



Week 18 Review

The end of the regular season is upon us. We know the teams heading to the playoff and the order of the first 18 draft positions. We will do a quickfire breakdown before the NFL CHAT UK awards are announced and the previews/predictions for the first game of the playoffs.

In the up and coming I will be looking at the draft prospects as well, looking at the top rated prospects and a few of my later round guys I like from what college has been available in the UK.

Browns (3-14) 10-35 (12-5) Ravens

The Browns wrap up a terrible season with another loss and land the 2nd overall pick in the 2025 draft. The Ravens however wrap up the AFC North title with a win, which guarantees them a home tie. Derrick Henry was the star of the show with 138 yards rushing and two touchdowns. The Ravens did however lose impressive wideout Zay Flowers early in this game and hope it is not too bad of an injury.

Bengals (9-8) 19-17 (10-7) Steelers

The Bengals beat the division rivals to give themselves a chance at the playoffs, but it was not enough in the end. The Bengals will rue missed opportunities at the start of the season and will inevitably believe that is what cost them a playoff run. They take the 17th pick in the draft. Once again the Burrow to Chase combination was once again the most impactful duo on the game. The Steelers loss stopped any chance of a home draw in the playoffs but they do go into the playoffs with a game against..... only division rivals Ravens who took the division title from them.

Panthers (5-12) 44-38 (8-9) Falcons

The Panthers left their best game to last, however the decision to bench Young early on in the season and allow him to get his confidence back looks like such a good decision now. Young was outstanding in this one and gave the Panthers a lot of hope in the next season.

He finished with 251 passing yards and 3 touchdowns, with 24 rushing yards and a further two touchdowns. The win leaves the Panthers with the 8th pick in next year's draft. The loss for the Falcons lands them the 15th pick in the draft, however they can be really encouraged by the late run from Penix at quarterback.

Commanders (12-5) 23-19 (7-10) Cowboys

The Commanders left it late to get the victory. Marcus Mariota led the way with 161 passing yards and two touchdowns with 56 rushing and a touchdown. Mariota stepped in when rookie sensation Jayden Daniels had to leave the field with a leg injury. Terry McLaurin got the final touchdown to put the Commanders in the lead with 5 seconds to play. The win gives the Commanders the 6th seed in the NFC. The loss for the Cowboys lands them the 12th pick in the draft. The Cowboys will hope next season they can keep the big stars fit, with the landing of a running back key.

Bears (5-12) 24-22 (11-6) Packers

The Bears beat the Packers!!!!!! Yes you read that right. A walk off field goal from Cairo Santos won it for them, to go alongside touchdowns from DeAndre Swift and DJ Moore. Caleb Williams was good with the ball with 21/29 passes going to hand. It wasn't the most explosive but it was consistent. The win leaves the Bear with the 10th Pick in the upcoming draft. The Packers end up as the 7th seed. There are more concerns as well due to the injury to Jordan Love who came out of the game and did not return.

Texans (10-6) 23-14 (3-14) Titans

The Texans wrap up their regular season with a win against the Titans, they knew win lose or draw they would be the 4th seed in the AFC and will get a home tie in the playoffs. The first stringers played one drive which got the Texans on the board with 7 before the reserve players took over. Dameon Pierce made the most of the opportunity with 176 rushing yards which included a 92 yard touchdown. The Titans end up with the first overall pick in next years draft which opens many options for them heading into the new year.

Jaguars (4-13) 23-26 (8-9) Colts OT

The Jaguars finish the season with another loss. There was once again no run game for them, however they were once again able to find rookie star Brian Thomas Jr with ease. He went for 103 yards on the day, and it is clear the Jags have a stud receiver. They land the fifth pick in the upcoming draft. The Colts finished well thanks to Jonathan Taylor's 177 rushing game which included a touchdown. The season was an unusual one that had a lot of promise at times but overall failed to materialise. They finished with the 14th overall pick in next year's draft.

Bills (13-4) 16-23 (4-13) Patriots

The Bills rested many of their starters in this one and had Mitchell Trubisky in at quarterback who could not get much going at all. There was opportunity for some of the second string to get snaps under their belt and stage a claim for starting in the playoffs. The Bills did land a home playoff spot and had it tied up before this game, they finished as the 2 seed in the AFC. The Patriots have Joe Milton to thank for the win and makes an interesting conversation for a few quarterback needy teams. Milton showed great class, and a hugely impressive arm in this game. He found Kayshon Boutte regularly for his career day of 117

yards and a touchdown. The Patriots finish the season landing the 4th pick in the draft, this is highly likely to bring in support for Drake Maye and his offence.

