

# The League of Doom

## Times - Chronicle Picayune

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### *MOCK DRAFT: THE FIRST ROUND*

#### *Projecting the First Round of the 2016 Draft*

##### *From Antonio Brown to Julio Jones, a Comprehensive Look at the First Round*

By **ALCYONE BALFOUR**, Contributor

THE WAR ROOM – The draft is less than two weeks away, the preseason has begun, and we're still waiting on a more interesting headline story, so the editorial board was like, “How about you write a list projecting who each owner will select in

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The expert *Times-Chronicle Picayune* statisticians take a look at the top ten fantasy quarterbacks this season, plus a bonus wild card quarterback. **PAGE SIX**

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In the first of our Rivalry Profile series, we take a look at the heated Ninjas Division rivalry between two perennial playoff powerhouses. **PAGE TWELVE**

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Our preview and analysis of the top ten fantasy defenses this year, as determined based on relative violence quotient. **PAGE FIFTEEN**

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##### **Everyone Is Stupid**

A well thought-out, measured critique of ESPN's site and app that our Technology Editor insisted we publish. **PAGE TWENTY-THREE**

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the first round of the draft? That should make a good column and allow you to avoid having to do any real reporting or investigation.”

And I was like, “You mean a mock draft?”

So they said, “No, mock drafts are written by disreputable, cut rate columnists who need to fill space in their sub-par publications during the dead zone prior to the beginning of the regular season. This is a draft projection.”

“Fine,” I said. “Whatever.”

Without further ado, your 2016 First Round Mock Draft:

### **1. Colin Lidston: Antonio Brown, Pit WR**

No one has ever drafted anything other than a wide receiver or running back with the first overall pick. Colin has a tendency to draft running backs, doing so 80% of the time, but Antonio Brown was the highest scoring non-Cam Newton player last year, and is projected by ESPN to be the highest scoring player overall this season. In 2015, he was second in the league in targets and tied for first in receptions per game, and Roethlisberger's number two target, Martavis Bryant, is suspended for all of 2016. If anything, Brown might be even better this season than he was last season. It would be crazy for Colin to let him go here, given that Colin has to wait another 22 picks for his second selection, and Brown is just about the surest thing out there this season.

### **2. Stef Andrews: David Johnson, Ari RB**

Eighty percent of League of Doom second overall picks have been running backs, and Stef has always taken a running back with her first pick. David Johnson was the number three fantasy running back last year, despite not becoming the starter in Arizona until week 13. Between weeks 13 and 17, he was the highest scoring running back in all of fantasy, including an insane 42.9 points against the Eagles in week 15. ESPN projects him to score the most points among running backs this season, and so do we.

### **3. Jason Vicks: Todd Gurley, LA RB**

This is another running back heavy spot, and Jason is another player with a tendency to take running backs in the first round. Gurley is virtually the only thing that the Rams have going for them, and he averaged 4.8 yards a carry last season even though he constantly faced eight-man fronts. Despite starting only 12 games in 2015, Gurley was eighth in scoring among running backs, and we project all the non-David

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Johnson backs ahead of him to decline this year. Gurley is the real deal, and it would be a big surprise to see him fall past the top three picks in the draft.

#### **4. Meredith Boram: Odell Beckham Jr., NYG WR**

This spot in the draft is a little less predictable, and Meredith seems to go for the best player available. In a 1/2 PPR league like this one, Odell Beckham Jr. is just about the surest thing around, aside from Antonio Brown. He was seventh in the NFL in targets last season and fifth in fantasy points at his position, despite missing a game due to a suspension. He faces only one top-tier passing defense (the Rams) all season long, which gives him a leg up over Julio Jones. Plus, his hair is awesome.

#### **5. Sam Manleigh: Aaron Rodgers, GB QB**

Someone has to take the first quarterback, and Sam has selected a quarterback with 60% of his first round picks. A strong case could be made for Cam Newton here – he was the top fantasy player last year, the NFL MVP, and probably the consensus top quarterback this year – but we think that Sam will go with Rodgers. Remember when we said that Sam selected a quarterback with 60% of his first round picks? One hundred percent of the quarterbacks he selected were Aaron Rodgers. In Sam's defense, Rodgers will have a healthy Jordy Nelson to throw the ball to this season, Rodgers has an easier schedule than Newton, and Rodgers is no longer on speaking terms with his media whore brother, Jordan, so he won't have that asshole around to distract him.

#### **6. Eric Millbrook: Cam Newton, Car QB**

Eric likes to take quarterbacks in the first round, and we expect him to take Newton here. He has had Newton before, and Newton is pretty much the best quarterback in football, regardless of what Sam thinks. He was the top fantasy scorer last season, and he stands a reasonable chance of repeating that this season, especially with his top receiver, Kelvin Benjamin, actually playing this year instead of taking the season off to “heal his ACL.”

#### **7. Chris Baskerville: Adrian Peterson, Min RB**

This spot is a bit of crap shoot, and Chris isn't quite so predictable as some players with his first round pick. However, AP seems like a safe bet here. He seems to be immune from the ravages of age, and injuries only make him stronger. (Rumor has it that he derives his incredible abilities from the pain and suffering of children.)

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Also, the Vikings aren't actually capable of throwing the ball, so they're going to be handing it to their old school workhorse back a whole damn lot, and Chris likes old school workhorse backs.

