Welcome to the NFL Fever 2004 strategy guide. If you’ve already played this game, then we don’t need to tell you that you’re looking at a much improved franchise. This already solid football series took a serious step forward this year, and if you want to keep up with the best players, you’ll have to master all the new additions. Here’s a quick look at some of the most important upgrades. We’ll show you how to get the most out of all of them later on in this guide.

New Defensive Adjustments

For starters, you won’t be able to go deep at will this year, the secondary has stepped up and you’ll have to play the run too. On-the-fly defensive adjustments and adaptive defensive players geared up to take away the deep pass are just two of the new defensive improvements.

Revised Tackling and Blocking

The new tackling and blocking engine not only makes the game look better in action, but it adds significantly to the gameplay. If you want a great running game, you’ll have to learn to read your blocks.

New Coaching Features

A new and more-intuitive playcalling interface makes calling plays easier, enabling you to dig deep into the playcalling menus and pick the perfect play. You can also listen to the coach as he describes each and every play in your playbook. His tips are incredibly helpful and useful in tight game situations.

Read and Lead Passing

Read and Lead Passing may be the coolest football control innovation we’ve seen in years. It actually lets you control the direction of both your pass and your receiver. Learn to use this well, and even the best passing defenses will have trouble shutting you down.

Xbox Live™ Upgrades

Downloadable content, roster updates, updated player ratings, tournaments and an all-new “cheater beater” that shuts down online tomfoolery are just some of the top new Xbox Live™ features in NFL Fever 2004.

Improved Graphics

The player models have been vastly improved and the player faces have to be seen to be believed. This game looks great.

Let’s get started with the Fever 2004 strategy guide. Good luck.
Controlling the Player

The first skill you need to learn in *NFL Fever 2004* is individual player control. It doesn’t matter how solid your strategy is or how good you are at reading the other team—if you can’t make the plays, you won’t win.

In this section, we discuss each type of player and the skills that are important to him. First, let’s look at the player ratings. They’re easy to skip over, but to be a top Fever pro you need to know the strengths and weaknesses of your entire team. Those strengths can be found in the player ratings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player Rating</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTG (Rating, Overall)</td>
<td>This indicates the ranking of each player. The higher the ranking, the better all-around player you have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC (Acceleration)</td>
<td>This shows how quickly a player can increase speed. Players with good acceleration can react and move quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD (Speed)</td>
<td>Some players are faster than others. Players with both good speed and acceleration are dangerous to the opposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STR (Strength)</td>
<td>One player pushing back another player demonstrates strength. Linemen and power running backs make use of strength.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGI (Agility)</td>
<td>Agility is a player’s ability to execute a special move and to react quickly. Players with high agility scores can spin, juke, and hurdle their way to touchdowns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIS (Vision)</td>
<td>Vision indicates on-field awareness—a player’s ability to observe and know what’s going on. You can leave players with good vision under computer control while you control players with less vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND (Hands)</td>
<td>This ranking determines a player’s ability to catch. Your receivers will need good HND ratings; your linemen probably won’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>END (Endurance)</td>
<td>Players with high endurance ratings tire more slowly than players with low ratings. Before you use your favorite player over and over, check his END rating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGG (Aggressiveness)</td>
<td>Players with high aggressiveness ratings react quickly and intensely to the ball and any ball carriers. Highly aggressive players are very useful when controlled by the computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTR (Arm Strength)</td>
<td>Arm strength determines how hard a QB can throw the ball. Those with good arm strength can zip the ball a long distance. Those with low ASTR should stick to the short passing game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACR (Passing Accuracy)</td>
<td>Even with a perfectly timed, strong throw, a QB with low passing accuracy can miss his target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSTR (Leg Strength)</td>
<td>This score indicates how far a kicker can boot the ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KACR (Kicking Accuracy)</td>
<td>This score indicates how good the kicker’s aim is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNTS (Punting Strength)</td>
<td>This number reflects the strength of your punter’s kicking leg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNTA (Punting Accuracy)</td>
<td>This reflects your punter’s aim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INJ (Injury Resistance)</td>
<td>A high INJ rating means your player isn’t likely to get injured. A low rating means you need to be careful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCTL (Ball Control)</td>
<td>Players with high Ball Control scores rarely fumble. Be wary of players with low scores—they cough up the ball when you least expect it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTKL (Break Tackle)</td>
<td>This score reflects the ability of your player to break a tackle and get free. Players with high BTKL scores are very useful on offense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLK (Shed Block)</td>
<td>This score indicates a player’s ability to get past a block. Players with high ratings are good at stopping the run and pressuring the QB. Players with low ratings are usually better suited for pass coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLK (Blocking)</td>
<td>Good blockers are a boon to both the passing game and the running game. Know your team’s good blockers and follow them in the running game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINS (Finesse Moves)</td>
<td>This rating reflects a blocker’s ability to use finesse moves to push aside a defender. Players with high scores are very useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKL (Tackling)</td>
<td>Players with high tackling ratings are reliable members of your defense. Players with low ratings can miss a big hit at the worst possible moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVG (Coverage)</td>
<td>This indicates a player’s ability to cover during the pass. If you enjoy playing as a safety or cornerback, you can play with someone who has a low CVG rating and pick up the slack with your skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even veteran football gamers should make a quick run through the training camp mode in NFL Fever 2004. Re-familiarize yourself with the controls, open up some secrets, and—most important—get an introduction to the new passing feature.

