

# ShoresteinSays.com 2019 - NFL Week 15

**"The Money Zone":** Games that have a "Calculated vs. Actual" difference of between 2 and 6 points are considered The Money Zone. Since 2015, games that fall within this tier have hit ~55% on a sample of over 500 games. I consider games in this tier to have a statistical advantage in the long run. This is a completely objective calculation that does not account for injuries, roster changes, weather etc. However, I believe the smartest investment is to make small bets on each one of these games and slowly increase them over time if you are successful.

2019 Week 15					
Away	Home	Calculated Spread	Actual Spread	Calculated vs Actual	Projected Winner ATS
LA Rams	Dallas	(5.33)	1.00	6.33	Dallas
Houston	Tennessee	(9.07)	(3.00)	6.07	Tennessee
Tampa Bay	Detroit	(1.14)	3.50	4.64	Detroit
Minnesota	LA Chargers	6.10	2.50	3.60	Minnesota
New England	Cincinnati	12.87	9.50	3.37	New England
Miami	NY Giants	(6.77)	(3.50)	3.27	NY Giants
Chicago	Green Bay	(7.50)	(4.50)	3.00	Green Bay
Jacksonville	Oakland	(3.53)	(6.50)	2.97	Jacksonville
NY Jets	Baltimore	(12.18)	(15.00)	2.82	NY Jets
Atlanta	San Francisco	(13.00)	(11.00)	2.00	San Francisco
Indianapolis	New Orleans	(10.63)	(9.00)	1.63	New Orleans
Cleveland	Arizona	1.22	2.50	1.28	Arizona
Philadelphia	Washington	5.53	4.50	1.03	Philadelphia
Buffalo	Pittsburgh	(2.70)	(2.00)	0.70	Pittsburgh
Seattle	Carolina	5.67	6.00	0.33	Carolina
Denver	Kansas City	(10.13)	(10.00)	0.13	Kansas City

**The Week 15 Money Zone picks are Detroit, Minnesota, New England, NY Giants, Green Bay, Jacksonville, NY Jets, & San Francisco.**

**\*\*2019 Money Zone picks are 33-53 ATS. All Time they are 307-270 (53.20%)\*\***

**"Shorestein Says" Picks of the Week:** Each week I select between 3-5 of my favorite games and do additional analysis on them. I've highlighted the "Shorestein Says" picks of the week in yellow. Read below for my in-depth analysis. **\*\*2019 "Shorestein Says" Picks of the Week are 28-28 ATS. 69-53 since last season (56.56%)\*\***

**NY Jets +15 @ Baltimore:** If there is one thing that the Jets have proven they can do, it's stop the run. At just 3.0 yards per carry, the Jets are by far the best team against the run. Baltimore's entire offense is built around a complex running attack that revolves around the read-option with probably the best running quarterback that we've ever seen. However, this week, Lamar Jackson is playing on a shortened week and has an injured thigh. I believe that the Ravens will be careful with how they use him and limit his rushing attempts. This feels like it could be a conservative offensive game plan for Baltimore, and the Jets have proven that they can shut down a more conventional-style run game. They are certainly vulnerable against the pass, but they should have enough on offense to keep this game close enough for the cover. 4 out of the last 5 games, the Jets offense has been explosive.

<b>Jets Offensive Awakening</b>				
<b>Opponent</b>	<b>Points Scored</b>	<b>QB Rating</b>	<b>Yards / Pass Att</b>	<b>Result</b>
Giants	34.00	97.90	7.67	W
Washington	34.00	121.30	9.77	W
Oakland	34.00	127.80	10.86	W
Cincinnati	6.00	71.40	4.98	L
Miami	22.00	86.60	7.50	W
Average	26.00	101.00	7.79	

I'm hoping that the dud in Cincinnati is was just an outlier....

Generally speaking, the last month of the regular season is the best time to fade the elite teams against the spread. Vegas tends to inflate the spreads of the best teams in the NFL, and that doesn't stop the betting public from backing them. Last year was a perfect example of this trend in the final four weeks of the regular season:

<b>Fading Elite Teams Down the Stretch</b>			
<b>2018 Season</b>	<b>New Orleans</b>	<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>LA Rams</b>
Win Loss Record ATS Final 4 Weeks	1-3	1-3	2-2
Combined Record: 4-8 (33.33% ATS)			

Baltimore will start to see some really inflated spreads as they are now the odds on favorite for the Super Bowl.

The last key to look at is the status of Jamal Adams. He's the best player that they have on defense, and would assume huge responsibility in watching Lamar Jackson. He's a game-time decision, but hopefully he will suit up.

**Tampa Bay @ Detroit +3.5:** Call me crazy for backing the "Blough", but I'll call you crazier for backing a banged up Jameis Winston without Mike Evans as a road favorite. Tampa as a favorite in any location is just 5-9 ATS since 2015. I've been a major skeptic of the Bucs pass defense for about 3 years now. They continue to give up points at a torrid pace.