### **8. Will Shannahan: Russell Wilson, Sea QB**

There isn't much of a trend when it comes to the eighth pick, although quarterbacks are at least as likely to be taken here as any other position, and Will is at least as likely to take a quarterback with his first pick as he is to take any other position. With Rodgers and Newton off the board, Wilson is the obvious pick here. He was the number three quarterback last year, and his stat-line shot through the roof when his top receiver, Doug Baldwin, exploded in week 10. If their connection holds up, Wilson might be a steal at the eighth pick.

### **9. Zakk Bailey: Drew Brees, NO QB**

This is a popular spot for quarterbacks, and Zakk likes to take quarterbacks in the first round. Andrew Luck might be a valid choice here, too, but it seems likely that Zakk would go with Brees, because Zakk was badly burned by taking Luck in the first round last season. There are some question marks surrounding Brees – he didn't look like himself the first seven weeks of 2015, and his receivers are largely unproven (Coby Fleener, anyone?) – but he was devastating in week eight, with 44.3 points, and finished the season very strong, which is a promising development for his prospects this year.

### **10. Jaime Richardson: Lamar Miller, Hou RB**

Jaime has a history of taking running backs, and this is historically a running back spot. Miller looks like a good bet here; he was the sixth-ranked running back in 2015, despite playing on a team that ranked last in the league in runs and split carries between Miller and legends like Jay Ajayi and Jonas Gray. Now, he's on the Texans – fifth in the league in runs last season – where their plug-and-play offensive system turns nobodies into successful running backs. Miller is not a nobody, so he should have a monster season carrying the rock 20 or more times per game for the first time in his career.

### **11. Sam Denisch: Rob Gronkowski, NE TE**

You know that someone is going to take him in the first round. Other Sam has taken a tight end in the first round in the past, and we like the idea of Other Sam

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selecting a member of the hated New England Patriots in the first round. And so, Gronk happens.

## **12. Ned Richardson: Julio Jones, Atl WR**

Ned has a tendency to take wide receivers in the first round, and he can freely take a running back or quarterback with the very next pick. Jones is the last of the top tier wide receivers, and we thought it would be disingenuous to let him slip into the second round. Jones didn't do much in 2015 – he was second among receivers in fantasy points, first in targets, tied for first in receptions a game, and first in receiving yards – but we think it should still be worth it to take a flyer and select Jones with the last pick of the first round.

And there you have it. We absolutely guarantee that this will be the precise order of the draft selections in the first round. Under no circumstances will it be possible that any other scenario could play out. We are so sure of this that we will give you 100% of your subscription fee back if we are wrong. ★

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## ***DRAFT PREVIEW: QUARTERBACKS***

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### ***Cam Newton Leads a Somewhat Weak Quarterback Class***

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**By SYNERGY COCHRAN, Contributor**

THE SANCTUARY OF STATISTICS — In 242 hours, the League of Doom draft will commence. In light of this fact, we will examine the top ten players at each position over the next two issues. We start with quarterbacks, defenses/special teams, and kickers. (*Defenses and special teams are on page fifteen and kickers are on page twenty. — Ed.*) In all probability, several owners are going to arrive for the draft without having made even the slightest preparation, so this series should be a useful and valuable public service.

Our analysis begins with the quarterbacks. Thirteen quarterbacks have been taken in the first round of the League of Doom draft. These quarterback selections have taken up 24.07% of all first round picks. There is a mean of 2.6 quarterbacks taken in the first round each season, with the first one taken with the fourth pick, on average. The highest a quarterback has been selected was second overall, and the lowest pick at which the first quarterback was taken was ninth. In 2013, only one quarterback was selected in the first round (Aaron Rodgers), the least in league history. In 2012, four quarterbacks were taken in the first round, the most in league history. Only one quarterback, Aaron Rodgers, has been selected in the first round every single season.

Despite their relatively scarcity in first round selections, quarterbacks are the most common position in the top five scoring fantasy players each season, taking up 60% of the top five players in league history. They also have composed 60% of the number one scoring players each year, with Cam Newton the most recent example.

This year, there is a fairly substantial drop after the top three quarterbacks, and another drop after the fifth. The two biggest quarterback names of their generation — Peyton Manning and Tom Brady — have either retired or been suspended, and their frequent also-rans, Aaron Rodgers and Drew Brees, had off years in 2015. We may be looking at a changing of the guards at quarterback, with Cam Newton, Russell Wilson, Andrew Luck, and a surprising Blake Bortles securing their spots among the elite signal callers. Quarterback is a position in transition, which makes things especially unpredictable this year, given their importance in fantasy football.

Without further ado, here are our 2016 quarterback rankings:

### **1. Cam Newton, Car** (1st in 2015; Week 7 Bye)

Newton had a career year in 2015. He personally accounted for 45 touchdowns; his 35 passing touchdowns were the second most in the league, and his 10 rushing touchdowns were first among quarterbacks — and tied for second for rushing touchdowns at any position. He also tied for second most yards per completion, at 13.0. And he did all of this without a number one receiver; after Greg Olsen, his tight end, four different receivers caught at least 30 passes, and none had more than 44 receptions. This year, he'll have his top receiver, Kelvin Benjamin, back, which may help to offset some of the regression to the mean that is likely to occur.