Moving Like an NFL Running Back
This one’s cake; just run through the cones.

Sprinting to the End Zone
Another easy one. Use 1 to sprint. Hold it down until the lightning bolt shrinks, release for a second or two, then hold it down again.

Spinning Around a Defender
The key to a good spin move is hitting it early. In a game situation, use this move when you’re away from all but one potential tackler. You have to spin by all the tackles to complete this drill.

Power Running: The Shoulder Charge
Bull your way through the defenders. Make sure your runner has a high strength rating before trying this move in a game.

Putting Your New Moves to
Follow the onscreen directions and use what you’ve learned so far. You should make it through easily.

One-Button Passing
This is just a quick reminder of how the single-button passing works. Hit 1 and let it fly.

Pitch and Catch
This drill teaches you how to throw using 8. See how the target leads the receivers? You need to mimic that in the drills coming up.

Selecting Your Receiver
Here’s another ultra-simple drill. Pay attention—it gets tougher!

Trigger Passing
Hold down B for a bullet; tap it for a lob.
Leading Your Receiver
Here it gets a little more skill-intensive. Check your receiver’s speed and direction before you throw the ball. Don’t be frustrated if this skill takes a while to master. It’s well worth the practice.

TIP
Remember that different quarterbacks have different arm strengths. Adjust your lead distances shorter for strong-armed passers and longer for noodle-armed QBs.

Start by targeting the end of the route (the tip of the arrow) and get a feel for your receiver’s speed. Don’t be afraid to lead your receiver beyond the end of his route. That tactic works especially well when throwing to your HB out of the flat.
Also, use touch passes if you have trouble with the short middle passes. You have to throw early, but it’s worth it.

Read and Lead Minigame
This is the toughest drill you face in training camp, but it’s also the best for preparing you to pass in a real game. We deal more with throwing the ball in the QB section of this guide, but here are three tips to help you get through this minigame.

• Always hit 1 to see your routes before snapping the ball.
• Hit the button of your desired receiver and the game automatically selects him.
• If you can’t easily throw to the primary route in Read and Lead mode, choose another receiver.

Kicking Directionally
Get a feel for the kicking game in this drill. For the short zones, you need only a little bit of red to show on the gauge—more, and you go over the top.

Hitting the Right Way
Pay attention to the direction closely. Defense can win or lose games.

Throwing Bullet and Lob Passes
Follow the directions and get the ball past the yellow barriers. Learn the timing for the high and low passes, which serve you well in game situations.

Offensive Player Controls:
The Basics
Let’s start with the offense. Before you jump into your first game, know all the controls available, so you go into battle fully armed. Here’s a quick overview of the basic controls for every offensive ball carrier.

Sprint: A
Use the sprint button every time you have the ball. When you hit A, you get a burst of speed and see a lightning bolt over your head. This wears off over time, so don’t keep A depressed all the time. When you have open space, release the button for a couple of seconds, then hit it again.
**Spin Move:**

Use the spin move in open-field running. It slows you down in the middle of a defensive pack, letting pursuers catch you. Hit the move before your tackler arrives, and don’t hold down 1 when you hit 2, or you won’t spin.

