007 Giants	5 *
2003 Patriots	1	2008 Steelers	2
2004 Patriots	2		

\* = wild card team

Not since all the way back in the 1993 season (Dallas vs. Buffalo) has there been a Super Bowl that matched two No. 1 seeds.

As both the Cowboys and Titans are painfully aware, it's been a regular occurrence in recent seasons for a No. 1 seed to lose its first playoff game.

**#1 Seeds Losing Divisional Playoff Game, 2005-2008**

- 2005 Colts (vs. Steelers)
- 2006 Chargers (vs. Patriots)
- 2007 Cowboys (vs. Giants)**
- 2008 Titans (vs. Ravens)**

The 2009 season will be Jeff Fisher's 16<sup>th</sup> at the helm for the Oilers/Titans franchise. Dating back to 1960, only four other coaches—all of them Hall of Famers—have stayed with a single franchise as long.

**Most Consecutive Seasons Coaching Same Team - Since 1960**

Tom Landry, Dal, 1960-1988	29 seasons *
Don Shula, Mia, 1970-1995	26 seasons *
Chuck Noll, Pit, 1969-1991	23 seasons *
Bud Grant, Min, 1967-1983	17 seasons *
<b>Jeff Fisher, Hou/Ten, 1994-2009</b>	<b>16 seasons</b>

\* Hall of Fame inductee

Last season the Titans piled up 24 rushing touchdowns, tied for second most in franchise history. They became one of only five teams in the era of the 16-game schedule to have two players run for at least nine TD apiece.

**NFL, 1978-2008 - Teammates With 9+ Rush TD Each**

- 1979 Saints - Chuck Muncie & Tony Galbreath
- 2002 Vikings - Moe Williams & Daunte Culpepper
- 2004 Chiefs - Priest Holmes & Larry Johnson
- 2008 Titans - LenDale White & Chris Johnson**
- 2008 Panthers - DeAngelo Williams & Jonathan Stewart

Avoiding miscues was a big part of Tennessee's success in 2008.

**Titans' Miscues, 2008 (with NFL ranks)**

<b>Sacks Allowed</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>t-fewest (Den)</b>
INT Thrown	9	3 <sup>rd</sup> fewest
Total Giveaways	17	t-3 <sup>rd</sup> fewest
Dropped Passes	22	t-7 <sup>th</sup> fewest

On the negative side, Tennessee committed 108 penalties last season, fourth most in the NFL. The Cowboys were even worse.

**Most Penalties Committed, 2008**

<b>Cowboys</b>	<b>119 (5<sup>th</sup> most in franchise history)</b>
Packers	110
Raiders	109
<b>Titans</b>	<b>108</b>
Cardinals	107

The Titans were terrific on defense last season.

**Titans' 2008 Defensive Ranks**

Opp Points/Game	2 <sup>nd</sup> (14.6; Pit 13.9)
Opp Passer Rating	3 <sup>rd</sup> (69.2)
Takeaways	t-3 <sup>rd</sup> (31)
Opp Yards/Completion	4 <sup>th</sup> (10.11)
Opp Yards/Play	4 <sup>th</sup> (4.60)

The Titans' defensive dominance extended into its divisional playoff game vs. the Ravens—but the Titans managed to lose to Baltimore, despite a 180-yard advantage in total net yards.

**Playoffs Since 1970 - Largest Yardage Differential by Losing Team**

Steelers, 1994 AFC Title Gm vs. SD	+189
Titans, 2000 Div Playoff vs. Bal	+183
<b>Titans, 2008 Div Playoff vs. Bal</b>	<b>+180</b>
Rams, 2001 Super Bowl vs. NE	+160
Cowboys, 1994 NFC Title Gm @ SF	+157

Now that defense will have to carry on in 2009 without departed free agent Albert Haynesworth. Based on the defense's performance with and without Haynesworth in the past two seasons, the Titans will struggle to maintain their defensive standards without him.