### **2. Aaron Rodgers, GB** (8th in 2015; Week 4 Bye)

Rodgers was a little off last season — possibly the worst season of his career as a starter. But the worst season of *his* career would be among the best seasons for most quarterbacks' careers: he threw for 3,821 yards and 31 touchdowns, while only throwing eight interceptions. However, both of his top receivers (Randall Cobb and Davante Adams) dropped passes at a rate placing them in the top 10 in the league. This season, Rodgers gets Jordy Nelson back. Nelson is one of the best receivers in the league, placing in the top ten in yards each season since becoming a starter. A dynamic player like Nelson should place Rodgers back towards the top of his position once more.

### **3. Russell Wilson, Sea** (3rd in 2015; Week 5 Bye)

Through week 10 of last year, Wilson had a mediocre-at-best season. Starting with the week 11 game against San Francisco, however, Wilson exploded on a seven-week run where he threw for 25 touchdowns and ran for another, all while only turning the ball over once. Almost certainly not coincidentally, Doug Baldwin went wild over the same period, making 40 receptions for 590 yards and 11 touchdowns over those seven weeks (making him the top fantasy receiver over that time). For the season, Wilson was sixth in the league in passing touchdowns, sixth lowest in interception percentage, and third in completion percentage. However, he also had the sixth highest sack percentage last year. Fortunately for Wilson — and whoever drafts him — the League Managers have halved the points penalty to quarterbacks when they are sacked. If Wilson keeps his late-season performance going throughout 2016, he will throw 352 receptions for 4,357 yards, 57 touchdowns, and just two

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interceptions. This is absurdly unlikely, but a significant fraction of that performance would still make Wilson the best quarterback in the league.

#### **4. Andrew Luck, Ind (27th in 2015; Week 10 Bye)**

Andrew Luck was not good last season, and when he wasn't being not good, it was because he was busy being injured. In 2014, he was the number two fantasy quarterback; in 2013, he was the number three fantasy quarterback; and in 2012, his rookie season, he was the number 11 fantasy quarterback. We suspect that 2015 was an aberration, and that Luck will return to form in 2016. Simply playing a full, uninjured season should help him to get into a rhythm, something he couldn't do last year. Combine that with regression to the mean, and whoever takes Luck should have a pretty serviceable starting quarterback for the season.

#### **5. Drew Brees, NO (6th in 2015; Week 5 Bye)**

Drew Brees has not finished outside of the top eight quarterbacks in a fantasy season for a decade. Last season was far from his best, but he was still sixth among fantasy quarterbacks. He also still threw for a league-high 4,870 yards, his 68.3% completion percentage was second in the league, and his 32 touchdown passes were seventh in the league. Despite not having a particularly strong arm, he was also sixth in the league in yards per attempt. His mean weekly score was 19.25 points, and his median weekly score was 16.4 points. Brees may be at the bottom of the tier 1A quarterbacks, but you would be hard-pressed to find a more consistent and reliable quarterback. If the Saints could actually field a team around him, he would likely vault back into the top echelon of signal callers.

#### **6. Ben Roethlisberger, Pit (20th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)**

Roethlisberger missed four games and the start of a fifth due to injury last season, and he had the worst interception rate among quarterbacks who started 10 or more games. He has a history of injury, having started all 16 games only three times in his 12-year NFL career. Moreover, he'll be missing his number two receiver, Martavis Bryant, due to a year-long suspension; his shiny, brand-new pass-catching tight end, Ladarius Green, is suffering mysterious injuries that could result in the Steelers never seeing him take the field; and as of this writing, star running back Le'Veon Bell has been unable to successfully appeal his four-game suspension to start the season.



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Promisingly, however, Big Ben had the fourth-lowest sack rate among quarterbacks who started 10 or more games last season — and the lowest sack rate and best completion percentage of his career. He also still has the best receiving weapon in the league with Antonio Brown, and DeAngelo Williams has proven to be a more than adequate backup to Bell. If he is truly healthy, and his line can protect him, he should, at minimum, be a quality starting quarterback. Anyone who drafts him, though, should take extra care to select a serviceable number two at the position.

### **7. Blake Bortles, Jac (5th in 2015; Week 5 Bye)**

Blake Bortles' performance in 2015 was a major surprise, but he shouldn't be a surprise any more. He tied for second in the league with 35 passing touchdowns and third in the league with 25 red zone passing touchdowns, and he had a mean weekly fantasy score of 18.16 with a median of 19.95. On the other hand, he also led the league in interceptions and sacks, with 18 and 51, respectively. Moreover, the Jaguars brought in Chris Ivory, who produced six of his seven touchdowns in the red zone, so they may not rely as much on Bortles' arm in the red zone this year. (In fact, Bortles also led the Jaguars in rushing touchdowns in the red zone, with two; T.J. Yeldon had only one.) Nevertheless, another year of NFL experience should result in Bortles having a more than respectable season.