**Shoulder Charge:**

If you have a ball carrier with enough strength and power, the shoulder charge move knocks a smaller defender flat on his back. If your ball carrier is weaker, use a finesse move like the spin.

**Stiff Arm:**

When a defender comes at you, use 3 to push him back with your free hand. This move is effective when a defender is approaching you from an angle. With one clean shove, you get some distance and move right on by.

**Dive:**

This is a last-ditch move to grab a couple yards before you’re tackled. It’s great for sneaking into the end zone and is also useful for picking up short first downs. Don’t use it in other situations. Once you’re on the ground, the defense easily finishes the tackle.

**Lateral:**

Laterals are rarely used in the NFL because they often turn into fumbles. You can use it in the game, but beware the consequences. Pass laterally only if you’re sure you have someone open to lateral the ball to.

**Juke Moves:**

A juke move sidesteps you right or left depending on which trigger you pull. Use juke moves to sneak into a hole in the line or to evade a defender coming at you head on. These aren’t super moves, but if used properly, they can help you add a couple of extra yards to a play.

**Hurdle:**

This is a great move when you’re being pursued from behind. Hit 5 just as the defender makes his grab. If you time it correctly, he grabs air and you run free.

**Celebrations:**

Nothing feels better than a little celebrating on your way to the end zone. Remember that you risk fumbling if someone hits you while you’re celebrating.
The running back is a crucial part of any Fever team. No matter how good your passing offense is, you have to have a running game to back it up or the defense just sets up in a pass defense and shuts you down.

A good running back keeps the defense on its heels and takes pressure off the passing game, so it doesn’t have to make the big play on every down.

Be smart in your use of the running back. Properly controlled, he’s hard to stop. If someone does figure out how to stop him, you can bet your passing game will be wide open.

Here are tips for running with the ball.

### Running Back Basics
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### Important Ratings
These skills determine the effectiveness of your running back.

**Speed:** Fast backs can run to the outside and get around the corner. Slower backs are caught from behind or cut off before they can turn upfield.

**Acceleration:** Backs with good acceleration can hit holes quickly and get up the field before the defense reacts. Slow accelerators often get to holes too late.

**Hands:** It’s okay to have a running back with a low hands rating (below 70), but a running back who also can catch gives your offense a lot more strategic alternatives.

**Endurance:** Watch this stat. If your player has a low rating, his skills quickly diminish as the game progresses.

**Injury Resistance:** You don’t want your number one running back to get hurt during a game, so watch this number. If your back has a low injury resistance, don’t rely on him too heavily.

**Break Tackles:** Backs with high tackle-breaking scores can make moves on defenders and add extra yards to almost every carry. Those with low scores need to turn upfield and take what they can get before the tackle.

**Blocking:** This score is more important for fullbacks than halfbacks because they do a lot of lead blocking. Backs also protect the QB from the pass rush, so low blocking ratings can be deadly.

**Ball Control:** Fumbles are the last thing you want in a close game. If your player has a ball control rating in the 70s or below, be careful especially when making moves.

### Running Back Tip 1: Follow Your Plays
Design your running plays to open a single hole for your back to hit and gain yards. If you freelance too much (say, try to stretch an inside running play to the outside or run the opposite direction of your blocks) you most likely lose yardage.

### Running Back Tip 2: Know Your Running Back
Before you start playing with a team, check your running back’s stats. Understanding his skills and abilities (see sidebar) helps you know how to call the right plays for him.

### Running Back Types
You find several kinds of running backs in the NFL, and many that bridge the gap between two types. Here’s a quick look at some of them.

#### The Power Back
**Highs:** STR, BTKL, END
**Lows:** SPD, ACC, HND
**Best use:** Running plays designed to run between the offensive tackles, right up the middle of the field.

#### The Finesse Back
**Highs:** SPD, ACC
**Lows:** STR, BTKL
**Best use:** Running on sweeps and counters around the corner of the defensive line. These backs have to have speed to get around the outside before the defense seals it off.

#### The Hands Back
**Highs:** HND, SPD
**Lows:** STR, BTKL
**Best use:** The short passing game. A halfback with a HND rating of 75 or higher is extremely useful in the passing game. With this back, a QB can look for the deep pass but know that there’s a safe, short pass to make if no one’s open.