**Titans With & Without A.Haynesworth, 2007-2008**

	W/Haynesworth	Without
W-L	22-5	1-4
Opp Pts/Gm	14.7	26.8
Opp Total Yds/Gm	279.7	362.2
Opp Rush Yds/Gm	85.4	134.8
Opp 3 <sup>rd</sup> -Down Pct	35.5	54.8
Takeaways/Gm	2.1	1.4

Speaking of playoff games, the Cowboys haven't won one since Troy Aikman quarterbacked a 1996 wild card victory over Minnesota. For more than a quarter century, the Cowboys had won playoff games quite frequently.

**Cowboys' Postseason Wins, 1970-2008**

1970-1996: 31 - **most in NFL**  
 1997-2008: 0

In 2007 the Cowboys had a terrific season offensively, ranking second behind only the record-setting Patriots in total points scored. But too many turnovers caused the offense to drop off considerably last season.

**Cowboys' Offense, 2007 vs. 2008, With NFL Ranks**

	2007	2008
Points/Game	28.4 (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	22.6 (18 <sup>th</sup> )
Total Yards/Gm	365.7 (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	344.5 (13 <sup>th</sup> )
Net Pass Yards/Gm	256.6 (4 <sup>th</sup> )	236.8 (9 <sup>th</sup> )
Giveaways	24 (t-7 <sup>th</sup> fewest)	33 (2 <sup>nd</sup> most)

Giveaways were a huge story for the 2008 Cowboys.

**Cowboys' Giveaway Numbers, 2008, With NFL Ranks**

Fumbles	29	5 <sup>th</sup> most
Fumbles Lost	13	t-5 <sup>th</sup> most
INT Thrown	20	t-2 <sup>nd</sup> most
Total Giveaways	33	2 <sup>nd</sup> most (SF 35)
Opponent Points Off	107	4 <sup>th</sup> most
Turnover Diff	-11	3 <sup>rd</sup> worst

In each of the past three seasons, the Cowboys have won their Thanksgiving game in dominant fashion—then faded thereafter.

**Cowboys, 2006-2008 - Numbers Through Thanksgiving & After**  
 (regular season & playoffs combined)

	Thru Thanks	Post-Thanks
W-L	25-9	6-10
Points/Game	28.4	19.6
Total Yards/Gm	373.4	316.2
Giveaways/Gm	1.6	2.1

For the Dallas defense last season, there was both the good and the bad.

**Cowboys' Defense, 2008**

- 59 sacks - **most in NFL**
- 8 INT - 3<sup>rd</sup> fewest in NFL
- 22 takeaways - t-8<sup>th</sup> fewest in NFL

Last season's Cowboys became just the second team, in the 27 seasons in which sacks have been an official statistic for individual defenders, to get at least 40 sacks from their linebacking corps.

**Most Sacks by Team's Linebackers in a Season, All-Time**

(sacks recorded as official stat for defenders since 1982)

2006 Chargers	42.5
<b>2008 Cowboys</b>	<b>40.5</b>
2008 Steelers	38.5
1996 Panthers	38.0
1994 Steelers	37.5

DeMarcus Ware came within half a sack of tying Lawrence Taylor's mark for most sacks in a single season by an LB.

**Most Sacks by Linebackers in a Season, All-Time**

(sacks recorded as official stat for defenders since 1982)

Lawrence Taylor, 1986 NYG	20.5
Derrick Thomas, 1990 KC	20.0
<b>DeMarcus Ware, 2008 Dal</b>	<b>20.0</b>
Tim Harris, 1989 GB	19.5
Andre Tippett, 1984 NE	18.5

Back on the offensive side, the Cowboys might be hard-pressed to replace Terrell Owens at wide receiver. The nine WRs on their active roster have less than half as many career TD receptions as the departed T.O.

**Career Totals - T.Owens & Cowboys' Current Wide Receivers**

	Owens	Current Dal WRs
Receptions	951	488
Rec Yards	14122	7169
Rec TD	139	52
Pro Bowls	6	1

Thanks in large part to Owens, Tony Romo has posted some phenomenal numbers in the last two seasons.