### **8. Eli Manning, NYG (10th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)**

Manning — now the only Manning in the league, until Marshall Manning, Peyton's son, graduates from Ole Miss in 2033 — is frustratingly inconsistent from week-to-week, but encouragingly consistent year-to-year. Last season, he was fourth in the league in passing attempts, sixth in yards, tied for second in touchdowns, and sixth lowest in sack percentage. These numbers were first, second, first, and third in his career, respectively. He has never missed a game since he became the starter, and his last two seasons, under offensive coordinator Ben McAdoo, have been the most prolific — and safest, in terms of interceptions — of Manning's career. McAdoo is now the head coach, so Manning remains in the system that has treated him so well. Unfortunately, his fantasy performance is all over the board; last year, he had four weeks where he scored in the single digits, and four weeks where he scored 20 or more points. This unpredictability prevents him from being rated higher.

### **9. Carson Palmer, Ari (4th in 2015; Week 9 Bye)**

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Palmer's 2015 campaign was his finest in a decade. He was fourth in the league in yards, tied for second with 35 passing touchdowns, and led the league in yards per attempt. All of these numbers were personal bests for Palmer. He was also second in the league in red zone yards, and tied for third in red zone touchdowns. He had two 1,000-yard receivers in Larry Fitzgerald and John Brown, and Fitzgerald was third in catch percentage among wide receivers, at 75.2%. The danger with Palmer is that, at 36, he is essentially guaranteed to revert to the mean, and it is highly unlikely that he will enjoy another career year. Prior to 2015, he had not even been a viable fantasy starter since 2007. Owners ought not to expect another fourth-ranked performance from Palmer this year, but he should be an acceptable low-end starting fantasy quarterback.

#### **10. Philip Rivers, SD** (12th in 2015; Week 11 Bye)

In the past decade, Rivers has only fallen out of the top-12 fantasy quarterbacks twice. Through the bye week last year, he was second among quarterbacks for points. Unfortunately for Rivers, and for Chargers fans, the team was decimated by injuries last year, resulting in something of a lost season. Top wide receiver Keenan Allen suffered a lacerated kidney in week nine, ending his season; starting left tackle King Dunlap missed nine games with a concussion and ankle injuries; starting left guard Orlando Franklin missed six games with a concussion and ankle injuries; superstar tight end Antonio Gates missed five games due to suspension and knee injury; and wide receiver Stevie Johnson missed six games due to hamstring and groin injuries. Despite all of this, Rivers was second in the league in passing yards, and threw for a respectable 29 touchdowns. The terrible injury luck is unlikely to continue, and simple reversion to the mean should make Rivers a respectable fantasy starter in 2016.

And of course, there is one wild card:

#### **Tom Brady, NE** (2nd in 2015; Week 9 Bye)

Brady had the second most passing yards in 2015; he was first in touchdowns, with 36; he had the lowest interception percentage; and he was 25th in interceptions thrown, behind players like Peyton Manning (who started 10 games), Ben Roethlisberger (who started 11), and Andrew Luck (who started seven). He also led the league in red zone passing yards and touchdowns. His mean weekly score was 20.33, and his median was 21.6. He did all of this without a clear number one receiver

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(aside from the inimitable Rob Gronkowski), with six different Patriots making 36 or more receptions, and four different players getting 500 or more receiving yards. This season, we project him to score the fourth most fantasy points per game among quarterbacks.

Unfortunately for both fantasy owners and the New England Patriots, Brady will serve a four-week suspension to kick off the season, punishment for permitting either an equipment manager or the cold weather to slightly deflate a single football in the first half of the AFC championship game 19 months ago. As a result, any owner who drafts Brady will likely be getting one of the best quarterbacks in fantasy football for 11 weeks. That brave owner will be obligated to select a quarterback who can perform reasonable backup duties for the first four weeks of the season, in addition to Brady's bye week. ★

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## ***RIVALRY PROFILE: JAIME AND JASON***

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### ***A Look at One of the Signature Rivalries of the League of Doom***

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**By HAMRINK ZINK, Contributor**

THE NINJAS' DOJO – Five seasons. Nine games. Animosity beyond measure. Jaime Richardson and Jason Vicks have one of the most enduring rivalries in the League of Doom. In the first of our series of profiles of the greatest rivalries in league history, we will take a look at the games and statistics that shaped their rivalry.

Jaime and Jason are both in the Ninjas Division; this will be their fifth season in the same division together. One or the other has won the division three out of five seasons, and their games have determined the division winner twice.

The pair of rivals first played one another in week eight of the 2011 season. Jaime won the game, 97-84, with Steven Jackson scoring 30 points to beat out Michael Vick and Calvin Johnson (with an assist from Ryan Torain and Devery Henderson, who combined to score just one point for Jason). At the time, neither owner could have predicted what their rivalry would become, as they were on two very different trajectories – Jaime was 5-2 and Jason was 3-4 – and they were in different divisions.

The following season, they were moved into the same division together. The new Ninjas Division was formed in a failed attempt to create parity in the league, something which hasn't been meaningfully attempted since. That year – and every year thereafter – they played one another twice.

Their first matchup of 2012 was in week 10. Jason was 7-2 at the time, and Jaime was 2-7, so the game meant little. Jaime also had a cat, Lyra Stupidpants, as a co-owner, which may have had some impact on the result. Jason won 128.6-79.8, led by outstanding performances from Demaryius Thomas, Arian Foster, and Jacoby Jones, who easily overcame Josh Freeman and Antonio Gates to even out the series.