#### The Average Back
**Highs:** Varied
**Lows:** Varied
**Best use:** Even if you don’t have the NFL’s best back on your team, use him to keep the defense on their toes. Just call plays that work to his relative strengths and prove you’re not afraid to run.
Running Back Tip 3: Run North and South
Sweeping to the outside makes you feel good because you cover long distances before a defender hits you. But it’s easy for your opponents to seal off the sideline. Don’t always try for the big gain. As soon as you see a clean hole upfield, take it. In the end, you average much better yardage.

Running Back Tip 4: Wait for Your Blocks
If you call plays that involve pulling linemen, wait for them to get in front and make the block. A common mistake is to hit the hole before they get in front of you. Then you meet the defender that they were supposed to take out.

Running Back Tip 5: Don’t Make Unnecessary Moves
Even if your running back has good BTKL skills and can put on a mean spin, be careful to use his moves only when they will help you. Make a move too early or in the wrong situation, and other defenders may catch up and bring you down.

Advanced Running Back Tip 2: Read the Holes
No matter how well designed the play, you don’t know what will happen until it actually takes place. As a running back, be aware that the hole that was supposed to open may not—but another lane may appear directly beside it.

Keep your eyes open and wait for your blockers to make their move. Immediately read what’s opening up and hit the hole as fast as you can. In the NFL, the greatest running backs are the ones who can read the field, spot the hole, and react in seconds.

Advanced Running Back Tip 3: Know Who’s About to Tackle You
While looking downfield, also watch who’s closing to make the tackle. If it’s a big lineman, you might get away by sprinting. If it’s a linebacker, you need a finesse move to keep running. Once you hit the secondary, throw a shoulder charge into a defensive back. If they’re small enough, they go right over.

Fullback Play
Fullbacks have a variety of uses in the NFL. Some are simply blocking backs who clear the way for the running back. Others are powerful runners who can be counted on to bang through the line on third and one. Still others have good hands and are used as much as a halfback in the running game.

Again, check skills before you play the game. Learn what your fullback can or cannot do, then play to his strengths and stay away from his weaknesses. If your team doesn’t have a solid fullback, stick to a single back set or Shotgun Formation and rely on your tight end and offensive line to open holes for the halfback.

Wide Receiver Basics
The passing game gets emphasis in NFL Fever 2004, and you can’t have a passing game without a couple of wide receivers to catch the ball. Even a great quarterback needs a couple of wide receivers who can both get open and catch his throws. Here are some tips to help you get the most out of your receivers.
**Important Ratings**

These skills determine the effectiveness of your wide receiver.

**Speed:** Your number one WR should be pushing a rating of 90 in speed. He has to have the jets to get open deep and outrun defenders.

**Acceleration:** Good acceleration is incredibly important for a wide receiver. He has to accelerate into his moves and also accelerate to the ball when it isn’t thrown off target.

**Hands:** This is perhaps the most important of all the wide receiver skills. Nothing makes you angrier than delivering a perfect pass only to have a stone-handed receiver drop it.

**Break tackles:** This isn’t as important with wide receivers as it is with running backs, but the yards gained after the catch are crucial, and it’s good to have a receiver who can shake a few defenders after pulling down a pass.

**Ball Control:** Watch out for receivers who can’t hold onto the ball. If you have one, don’t try too hard for yards after the catch. Just get the yards you can without throwing too many moves.

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**Wide Receiver Tip 1:** Choose Plays with Your Receivers in Mind

If you have a speedy WR, send him deep and air it out. If you have a WR with great acceleration, try some slants over the middle. By the time the defense catches up to him, he already has the ball.

**Wide Receiver Tip 2:** Learn about your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Receivers

If the defense knows you have a favorite receiver, they double-cover him for the rest of the game and shut him down. Learn the skills and abilities of your other receivers, and you often end up throwing to them as much as to your primary guy.

**Wide Receiver Tip 3:** Turn Upfield Immediately After the Catch

Yards after the catch are hard to come by. Grab as many as you can by immediately turning upfield. Kick in the sprint turbos and run to daylight. Fancy moves don’t usually buy you much.

