

# NFL Playoffs at a Glance

by Rick Cain  
Collegian Sports Editor

With only two weeks left in the season, there are still a number of playoff spots yet to be decided. Here is a run down of the teams that still have a chance to battle in the coveted Superbowl in January.

## American Football Conference

The Eastern division belongs to Buffalo. At 11-3, the Bills only worry is whether they will have home field advantage throughout AFC the playoffs.

The Central division's best bet is Cincinnati. The Bengals are also 11-3, and one of their wins was against Buffalo. This insures home field advantage for the Bengals if they end up tied with the Bills.

The Western division is a mess. Seattle, Denver and Los Angeles are all 7-7. The Seahawks presently have the head to head advantage and would take the title if the season ended today. However, the Broncos and the Seahawks meet in Seattle Sunday, Dec. 10, and the Raiders host the Hawks on the 18th. These two games should be the deciding factor in the division.

The Wild Card spots are down to four teams. Houston and Cleveland are both 9-5 and could put three Central division teams into the playoffs. Their nearest threats are New England and Indianapolis (both 8-6). The Patriots possess a better divisional record than the Browns and could steal the final AFC playoff spot if there is a tie.

## National Football Conference

The Eastern division currently belongs to New York at 9-5. However, Philadelphia (8-6), Phoenix (7-7) and Washington (7-7) still have a shot at overtaking the Giants. A telling game will be played Saturday, Dec. 10, in Tempe between the Cardinals and Eagles. The tie-breaking scheme is too confusing to discuss at this time.

The Central division is a toss up between ever present Chicago (11-3) and Minnesota (10-4). The Bears and Vikings are probably the best two teams in the league and, barring any incredible upsets on Dec. 11 (the Bears play at home against the Lions and the Vikes travel to Green Bay), the division title will come down to their final game. The Bears and Vikings should be 12-3 and 11-4 going in to their head to head season finale. Since Minnesota won the first match-up, and would therefore take the title if there is a tie, the championship will be decided in what could probably be the best game of the season.

The Western division is a toss-up between San Francisco and New Orleans. Both at 9-5, the 49'ers have the present edge having won the first head to head match-up between the two. However, the two meet again Sunday and the winner should take the title. The long shot of the division are the Rams. After going winless through November, L.A. upset the Bears on Dec. 5, and are presently 8-6. The Rams need a combination of losses by both the 49'ers and Saints to survive.

The Wild Card spots will most likely consist of the Vikings and the second place finisher in the west. This final spot, not unlike the Western division title, is in the hands of the 49'ers, Saints and Rams. The outside chance is whoever claims the number two spot in the East.

# College Bowl Games

December 10

California Bowl at Fresno, CA - Fresno St. & Western Michigan

December 23

Independence Bowl at Shreveport, LA - Texas-El Paso & Southern Mississippi

December 24

Sun Bowl at El Paso, TX - Alabama & Army

December 25

Aloha Bowl at Honolulu, HA - Houston & Washington St.

December 28

Liberty Bowl at Memphis, TN - Indiana & South Carolina

December 29

All-American Bowl at Birmingham, AL - Florida & Illinois

Freedom Bowl at Anaheim, CA - Colorado & Brigham Young

December 30

Holiday Bowl at San Diego, CA - Oklahoma St. & Wyoming

December 31

Peach Bowl at Atlanta, GA - Iowa & North Carolina St.

January 1

Gator Bowl at Jacksonville, FL - Georgia & Michigan St.

January 2

Hall of Fame Bowl at Tampa, FL - Syracuse & Louisiana St.

Florida Citrus Bowl at Orlando, FL - Clemson & Oklahoma

Cotton Bowl at Dallas, TX - UCLA & Arkansas

Fiesta Bowl at Tempe, AZ - Notre Dame & West Virginia

Rose Bowl at Pasadena, CA - USC & Michigan

Orange Bowl at Miami, FL - Miami & Nebraska

Sugar Bowl at New Orleans, LA - Florida State & Auburn

# Weekend Couch Potato

by Paul Polasik  
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What is it about football that makes a normal, active person during the week become a couch potato on the weekend?

The average person either works or goes to school during the week so you figure that come the weekend they would want to do something besides just sit around and watch TV. But, millions of people every fall waste weekend after weekend watching grown men play a little boys game.

What is the fascination? Is it the violent hits? Is it the last second victories? Or is it that we're just a lazy bunch of people who have nothing better to do with our time?

The truth is that football is big business. It's right up there with the movie industry when it comes to making money. People pay over \$20 a seat to freeze or get rained on just to see it. The Super Bowl has almost turned into a national holiday. People throw parties and go nuts just for the game. Scalpers got \$1,000 a ticket last year for seats where you need binoculars to see the action on the field. It's crazy, but a winning football team can make a whole town go bonkers over it.

In my opinion, football is like a movie, you buy your ticket (or turn on the TV) and just escape for a little while.

## Puzzle Answers

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