

THE FANTASY FORECAST: BEWARE THE WEEK 1 MIRAGE IN WEEK 2

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Just as the first week of classes has flown by, so has the first week of the NFL season. This past weekend was filled with exciting performances and unbelievable outcomes. From the ferocious display of the Cincinnati Bengals' defense to the wild upset delivered to the Los Angeles Chargers by the Arizona Cardinals, Sunday had it all.

Unless you are a New York Jets fan basking in a 1-0 start for the first time in three years, the most important thing is that your fantasy football team is either undefeated or winless.

Whichever camp you find yourself in heading into Week 2, this Fantasy Forecast will ensure that your win column gets a boost.

QBs: Start, Sit
410 passing yards, three touchdowns and 35 completions on 56 attempts. That was quarterback Tyler Shough's stat line as he led the New Orleans Saints in a heartbreaking overtime loss to the Detroit Lions.

While that strong display wasn't enough to make out a win that afternoon, it did etch his name into several headlines the next morning. Fantasy analysts are now calling for the second-year QB to be picked up on any waiver he's left untouched. However, don't buy that hype as he heads into Week 2.

There is no denying that the performance in Detroit was special; there is a reason Shough is among the top 10 quarterbacks for fantasy performance in Week 1. However, he must now take his defeated Saints into Baltimore

and face off against the Ravens.

The team whose secondary just held the Indianapolis Colts to 166 passing yards on 19 completions.

If Shough was an eager pickup or a last-minute draft, it's safer to sit him out for Week 2, as the Ravens will look to limit any air attack.

Desperate times call for desperate measures, and if your fantasy team is falling to the former, then quarterback Deshaun Watson might just be your latter in Week 2.

Among a crowded quarterback room, the tenth-year veteran earned the starting position for the Cleveland Browns and will retain it this weekend. His Week 1 display was nothing larger than average, with 205 passing yards, a 72.5% completion rating, a touchdown and an interception to go with it.

However, often overlooked is Watson's duality as quarterback. Yes, his 38 rushing yards on Sunday are not eye-popping, but he did outrush the highly anticipated running back, Quinshon Judkins.

As the Browns suit up this Sunday for an away match against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, it shouldn't be any surprise if his ground game gets more action, and his air attack sees more success. The Bucs just allowed 254 passing yards and 76 total rushing yards against a Cincinnati Bengals offense that appeared dull.

The bottle of potential that is Watson is just waiting to be opened. A Tampa Bay defense that might unscrew it calls for the quarterback to start. If you're looking to shake things up or were on the fence from the get-go, let this be your sign to go for it.



Joe Burrow of the Cincinnati Bengals on the field before a game. The Bengals lost 27-33 against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on September 13, 2026. PHOTO COURTESY OF @BENGALS ON INSTAGRAM



Quincy Williams of the Cleveland Browns warming up on the field fifteen minutes before a game. The Browns lost 10-34 against the Jackson Jaguars on September 13, 2026. PHOTO COURTESY OF @CLEVELANDBROWNS ON INSTAGRAM

FLEX: Start, Sit
Week 1 is always best in determining who will be a quarterback's go-to in the backfield. While these can change later in the season, it's often a good sign of who will remain prominent early on.

Luckily for running back Jacory Croskey-Merritt, it seems that the Washington Commanders will retain his role heading into Week 2.

In their narrow defeat against the Philadelphia Eagles, the second-year running back ran for 63 yards on 16 carries and found the end zone late in the first half. The only concern raised for fantasy users is that Croskey-Merritt's 33 offensive snaps rivaled veteran running back Rachaad White's 27 snaps.

However, it would appear that quarterback Jayden Daniels relies on White in a more pass-catching position, meaning Croskey-Merritt makes up Washington's ground game.

As the Commanders look to pick up their first win of the season Sunday evening, fantasy users should feel safe in starting Jacory Cros-

key-Merritt. After all, he'll be contending with the Dallas Cowboys, who just let the New York Giants' running back Cam Skattebo rush for over 80 yards.

Our last fantasy suggestion for this week's edition deals with steadfast tight end Pat Freiermuth. The sixth-year TE was certainly the pièce de résistance for the Pittsburgh Steelers in their week one victory against the Atlanta Falcons.

A 15.6-point day in fantasy is always encouraging for a TE, yet the defense they played must always be a consideration. The Atlanta Falcons defense allowed an average of 48 receiving yards per game to opposing tight ends over the 17-game 2025 regular season.

Freiermuth's 46 yards on five receptions fits that average almost perfectly, meaning his performance was hardly a surprise. Under the same methodology, that production will be in stark contrast to what he will put up in Week 2 versus the New England Patriots.

The Pats only allowed an average of 29.5 receiving yards per game to opposing tight ends last season. Not to mention, New England's defense just held the former Super

Bowl champions to only 13 points in Week 1.

Therefore, if Freiermuth is your top tight end option or perhaps your best flex, it would be wise to look elsewhere in Week 2.

To sum it up: As we barrel towards another football-filled weekend, QB Tyler Shough and TE Pat Freiermuth are best served on the bench. Their hype is too ungrounded for a reliable start.

Meanwhile, QB Deshaun Watson and RB Jacory Croskey-Merritt get the okay as starters. Watson gets the nod as the best chance for a Week 2 boom, while Croskey-Merritt should have a good opportunity to build upon his opening display.

Best of luck, Huskies.



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