Two weeks later, Jason followed up with the biggest blowout in the history of the rivalry so far, defeating Jaime 160.2-79.7. His team had impressive showings from Arian Foster, T.Y. Hilton, and Bryce Brown (remember him?), while four of Jaime's players, including future Hall of Famers Antonio Gates and Larry Fitzgerald, scored in the single digits. And so began the first win streak in the history of the Jaime and Jason rivalry.

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The streak ended the very next game, in week five of the 2013 season, when Jaime (then 1-4) beat Jason (2-3), 109.7-107.7. Just as the previous game saw the largest point differential in the series, this game saw the smallest point differential so far, and ensured that the series remained tied at 2-2.

The end of the 2013 regular season saw Jason beat Jaime, 113.4-99.8, in week 13. In some Bills-on-Bills violence, Jason's C.J. Spiller bested Jaime's Fred Jackson. The game allowed Jason to clinch the third seed going into the playoffs, and handed him back a 3-2 lead in the series.

The next season, 2014, saw a league expansion and resulting divisional realignment that placed Jaime and Jason in a division with only one other owner, making their games against one another even more important. They kicked off the season with a week one matchup in which Jaime won, 131.7-109.5, propelled by dazzling games by Matt Forte, Antonio Brown, and Greg Olsen. This tied up the all-time series between the two, 3-3.

They didn't play again until week 12. At the time, both Jaime and Jason were 6-5, and the Ninjas Division hung in the balance. Jason won, 117.6-90.4, establishing a division lead that he would never relinquish in the process.

The second win streak in the series would begin in week one of 2015, when Jason beat Jaime 130.5-101.3, with Tom Brady, Austin Seferian-Jenkins, and Carlos Hyde furnishing more than enough points to beat Philip Rivers, Matt Forte, and Jarvis Landry. This win put Jason ahead in the series, 5-3 – the biggest lead in the history of the rivalry.

Week 12 of 2015 saw a repeat of the latter portion of the previous season: both Jaime (6-5) and Jason (5-6) in position to take the lead in the division. Jaime won, 141-109.2, ending Jason's two game win streak in the series. This also secured her the division lead and a playoff spot, and knocked Jason out of playoff contention.

That is where the rivalry stands at the opening of the 2016 season. Jason leads the series, 5-4, and he also leads the series in average score, 117.9-103.4. No doubt, he seeks revenge against Jaime for her victory in their last matchup.

They play each other twice in the regular season this year: first in week one, and then in week 12. The latter game is likely to have a major impact on the determination of the Ninjas Division winner, as it has the previous two seasons.

We spoke to the rivals to get their insights about their heated competition and their outlooks on the upcoming season.

"I don't know why we have a rivalry; maybe it's just because I'm such an insufferable bitch to him. It's all in good fun, though. Kitten kisses," Jaime mused.

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When asked about her expectations for the rivalry this season, Jaime said, “I will destroy him this year. Greg Grunberg is my hero.”

When we approached Jason, he ranted and raved for several minutes and threatened us with legal action if we misrepresented him. As such, we have decided to print his entire statement, in context:

“When I think of my rivalry with Jaime, one word comes to mind: crooked. People are saying – not me, mind you, but ‘people’ – that every time she beat me, she cheated. Is that true? I dunno, but that’s what some people are saying. And these people know things, OK?”

“My expectations for this season are *yuge* [sic]. It’s gonna be a great season. We’re going to have fantastic success, and no one knows more about good, great, fantastic success than me, OK? I have a good brain that knows good words, OK?”

“Chris Bakersfield [sic] . . . loser, OK? Eric Millbrook? Good guy, OK? Sam Manleigh – or as I like to call him, Lying Sam – bad guy. At least that’s what people say. And Sam Denisch . . . all I’m going to say is that people are saying that Stef makes all of the fantasy football decisions in that house. Not good, folks . . . not good, OK? Ned and Jaime? Founder and co-founder of ISIS.

“In closing, I’ll just say that I’m the best, no one has ever been as great as me, OK? Not Jesus, not Gandhi, not Joe Flacco, no one, OK? At least that’s what people tell me, OK? I look forward to building a wall of fantastic success around my team this year, OK? And when I do that, I will high five Colin with my above average sized hands and declare loud enough for the whole league to hear that we’ve made Doom Great Again (hats: \$29.99, t-shirts: \$49.99, each of which are manufactured by the proud people of Bangladesh).”

We also managed to track down the elusive Lyra Stupidpants, not seen since her infamous co-ownership of the Happy Cats, along with Jaime, back in 2012. We asked Lyra what she thought of Jason.

“Who is Jason? I don’t remember. Is he nice? I love you,” she replied.

Those are pretty harsh words, and we here are *The League of Doom Times-Chronicle Picayune* can’t wait for this rivalry to be rekindled in 2016. ★

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# ***DRAFT PREVIEW: DEFENSES AND SPECIAL TEAMS***

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## ***The Nastiest, Most Brutal, Meanest, Most Vicious Defenses of 2016***

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**By BLOXX WAPP, Contributor**

THE ULTIMATE MAN-CAVE – Defenses: the heart and soul of the NFL. Special teams: one third of the game. But these two are just dumped together to make up only a tiny bit of fantasy football. It's not right.

Owners take so-called "D/STs" near the bottom of the draft. Actual, real-life defensive play is never correctly rewarded in fantasy football. Owners get nothing for the bone-crunching hits, the bowel-loosening, heart-thumping, adrenaline-pumping crashes that get the fans jumping to their feet. It's all a damn shame.