**Wide Receiver Tip 4:** Learn How to Hurdle

Hit to hurdle when a defender is behind you. Time it right and he grabs thin air. This is a very important move to learn as a WR. When you catch deep passes, your most pressing threat usually comes up from behind. Learn the timing and you can add 10 or more yards to a big catch.

**Wide Receiver Tip 5:** Run in Motion

Motion is important because it requires the defense to adapt and lets the quarterback read the opposing strategy. We’ll talk about motion more in the next section.

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**The Tight End**

The tight end is another huge part of your offense, but the position is different for each squad. Some TEs—among them Tony Gonzalez of the Chiefs—are almost like another receiver, and are an integral part of the passing game. Others are primarily used as blockers who open holes for running backs and help protect the quarterback. Check out the stats for your TE before you start the game and use him in the situation he’s best designed for.
**The Routes**

Often a passing play is described according to the route that the primary receiver runs. Here’s a brief rundown of some of the main routes.

**Button Hook Out:** Short comeback.

**Angle Out:** Short pass to the outside.

**Stunt Corner:** Juke to the inside and then go outside.

**Hook Out:** Medium comeback.

**Out:** Medium pass to the outside.

**Seam Out:** Break deep to the sideline.

**Seam:** Deep over the middle.

**Dino:** Triple move deep across the middle.

**Hook:** Fake deep and break back inside.

**Sluggo:** Fake the slant and break deep.

**In:** Come across the middle deep.

**Medium Cross:** Come across the middle medium.

**Button Hook In:** Very short comeback.

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**Quarterback Basics**

The quarterback is perhaps the most important player in this or any football game—and the position is the most complex to play. You can survive with a quarterback who throws the most basic of routes and makes the most basic of calls, but if you want to really succeed at *Fever*, get the most out of your quarterbacks.

First, the basics:

**Note**

Note that 3, 4, and 6 swap usage when you start scrambling.

**Pocket Passer Basics**

The most traditional QB is a pocket passer. The player hikes the ball, takes a three-, five-, or seven-step drop, and then looks for an open receiver. If your team has a pocket passer, here are tips for getting the most out of his skills.

**Tip**

It’s easy to see if your QB is better at scrambling or at staying in the pocket. If his SPD or ACC is below 75, stick to the pocket. If his INJ or BCTL is below 75, it’s still a good idea to stick to the pocket.

**Pocket Passer Tip 1:**

**Look at All the Receivers**

Don’t just look for your primary receiver to break open. Keep your eyes on the field. You never know when your third or fourth option will break free.

**Pocket Passer Tip 2:**

**Watch your Footwork**

If you throw while scrambling, you often make a bad, loopy throw. Plant your feet securely before making a throw, especially a deep throw.

**Pocket Passer Tip 3:**

**Stay in the Pocket**

When the defense applies pressure, you may be tempted to drop back out of the pocket and drift away from the defense. If you do, you often throw off your back foot or miss the quick routes as you fade back. Stay in the pocket and keep an eye on the defensive rush.
Mobile Passer Basics

In the last decade, the mobile quarterback has become an integral part of the NFL. What was once considered a liability is now considered the QB prototype—a passer who’s just as dangerous with his legs as he is with his arm. Here are a couple tips for winning with a mobile QB.

**Mobile Passer Tip 1: Scramble Early**

Let the defense know early that they have to pay attention to your QB at all times, or he runs. If you do this right, they have to keep a man on you for the rest of the game, opening the secondary for easier passing.

**Mobile Passer Tip 2: Scramble During Pass Plays**

Simply running a few QB draw plays doesn’t threaten your defense. Call pass plays that send receivers overloading onto one side. While they make their crossing routes, scramble in that direction. This makes passing easier, and if you have open space you can run it for seven or eight yards easy.

**Mobile Passer Tip 3: Call Plays That Make Scrambling Easier**

Plays that feature a back running out to the flat or other short crossing route work well with a scrambling QB. Follow your receivers in their direction and hit them on the run.

**Mobile Passer Tip 4: Don’t Take Unnecessary Hits**

If you have a top scrambling QB, don’t get him injured or have him fumble. Be prepared to hit in scrambling mode to make your QB take a slide. Your opponent will hate it, but you’ll still have your QB in the fourth quarter.