<b>Bucs Pass Defense</b>			
<b>Season</b>	<b>Def. Passer Rating</b>	<b>Points Allowed</b>	<b>Yards / Pass Att Allowed</b>
2018	110.90 (32nd)	29.00 (31st)	7.80 (31st)
2019	95.10 (20th)	29.30 (31st)	6.70 (17th)

There are some minor improvements, but the fact that they still lead the league in turnovers again, becomes a recipe for disaster as a road favorite. They are averaging a vomit-inducing 2.5 turnovers per game.

I think Blough should have a big day. Kenny Golladay is having an outstanding season, and Marvin Jones is a great complimentary skill player. I think there will be a lot of big plays and wide open receivers in the dome against this weak defense. While the Lions have a weak defense of their own, I'm a little less

concerned as Evans is likely done for the season. Chris Godwin has been a dynamic player for the Bucs this season, but I think Darius Slay can matchup and limit him.

**Buffalo @ Pittsburgh -2:** I'm choosing the quarterback that is less likely to make the costly mistake in this battle between two elite defenses. Josh Allen seems to resort back to the wild, out of control, turnover machine that he was last year when he's facing a tough pass defense. Here are some of his performances this season in these situations:

<i>Josh Allen vs. Strong Pass Defense</i>					
<u>Opponent</u>	<u>QB Rating</u>	<u>Sacked</u>	<u>Turnovers</u>	<u>Yards / Attempt</u>	<u>Pass Def. Rank of Opponent</u>
Patriots	24.00	4.00	3.00	5.46	1st
Ravens	62.60	6.00	1.00	3.74	2nd
Pittsburgh	?	?	?	?	5th

I think he will see similar pressure from the Pittsburgh defense which was been a quarterback's nightmare this season, especially, at Heinz Field. The Steelers sack % at home this season is 12.68% which is better than San Francisco's. The Steelers have been a turnover forcing machine, and I think they are playing maybe the most turnover prone quarterback in the NFL over the last 2 seasons. At home, the Steelers defense has forced an eye-opeing 2.9 turnovers per game.

All I'm looking for from Duck Hodges is to not do anything stupid. And he's shown that he is capable of that. He's played in 5 games so far this season, and he's only thrown 2 interceptions. He also has a quarterback rating of 103, and he's averaging over 8 yards per pass attempt. And he should be getting the team's best receiver back this week as Ju Ju Smith-Schuster is expected to return to action. A nice game-manager to compliment the dominant defense should be all Pittsburgh needs to get the win on Sunday night.

**Seattle -6 @ Carolina:** This is an excellent matchup for the run-heavy Seahawks. Carolina has just been God-awful at stopping the run the entire season. I still am not completely sure why, but they've been gashed by just about everyone under the sun in the run game. Often to my dismay, Kyle Schottenheimer is more than happy to pound the run all game.

<i>Strength vs Weakness</i>			
<u>Team</u>	<u>Yards / Attempt</u>	<u>Attempts / Game</u>	<u>Total Yardage</u>
Carolina Run Defense	5.30 (32nd)	26.50 (19th)	139.20 (29th)
Seattle Run Offense	4.60 (7th)	30.50 (3rd)	140.80 (3rd)

Seattle's offensive philosophy for the past two years, has been to pound the run early and often and then drop big plays over the top off of play-action. We've seen it a million times with Russell Wilson and his amazing ability to throw the deep ball. I think this is another area where Seattle should have the advantage. The Carolina secondary is weak on the back end and there should be plenty of opportunities for the home run.

Seattle's defense was lit up last Sunday night. On multiple occasions this season, they've shown that they can game plan around stopping a running game. They did it in matchups with San Francisco and Minnesota when they keyed in on the running backs and made the unprepared quarterbacks beat them.

I think Pete Carroll will take the same approach against Christian McCaffery. After Kyle Allen's fast start, he's starting to show why no one really believed in him.

<i>Kyle Allen's Ranks over the Last 3 Games</i>		
<u>Sack %</u>	<u>Passer Rating</u>	<u>Yards / Attempt</u>
11.51% (29th)	89.00 (17th)	5.60 (25th)

Seattle has historically been an excellent bounce back team under Russell Wilson. Since 2016, the Seahawks are 12-5 ATS after a loss (70.6%). I think they should win by a healthy margin in a big game for them to match San Francisco's pace.

### Random Thoughts

- It took 14 weeks, but the first Shorestein Sweep of the year felt pretty damn good!.. a 4-0-1 week ATS was almost even better, but the Vikings decided to give up a backdoor TD in a game in which they dominated.....
- Last week, I said that I loved the Week 14 board... I don't love the Week 15 board nearly as much. I feel like there are too many lopsided games and big spreads.
- That 49ers/Saints game was unreal.... I predicted a low-scoring, defensive dog-fight.... And I was spot on.... lol
- If I were to add a 5<sup>th</sup> game, I would probably go with Philly. The Redskins continue to cover games with some of the worst quarterback play that you can imagine. Philly's strength is stopping the run, which is basically the only thing Washington can do. It's now been two straight weeks the Redskins started in a 14-0+ hole, but still managed to cover. I don't see that as a sustainable way to win against the spread.
- Patriots will probably pound the Bengals for starting all this Spy Gate crap again... As a New Englander I can't escape the constant Patriot scandals and talk radio nonsense that comes with it. It's insufferable.

Good Luck Everyone!



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