Nevertheless, I have been told to give you a ranking of the defenses, and also the special teams, for fantasy football use. So here it is.

### **1. Denver Broncos** (1st in 2015; Week 11 Bye)

Number one in fantasy points last year, the Broncos have one of the scariest defenses in the league again this year. Cornerback Aqib Talib once fought Steve Smith Sr. and lived. He was suspended one game for poking Colts tight end Dwayne Allen in the eye, and he face-masked and threw Panthers cornerback Philly Brown onto the turf during the Super Bowl. He has been fined an impressive \$400,000 for safety violations over his career, including seven unnecessary roughness penalties.

Not to be shown up, Talib's teammate, Von Miller, linebacker, chicken farmer, and unbearable hipster, was suspended six games for attempting to cheat on a drug test. He once kneed Colts tight end Jack Doyle in the throat (the Broncos really don't like Colts tight ends). He has been fined over \$110,000 for illegal hits in his career, and has nine roughing the passer penalties.

### **2. Seattle Seahawks** (7th in 2015; Week 5 Bye)

The Seahawks and their Legion of Boom have shown us year in and year out that they know how to play defense the right way – by dishing out pain and suffering. This year, they are finally rejoined by Brandon Browner, their former cornerback.

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Browner has committed more penalties than any other player in the league since he played his first game – in fact, 24 more than the number two player. In 2015, he set the record for the most penalties against a player in a single season, with 24. He has fought Greg Jennings, and he once allowed Alfred Morris to run by him so he could lay out offensive lineman Spencer Lang, instead of making a tackle. He has eight unnecessary roughness penalties over his awe-inspiring career.

### **3. Cincinnati Bengals (9th in 2015; Week 9 Bye)**

The Bengals boast two of the hardest, most ruthless and unrelenting defensive players in the NFL. Linebacker Vontaze Burfict starts the season on a three game suspension for “repeated violations of safety-related playing rules.” In the wild card round last year, he absolutely obliterated Antonio Brown in a blatantly illegal helmet-to-helmet hit. The resulting penalty cost Cincy the game, but it was worth it. Burfict was fined \$69,454 for just that one game. In the past, he’s twisted the ankles of Greg Olsen and Cam Newton in the same game, ended Le’Veon Bell’s 2016 season, injured Ben Roethlisberger’s ankles, and struck Green Bay tight end Ryan Taylor in the crotch. His career fines amount to just under \$200,000, and he has committed 12 unnecessary roughness penalties, all in just four years, demonstrating a single-minded focus on making offenses suffer. He is probably the meanest son of a bitch in the NFL today.

But cornerback Adam “Pacman” Jones is no slouch, and should get a nastiness lifetime achievement award. In 2015 alone, he smashed Amari Cooper’s un-helmeted head on the ground, shoved a ref during a playoff game, and said that a concussed, unconscious Antonio Brown was faking injury. He boasts four unsportsmanlike conduct penalties and seven unnecessary roughness penalties over his career. He has been fined just \$60,000 for safety violations, but he has forfeited another \$1,700,000 over 20 weeks of suspensions because he attacked strippers and a security guard, and later attacked his own bodyguard. He has truly gone above and beyond, both on the field and off.

### **4. Pittsburgh Steelers (10th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)**

The Steelers defense isn’t what it once was, after having lost many of their stars. This season they will be without their legendary coordinator, Dick LeBeau, who is great even though he’s Canadian. As long as they still have James Harrison, though, they will remain the meanest defenses in the league, in my book. Harrison, a self-proclaimed “mean son of a bitch who loves hitting the hell out of people” deserves



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to be in the vicious hard-ass Hall of Fame. He's been suspended for a game, back in 2011. He was voted the "most violent, dangerous" player in the league in 2012. He's been fined for verbally abusing officials. He appeared on the cover of *Men's Journal* shirtless, holding a pair of pistols, like a real man. He has been fined \$223,529 for safety violations over his career, and been penalized 10 times for roughing the passer. Better yet, he came to the defense of Vontaze Burfict after the annihilation of Harrison's own teammate, Antonio Brown, in the wildcard game I wrote about.

Harrison has said that he is willing to sit out the 2016 season rather than being interviewed by the NFL about some drug test nonsense, which would be a real shame, because no one brings the pain more than old Silverback.

### **5. Los Angeles Rams** (5th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)

The Rams are known for their deep pass-rushing bench and the fact that they seemed to have intentionally sucked last year so they could move to Los Angeles. They *should* be known for their punter Johnny Hekker, who has a tendency to deliver vicious blindside blocks on punts, and then run away when players try to retaliate. He's hard core.

### **6. Green Bay Packers** (16th in 2016; Week 4 Bye)

The Packers attacking 3-4 defense is coordinated by long-time defensive mastermind Dom Capers. Their fiercest player is kind of sneaky about it. Clay Matthews, pass-rushing outside linebacker and professional wrestler lookalike, says he's "an awesome player, not a dirty player." I think he's both! He's been fined a total of over \$90,000 for safety violations, including \$15,000 for a late, out-of-bounds clothesline tackle of Colin Kaepernick (who needs to be hit like that more often); \$22,050 for a blindside block of Russell Wilson; and \$5,000 for an "excessive facemask" against Jay Cutler (who deserves all the facemasks he gets). He was also, somehow, fined \$15,000 for a helmet-to-helmet hit against the entire city of Detroit in 2013, which is just plain badass. Points off for having sissy hair and showing up in that stupid singing movie that my daughter likes, though.