**Mobile Passer Tip 5: Read the Defense’s Reaction**

When you start scrambling, the defense is forced to react. If a linebacker or a member of the secondary pulls up to seal off your run, look to the space he vacated—a receiver may be wide open. Pay special attention when the middle linebacker breaks off to stop you. That leaves the middle of the field wide open.

**Important Ratings**

These skills determine the effectiveness of your quarterback.

**Passing Accuracy:** This is crucial for a good passing game. If the rating’s high, you can thread the needle through the defense. If it’s low, you have to look for more open receivers.

**Arm Strength:** This determines how far you can throw the ball and how much heat you can get on it. If you have low ASTR, don’t try to force the deep pass. The secondary feasts on those lame ducks.

**Speed:** Good SPD ratings are not essential for your QB but those who do have good ratings (like Michael Vick) can scramble and frustrate defenses. If your SPD rating is low, stay in the pocket.

**Acceleration:** This is similar to speed—not essential, but certainly useful. Good ACC can help you sneak out of trouble without taking a sack.

**Ball Control:** Keep an eye on this stat if you’re playing as a mobile QB. Some QBs drop the ball when a defender barely hits them.

**Injury Resistance:** Check this stat carefully. If you use your QB like a running back, he may get injured before the second half rolls around.
Read and Lead Passing

One of the coolest innovations in NFL Fever 2004 is Read and Lead passing. This feature lets you control the direction of every pass you throw, rather than just pick a receiver and hit a button.

The skill is frustrating until you get the hang of it, but once you learn how to use it well, you can pick apart secondaries like Joe Montana in his prime. Here are some tips to help you master this control scheme.

Read and Lead Passing Tip 1: Play Through the Fever Training Camp

This mode is mostly basic, but a very good minigame teaches you how to use Read and Lead passing in game situations. Play through this minigame many times until you get a feel for the control scheme. There’s no better way to get a grasp of it.

Read and Lead Passing Tip 2: Know Your Players

You’ve heard this before and you’ll hear it again, but it’s very important in Read and Lead passing. The system works as differently for a weak-armed QB and slow WR as it does for a rocket-armed QB and speedster receiver. Learn how much lead you need to give each receiver. Sometimes a fraction of a second makes all the difference.

Read and Lead Passing Tip 3: Pay Attention to Velocity

Plant your feet when you throw the ball, and remember to correctly use \(8\) with either a tap (touch pass) or a hold (bullet pass). Each requires timing to hit your receiver, and each is useful in its own circumstance. Don’t rely on a single pass type. You need both to succeed.

Read and Lead Passing Tip 4: Remember Height

If you hold \(1\) as your QB goes into his throwing motion, the ball is thrown high. This often helps get it above the outstretched arms of defenders. If you hold \(6\) as you throw, the ball zips in low, which is great for comeback routes.

Read and Lead Passing Tip 5: Select Your Receiver with His Icon Button

Always select your receiver with his icon button. It’s a three-step process.

1) Choose the receiver with his icon button.
2) Move the target with the right stick. (Lead the receiver.)
3) Pull the right trigger to pass the ball.

Other Passing Modes

One-button passing: This is the traditional way to throw in a football game. Hit \(1\) to snap the ball, then pick your favorite receiver and hit his button, and the QB automatically throws to him. One-button passing is the easiest and in some cases most efficient passing method. You can’t exploit holes in the defense very well, but if you’re controlling an accurate passer, you can hit your targets on their routes.

Trigger: This is similar to traditional one-button passing, but this time you throw using \(8\). While using trigger passing, you can pull \(7\), which sends your receiver breaking down the field for a deep pass. This broken play control is very helpful, but be careful—if your man isn’t open, this is an easy way to get your pass picked off. Trigger passing bridges the gap between traditional one-button passing and Read and Lead. Its benefits include the broken-play control that gives you a chance to exploit some holes in the defense, and the use of \(8\) to pass, which is better than the usual buttons for controlling pass velocity.

Trigger passing is the “training wheels” version of Read and Lead. The receivers will be in a pre-lead state in Trigger passing. The AI does the leading for the user and it is a great way to get a feel for how far to lead a receiver.
Advanced Quarterback Techniques

Besides being one of the most important players on the field, the quarterback also can act as a play-caller during the game. A quarterback who can make last-minute changes at the line of scrimmage can give a defense no end of trouble. There are two main ways to do this: changing receiver routes and calling audibles.

