Sports

Photo of the Day |



The Huskies go up against the Bryant Bulldogs in Storrs, CT on Tuesday, September 8, 2026. They had a large crowd for their first home game of the season. PHOTO BY MORGAN BLANCHARD / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Fantasy Forecast: Class is in session

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The fall semester spurs many certainties all around campus. From purchasing expensive textbooks that won't be opened to dining hall lines stretching out the door or even early midterm stress.

They can be found everywhere.

However, the most prominent certainty that befalls every college is that of fantasy football buzz.

This Wednesday marks the start of the NFL's 107th season as the Seattle Seahawks host the New England Patriots in a widely anticipated Super Bowl rematch. In addition, the 8:20 p.m. kickoff will also trigger the beginning of another fantasy football season.

As the reigning Super Bowl champions look to defend their relevance at home, the Patriots are eager to unleash their simmering revenge. Meanwhile, fantasy players are starting to sweat their lineups and perhaps even doubt some draft picks.

That's where the Fantasy Forecast comes into use.

This weekly guide gives fantasy competitors around campus an inside scoop into the teams and players to look out for. No matter the type of league you find yourself in, the Fantasy Forecast will give you the tools necessary to climb the leaderboard and assert yourself as a fantasy champ. Here's how to make a statement early in Week 1.

WRs: Start, Sit

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers found their passing defense ranked 27th last season when all was said and done. With their first-round draft of linebacker Rueben Bain Jr. and some notable free agency signings such as defensive tackle A'Shawn Robinson, the Bucs have revamped their biggest weakness.

As they travel north to the Banks of Ohio to take on the Cincinnati Bengals, you can guarantee that much of that defense will be fixed on limiting star wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase. With Cincy's weak offensive line crumbling against this new Tampa Bay front, quarterback Joe Burrow will have to quickly find his No. 2 wide receiver, Tee Higgins. If Higgins is anywhere on your bench, make sure he starts in that WR2 slot or at the very least, put him as a flex option.



Linebacker, Rueben Bain Jr., of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers running on the field. The Browns are set to face the Cincinnati Bengals on Sunday, September 13, 2026. Photo courtesy of @buccaneers on Instagram.

There are many variables that can affect a player's performance — a rainy day compared to a game with direct sunlight, home versus road matchups and turf fields or grass ones, to name a few.

For New York Giants wide receiver Malik Nabers, recovering from a season-ending ACL tear, a new head coach who favors a run-heavy offense and a stellar, overhauled Dallas Cowboys defense will also play a role.

It shouldn't be any surprise then that Nabers may have a slow start to his third year. Dallas' first-round pick and 2025 Jim Thorpe Award-winning safety Caleb Downs should be reason enough for users to hold off on Nabers. In other words, Nabers' tough opening day means a spot on the bench will serve users best.

RBs: Start, Sit

One of the great questions surrounding the Carolina Panthers this season is who will emerge as quarterback Bryce Young's go-to running back. With former starter Rico Dowdle signing with the Pittsburgh Steelers, that means running backs Chuba Hubbard and Jonathon Brooks will be battling it out for the RB1 slot.

As the two return from season-ending injuries, fantasy users can expect to share the load in the backfield. The Sunday home opener against a Chicago Bears defense that finished 27th in rushing yards allowed last year, coupled with Carolina's lackluster wide receiving corps, means both Hubbard and Brooks will be safe starters.

With all the drama unfolding in the quarterback room of the Cleveland Browns, fantasy users should be eager to have running back Quinshon Judkins on their team. The second-year RB is poised to have a breakout year with new Head Coach Todd Monken employing a dominant rushing game wherever he goes. However, users must detach from this line of thinking heading into this weekend.

The Browns will be on the road for their season opener and will be facing off against the Jacksonville Jaguars, a defense that only allowed 1,455 rushing yards last year. Simply put, an incomplete offense contending the league's former top run defense means Judkins is a bench.

To sum it up: As the season starts to unfold, Week 1 picks feature WR Tee Higgins, RBs Chuba Hubbard and Jonathon Brooks as starters, while WR Malik Nabers and RB Quinshon Judkins sit on the bench. Higgins gets the nod as Cincinnati's No. 2 receiver, while Hubbard and Brooks benefit from a favorable matchup. On the other hand, Nabers and Judkins face difficult defenses that could limit their production.

Best of luck, Huskies.