### **7. Baltimore Ravens** (24th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)

The Ravens are not as terrifying as they used to be, back when they had Ray "I stabbed a guy and got away with it" Lewis on the team. Also, everybody was hurt last year, so that's disappointing. They *do* still have linebacker Terrell Suggs, though. When discussing how much the rest of the NFL hated and feared the Ravens defense,

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Suggs once said, “We have been declared war upon. We are the enemy of the state.” He has won Ugliest Man in the NFL for over a decade straight. He has said how much he loves to make other teams’ fans angry, and his gruff personality matches his play on the field. He tried to injure Sam Bradford and Brent Celek in a *preseason* game, he took a post-whistle cheap shot at LeGarrette Blount's knees, and he’s been fined by the NFL for wearing a gladiator helmet onto the field. On his career, he has nine unnecessary roughness penalties and seven roughing the passer penalties. He should do Ray “What white suit? I never saw a white suit” Lewis proud in what is expected to be his final NFL season.

### **8. Detroit Lions** (16th in 2015; Week 10 Bye)

Detroit used to have Ndamukong Suh and Nick Fairley. The loss of those two is a major blow for their rep. They were probably still reeling from that helmet-to-helmet hit from Clay Matthews. Desperate to get a *real* man on their team, they traded with Baltimore for defensive tackle Haloti Ngata last year. The PED fueled man-monster has been fined over \$40,000 for safety violations, including eight roughing the passer penalties, three unnecessary roughness penalties, and three personal fouls. His most brutal moments: kicking Washington guard Shawn Lauvao, smacking Ben Roethlisberger in the face and breaking the filthy rapist’s nose, and destroying little Bobby Griffin’s knee (and career). Also, one time, he sent his coach, John Harbaugh flying after a celebratory chest bump. Boom!

### **9. Miami Dolphins** (20th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)

They’re really not very good at playing defense, but the Dolphins have nice weather, spiffy newish uniforms, and defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh. Suh is probably the king of suspensions and fines due to pure ferociousness. His violent moments highlight reel is truly inspiring. A few standout moments include the time when he kicked Matt Schaub in the balls, the time when he stomped on Evan Dietrich-Smith's arm, the time when he stomped on Aaron Rodgers’ leg, and the time when he gave Jay Cutler a forearm shiver to the head (Smokin’ Jay deserved it). Suh has been suspended twice and fined an absurd \$600,000+ for repeated player safety violations. Everyone else really needs to work harder to catch up to him. Weirdly enough, Suh is represented by Jay-Z, a former crack dealer who has pled guilty to stabbing a guy once, and who, I’m told by my daughter, is a famous rapper, but that’s not my kind of music.

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## 10. New Orleans Saints (30th in 2015; Week 5 Bye)

They say that the Saints are bad at defense, and they say they are also a bad fantasy defense. That is just a load of hogwash. “They” don’t understand what good defense is any more. Luckily, the Saints GM, whose name I didn’t bother to look up (*His name is Mickey Loomis – Ed.*), *does* understand the value of a good defense. He picked up vicious cornerback Cortland Finnegan in the offseason. When he was once voted sixth dirtiest player in the NFL, Finnegan said, “I’m aspiring to one day hopefully be No. 1,” and said of former wide receiver and possibly dirtiest player of all time Hines Ward’s then number-one ranking, “It’s a compliment. That’s absolutely a compliment.” Finnegan – who is, I want to remind you, a teeny tiny little *cornerback* – once fought offensive lineman Chris Kuper during a game. He also fought Steve Smith Sr. Also, he fought Andrew Johnson. He has been fined over \$110,000 for safety violations, been penalized 12 times for unnecessary roughness, and received five personal fouls.

The Saints also picked up former Lions defensive tackle Nick Fairley. Fairley enjoys drinking and driving, smoking the marijuana, being a huge, lazy fat-ass, and jumping on top of opposing quarterbacks in attempts to injure their throwing arms. He especially hates Josh McCown, that insufferable little journeyman signal caller; Fairley was fined for roughing the passer against McCown over two separate seasons, and McCown was on different teams each time. Also, McCown is a *backup*, so Fairley really had to work at it. He’s been fined in excess of \$80,000 over his career, which only covers five seasons. If the Saints keep this up, flying in the face of general distrust because of that overblown Bountygate stuff, they might actually be able to field a scary defense this year.

So there you have it: the nastiest, most brutal, meanest, most vicious defenses of 2016. You won’t regret drafting them. Bam! ★

## ***DRAFT PREVIEW: KICKERS***

### ***Who Are the Cutest and Most Draftable Kickers of 2016?***

By **BRITNEY TOADELBOW**, Contributing Niece

A TOTALLY SWEET LOFT APARTMENT – My Uncle Zippy runs this newspaper, and I think he owes my dad a favor or something, because my dad asked whether I could write an article, and Uncle Zippy said yes. He said, “No one pays even one iota of consideration to kickers; let the diminutive imbecile write about them. Their performances cannot be satisfactorily projected, in any event.”