Changing Receiver Routes

This is one of a QB’s most useful skills. To do it right, you must be able to read defenses and be able to think quickly. (It’s easy to get a delay-of-game penalty while making last-second changes.) Here are a few basic situations in which you change routes correctly.

Situation 1: Defensive Backs Are on Your Receiver
If you have a fast receiver, this is a good situation. Change the route to go deep and fade away from whatever safeties are in the backfield.

Situation 2: Defensive Backs Are Playing Several Yards off Your Receiver
This means they respect your WR’s speed and have left themselves a cushion. Change the route to a quick slant or a curl route, and you have a quick pass for a couple easy yards.

Situation 3: The Opponent Puts Everyone In to Stop the Run
Send your WR straight down the field and let the ball go early. With all the focus on the run, he probably faces minimal coverage.

Situation 4: The Defense Sends in Extra Players on the Blitz
Tell your TE to stay in and block. If you think your opponent might blitz, hotroute your running back to stay and block instead of going on a pass route. This is often more effective than having the TE block.

Situation 5: You Sent a Man in Motion and a Defender Followed Him
Switch your running back to a deep route in hopes that he’ll face a one-on-one with a slower linebacker.

Situation 6: You Sent a Man in Motion and a Defender Doesn’t Follow
Change routes so that you flood one area of the field with receivers. If you overload the zone, the defense can’t cover everybody.

Calling Audibles

In the coaching section of this book we talk about reading defenses and exploiting them by calling audibles. However, even before you’re comfortable reading and reacting, you should put your favorite plays into the audible menu. When you face an obvious running defense, you can swap quickly to a passing play and burn them deep, or vice versa.

Knowing how to use audibles correctly also pays off in the two-minute drill. You can go to the line of scrimmage and call your plays from theirs. The right call could get you a touchdown. The wrong call could cost you the game. No one ever said it was easy being a quarterback.

This is a sampling of the ways you can exploit defenses by changing plays and receiver routes at the line of scrimmage. We get into more of this in the coaching section of this guide.

Kicking Basics

Your kicker often is the difference between snatching victory from the jaws of defeat and going home with a notch in the loss department. It’s good to know your kicker’s stats before starting a game.

Important Ratings

These skills determine the effectiveness of your wide kicker.

Kicking Strength: If your kicker has a low KSTR rating, don’t try for the long field goal. Either punt on the fourth down, or go for it.

Kicking Accuracy: This determines how accurate your kicker will be.
Quick Kicking Tips
Kick the ball high on kickoffs. The more air you get under the ball, the easier it is for your teammates to cover.

Adjust height on field goals. On longer field goals, you need to aim your target down just a little. You risk a block, but you get better distance.

Know when to kick and when to go for two. Many games are won or lost by a single one- or two-point conversion, so know when to kick for one and take the safe points and when to risk going for two.

Quick Punting Tips
Kick the ball high in the air: Line-drive punts give punt returners plenty of room to do their magic.

Kick out of bounds if necessary. One way to shut down a top punt returner is to never let him have the ball. Practice directional kicking so that the ball lands just a foot or two out of bounds in your desired location.

Go for the coffin corner. A perfect punt is when you kick the ball and have it land out of bounds inside your opponent’s 10-yard line. This takes lots of practice and skill, but it’s a very useful tactical maneuver.

One Point or Two?

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Be smart about onside kicks. You’re often tempted to surprise your opponent with an onside kick. This is a low percentage play, and you yield a lot of free yardage to your opponent. If you insist on trying, make the onside kick from a regular kicking formation. You actually surprise your opponent, and you have a numbers advantage over his front-line guys.

Never kick off out of bounds. The penalty is just too steep. Just kick it down the middle and let your coverage team do its job.

Kick Returner Basics
Kick returners can make a huge difference in a football game. A good return can save an offense several first downs and can set them up for easy scores. A bad return can do just the opposite.

Important Ratings
These skills determine the effectiveness of your kick and punt returner.

**Speed:** Having the speed to outrun the coverage team can help you get around the corner and up the field.

**Acceleration:** Good returners need to get up to full speed quickly, because danger is always coming.

**Ball Control:** You definitely don’t want to get too crazy with a returner who can’t hold onto a football. The hard special-teams tackles jar the ball loose easily.