**T.Romo Numbers, 2007-2008, With NFL Ranks**

Pass Yards/Gm	264.1	3 <sup>rd</sup> (minimum 20 gms)
Yards/Completion	12.5	3 <sup>rd</sup> *
Yards/Attempt	7.90	4 <sup>th</sup> *
<b>TD Passes</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>t-1<sup>st</sup> (D.Brees)</b>
Rating	94.6	3 <sup>rd</sup> *

\* ranks based on minimum 400 attempts

Romo doesn't yet have the 1,500 career pass attempts needed to qualify among the NFL's official all-time leaders for percentage and ratio stats (he starts the season with 1,307 career attempts), but among passers with at least 1,000 attempts, he ranks fourth all-time in yards per attempt.

**Most Career Yards per Pass Attempt, Minimum 1000 Attempts**

Otto Graham	8.63
Sid Luckman	8.42
Norm Van Brocklin	8.16
<b>Tony Romo</b>	<b>8.08</b>
Kurt Warner	8.04

Romo would certainly benefit from having a more productive Roy Williams. After posting over 1,300 receiving yards for the 2006 Lions, Williams failed to reach that total in the following two seasons combined.

**R.Williams - Last 3 Seasons**

	2006	2007-2008
Receptions	82	100
Rec Yards	1310	1268
Rec TD	7	7

While the wide receiver position may be a question mark for the Cowboys, there are no issues at tight end, where Jason Witten has been a star for the last five seasons.

**J.Witten Numbers, 2004-2008, With Ranks Among TE**

Receptions	394	2 <sup>nd</sup> (T.Gonzalez 448)
Rec Yards	4588	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Rec TD	24	6 <sup>th</sup>
Rec 1 <sup>st</sup> Downs	227	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Unlike Tony Romo, Kerry Collins doesn't tend to rack up prolific passing numbers. In 2008, Collins didn't rank in the league's top 20 in passing yards, TD or rating. But he did an excellent job of avoiding sacks and interceptions.

**K.Collins - 2008 Ranks**

Passing Yards	24 <sup>th</sup> (2676)
TD Passes	t-24 <sup>th</sup> (12)
Yards/Attempt	24 <sup>th</sup> (6.45)
Rating	23 <sup>rd</sup> (80.2)
INT Pct	5 <sup>th</sup> (1.7)
Sacks/Pass Play	2 <sup>nd</sup> (1.9; J.Cutler 1.8)

Collins is certainly a survivor. Last season he became the fourth QB in NFL history to start in the playoffs for three different teams.

**NFL Postseason All-Time - QBs Who Have Started for 3+ Teams**

- D.Krieg: Sea (1983, 1984, 1987, 1988), KC (1992), Det (1994)
- Brad Johnson: Min (1996), Wsh (1999), TB (2001, 2002)
- Jeff Garcia: SF (2001, 2002), Phi (2006), TB (2007)
- **Kerry Collins: Car (1996), NYG (2000, 2002), Car (2008)**

In 2008 Chris Johnson became one of just six players to post 1200 rushing yards and an average of at least 4.5 yards per rush in a rookie season, since 1990.

**NFL 1990-2008 - Rookies W/1200+ Rush Yds and 4.5+ Yds/Rush**

	Rush Yds	Avg
Jerome Bettis, 1993 LA Rams	1429	4.9
Fred Taylor, 1998 Jax	1223	4.6
Clinton Portis, 2002 Den	1508	5.5
Adrian Peterson, 2007 Min	1341	5.6
<b>Chris Johnson, 2008 Ten</b>	<b>1228</b>	<b>4.9</b>
Steve Slaton, 2008 Hou	1282	4.8

Last season LenDale White ran the ball just 200 times—and still scored 15 rushing TD. In NFL history, only three players have ever scored as many as 15 rush TD with *fewer* attempts.

**Single Seasons All-Time - Fewest Rushes by Player W/15+ Rush TD**

	Rushes	Rush TD
Steve Van Buren, 1945 Phi	143	15
Lenny Moore, 1964 Bal Colts	157	16
Pete Banaszak, 1975 Oak	187	16
<b>LenDale White, 2008 Ten</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>15</b>