Now I’m doing it. Football is loud and boring, and kickers are especially boring. But some of them are *cute*, so I’m just going to rank them based on how hot they are, OK?

#### **1. Sebastian Janikowski, Oak (20th in 2015; Week 10 Bye)**

Look at that fine-ass kicker. He’s like that guy from that old band, Limp Bizkit, but way hotter, because he’s a jock. Plus, he’s all foreign and exotic.



*Pictured: The sexiest kickers in the NFL. Top row: Sebastian Janikowski, Adam Vinatieri, Travis Coons, Justin Tucker, Stephen Gostkowski. Bottom row: Chris Boswell, Graham Gano, Brandon McManus, Andrew Franks, Mason Crosby.*

**2. Adam Vinatieri, Ind** (16th in 2015; Week 10 Bye)

My dad says he's the greatest kicker in NFL history. I say he's a yummy DILF. Adam, not my dad, ewww, gross.

**3. Travis Coons, Cle** (20th in 2015; Week 13 Bye)

Oh. My. God. Look at his friggin' hair. I mean, he also looks like a bit of a knob, so he's probably just a bang piece. And my dad says he's on a team called the "Browns," which is rached, but still. That hair is scorching.

**4. Justin Tucker, Bal** (4th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)

He's totally kawaii. I've seen the ads where he sings, too. That's defs a plus. And he's got all that sweet Royal Farms scrilla. A girl's gotta eat, yadidamuffin?

**5. Stephen Gostkowski, NE** (1st in 2015; Week 9 Bye)

OK, so, he's not really *that* cute. But my dad says he's the best kicker in football today. (I don't know what that means for Adam – hey bae! – but I don't care to figure out Dad's inconsistencies.) The real bonus here is that he knows Tom Brady, and *that's* friggin' blistering hot.

**6. Chris Boswell, Pit** (14th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)

Those friggin' ears. Hnng. I just want to grab onto those dumbos and ride, fimme? He's also only 25, so we could actually have a conversation about something, and like, relate to each other. And his middle name is Lynn, which is smol bean.

**7. Graham Gano, Car** (2nd in 2015; Week 7 Bye)

He's prime, but like, in the way where you feel like you might actually be able to meet him. He does look like he might spend a little too much time on his looks, though, which can be a bit of a turn off.

**8. Brandon McManus, Den** (10th in 2015; Week 11 Bye)

Aww. Poor baby. He doesn't know what's going on, does he? He kind of reminds me of that one old actor, from *The Lake House* and *Sweet November*. I just want to take his hand and explain to him how to do things. He's definitely just a guybrator, though. I mean, can you *imagine* trying to have a conversation with that twonk?

**9. Andrew Franks, Mia** (30th in 2015; Week 8 Bye)

Here's the thing. My dad says that he was Nickelback's greatest hits last year, and shouldn't be anywhere near a fantasy roster. Which, fine, whatever. But he's a fine looking young gentleman that I'd like to bring home and not introduce to my family. He's toite, and most of the kickers I looked at are facially heinous. And I like the teal uniforms, I think they're kinda fun.

**10. Mason Crosby, GB** (15th in 2015; Week 4 Bye)

Ugh, snorrendous. I mean, I like the salt and pepper thing well enough, sure. But he's really just so plain. He knows Aaron Rodgers, though, right? Aaron is a cutie, and maybe some of that rubbed off on this Mason guy?

Look, I don't know what you really want. Football is a lame snooze fest. It's just a bunch of fat people standing around for, like, five hours or whatever. I wouldn't let most of those guys anywhere near my cookies, but Uncle Zippy is cool enough, so I didn't really mind writing this. Yeah. So, see you never. ★

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# ***EVERYONE IS STUPID***

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## ***A Critical Assessment of ESPN's Fantasy Site and App***

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**By WINSTON "BUG" BUFFERS, Technology Editor**

A SAD ROOM FULL OF SERVERS – We live in the 21st god damn century. I can set my electric car on autopilot and order groceries with my fridge.

So why the frignag can't I post a god damn PDF on a muffugging website, ESPN?

I have to convert that PDF into a series of JPEGs, and then, because Picasa no longer exists, I have to post those JPEGs on Tumblr. And then I have to link to Tumblr on the ESPN website.

But it doesn't stop there. The completely deficient fruckigging ESPN fantasy app is entirely incapable of handling Adobe Flash or redirect links. And no one wants to directly host PDFs – or at least not Google or Microsoft. So I have to upload the bloody things to some random site called PDF Archive, and then link to that site with all of its myriad advertisements, and then hope that the idiot owners are capable of navigating to the previews, all so those morons can click a link in a subpar app. I hope it's worth it. ★

### **Correction**

In an article in our August 9th issue, we erroneously wrote that "Chris and Will have also played nine games against each other with Chris leading that series 3-6." The story should have read that Chris trails in that series, 6-3.

### **Contributors Needed**

Do you consider yourself to be literate? Are you an owner in the League of Doom? Or perhaps someone who knows an owner? Do you have opinions about fantasy football related things? Even better, do you have opinions about the League of Doom? If so, you might be just what we're looking for! Please contact the Editorial Board, either on the League message boards or at [lodtcp@gmail.com](mailto:lodtcp@gmail.com), if you think you have an idea for a column.