Giants (3-14) 13-20 (14-3) Eagles

The Giants lose another game, this time against an Eagles side resting starters. The Giants do have some positives heading into the new season with rookies Tyrone Tracy and stud wideout Malik Nabers. They also showed signs on defence occasionally, but overall a really tough year which lands them a 3rd pick in next year's draft. The Eagles however are flying high. They land another win, this time not needing Saquon Barkley to take any snaps, Jalen Hurts was still in concussion protocol and now faces a race to be fit for their playoff game after landing a home tie and the 2nd seed in the NFC and a match-up Vs the Packers.

Saints (5-12) 19-27 (10-7) Buccaneers

The Saints could not go out on a high despite giving the Bucs a tough test, Spencer Rattler played well and found Juwan Johnson often. The run game was in affective and the side lacked the explosive plays they had in the first few weeks. They get the 9th pick in next years draft. The Bucs however had a fairytale ending, they managed to get a win to secure the division and a home tie in the playoffs, this will be against the Commanders, but also landed Mike Evans his 1000 yards that matches Jerry Rice's 11th straight 1000 season. It also extends his record of the most 1000 yards to start a career. He did it thanks to a last play when the Bucs could of kneeled out for the win.

Chiefs (15-2) 0-38 (10-7) Broncos

After already wrapping up the division, the number 1 Seed in the AFC rested many of their starters and allowed some that needed the snaps to get game time. It did not work out well. The Chiefs had a total of 98 yards of offence. This did not matter though as they look ahead to their bye week before preparing for another run at the superbowl. The Broncos were outstanding and so was rookie quarterback Bo Nix who threw for 321 yards and 4 touchdowns on the day, he also led the team in rushing yards with 47. The win guaranteed the Broncos a playoff spot and they have a difficult task of travelling to the Bills for their wildcard game.

Chargers (11-6) 34-20 (4-13) Raiders

The Chargers wrapped up their regular season with another fantastic display put on by Justin Herbert and this offence. Herbert threw for 346 yards and 2 touchdowns, he found Quentin Johnson with 186 of those yards. The win meant that the Chargers cemented the 6th seed and will travel to Houston to face the Texans in the wildcard fixtures. The Raiders were once again poor, a late Brock Bowers touchdown was nothing more than a consolation, however this wrapped up a fantastic season for the rookie. The Raiders have the 6th pick in next year's draft and will surely be hoping to land a quarterback.

Seahawks (10-7) 30-25 (10-7) Rams

The Seahawks finished the season with another win, and a good winning record, however they weren't able to get a playoff spot as the Rams knew they had the division wrapped up. That did not stop the Seahawks from having a good game. Geno Smith was excellent with 223 yards and 4 touchdowns, the win landed the Seahawks the 18th pick in next year's draft and the top team to not make the playoffs. It does also appear Tyler Lockett may have retired based on social media posts, if it is, we wish you the best, one of our favourite

players to watch. The Rams knew they had the division wrapped up so rested key starters, Jimmy Garoppolo put up good numbers with 334 and 2 touchdowns, he did throw an interception. The Rams look forward to a home tie in the wildcard weekend.

Dolphins (8-9) 20-32 (5-12) Jets

The Dolphins loss cost them a run in the playoffs, they have been without Tua for a long time this year and it shows with some of their results. It was a poor display overall but once again De'Von Achane was the standout with 121 rushing yards with a touchdown. There was more unrest after the game with big players showing their unhappiness with the squad. The Dolphins land the 13th pick of the draft. The Jets win and land them the 7th pick in the draft. The win was orchestrated through Aaron Rodgers and Devante Adams. The two once again rolled the years back but this has been too little way too late. The Jets also have big questions in the new offseason around big name players.

49ers (6-11) 24-47 (8-9) Cardinals

Both of these teams knew before the game the playoffs were out of reach. The 49ers had their injury worries all year long and once again it showed, normally good on both offence and defence did not show much. However the 49ers did see the final two weeks they have something with Ricky Pearsall who led the team in receiving yards the last two weeks. The 49ers have the 11th pick in the 2025 draft. The Cardinals land the 16th pick in the draft, but there are so many positives for this side after a few bad seasons. They missed out on the playoffs but were leading the way until a few losses towards the end of the year. James Connor and Trey McBride have been outstanding all season.

Vikings (14-3) 9-31 (15-2) Lions

The final game of the week saw the Vikings and Lions battle it out for the NFC top seed. The Lions came out on top but both sides head to the playoffs. The Vikings, despite playing for the top seed, finish as the 5th seed and will travel to LA to face the Rams. The Vikings, potentially the surprise package this year, have been brilliant in the regular season and hope to get a win on the road. The Lions, I have run out of words to describe the Lions. They are absolutely fantastic to watch week in week out. They have had injuries all season but they did not slow down and have ripped through sides all season long. The Lions get the all important bye week and await their first playoff match up.

The playoff games are all set!!!!

<u>AFC</u>	<u>NFC</u>
Chiefs - Bye Week	Lions - Bye week
Broncos @ Bills	Packers @ Eagles
Steelers @ Ravens	Commanders @ Bucs
Chargers @ Texans	Vikings @ Rams