Quick Returner Tips
Keep running north and south. You don’t have to head right up the middle, but time is at a premium in the return game and you need to get as many yards as you can as quickly as you can.

Watch your blockers. Big kick returns usually start with a big block. Keep an eye upfield, and watch out for danger.

Make the big first move. The most important move you can make on a kick return is to make the first defender miss. Whether you try a spin, shoulder charge, or juke, if you can get past the first guy, you add quite a few more yards.

Important Ratings
These skills determine the effectiveness of your punter.

**Punting Strength:** You want a punter who can boom the ball.

**Punting Accuracy:** Know this stat before you try a precision coffin-corner punt.

Punting Basics
Do not neglect your punting game. A good punter can pin your opponents back in the shadow of their own goalposts.
Defensive Player Controls: The Basics

Now we’re on to the defense. The offense gets the glory, but defense wins and loses games. The first step to having a good defense is learning how to control the defensive players. Here’s a quick guide to defensive controls.

**Sprint:**
You want to get to the ball on defense as quickly as possible. You may be switching between players, so it doesn’t hurt to press the sprint button as much as you can and milk all the speed that you can out of your defender.

**Dive for Pass:**
This is mega-risky. If you miss the pass, you can’t stop the receiver. But if the QB throws up a lame duck, it’s worth a shot if the ball seems to be out of range of the intended receiver.

**Knock Down Pass:**
This is a reliable and useful button for those who like top play in coverage. Just reach out your arm and swat down the ball. It isn’t flashy, but used correctly it can help shut down a passing offense.

**Dive Tackle:**
This is a good way to close the gap to a ball carrier and make a good, hard tackle. Be careful: If you dive wrong, you may miss the tackle completely and your guy skates by.

**Player Nearest Target:**
Use this button to switch to the defender closest to the targeted receiver so you can try to knock down the pass or pick it off.

**Player Nearest Ball:**
Be ready to tag this button quickly, and find yourself in the middle of the play. But be careful not to hit the button too late while trying to tackle the QB, which will make your defensive back run away from his receiver.

**Shuffle Step:**
The shuffle step lets your defender move laterally to keep facing the ball carrier. Use this move when you’re trying to keep an eye on a scrambling quarterback or a shifty running back.

**Attempt to Catch Pass:**
This can be a risky move, because you’re less likely to stop the pass trying to catch it than by trying to knock down the ball. It’s worth a try, because an interception is far more valuable than an incomplete pass.
**Linebacker Basics**

In *NFL Fever*, as in the real NFL, the linebacker position is one of the most difficult and complex positions. The linebacker has to watch the gaps in the line and stuff the run, but he’s also called upon to cover the pass over the middle.

If you choose to control the linebacker, you have to read the offense and keep an eye out for the run while still paying attention to your zone or the receiver you’re supposed to be covering.

**Important Ratings**

These skills determine the effectiveness of your linebacker.

**Speed:** This helps you keep up with receivers and also gets you to the QB easier on a blitz.

**Tackling:** A good linebacker needs to be a good tackler. You’re often all there is between the ball carrier and the secondary.

**Shedding Blocks:** This skill is especially useful when blitzing with your LB. The quicker he gets past a block, the more pressure he can put on the QB.

**Aggressiveness:** Linebackers with high ratings in this area are especially dangerous when you let the computer control them. They seem to be in the middle of every play.

**Linebacker Tip 1:**
**Read Before You React**

Watch what the QB does before you make your big move. If he drops behind the back, look for your receiver or cover your zone. If he hands off the ball, sprint to the runner.

**Linebacker Tip 2:**
**Think Like a Running Back**

When the offense is running the ball, think like a running back and look for his closest open hole. If you do your job, you hit the hole at the same time he does and nail him for no gain.

**Linebacker Tip 3:**
**If You Have the Skills, Blitz**

A linebacker can put serious pressure on a QB if he has the right skill ratings. Look for LBs with high ratings in SPD, SBLK, and ACC. They usually make good blitizers.

**Linebacker Tip 4:**
**Keep an Eye Out for Scrambling QBs**

LBs have to stop scrambling QBs. It’s your job to determine when to leave your pass coverage and make a run at the QB. If the QB is a good scrambler, this can be a difficult choice. But if a linebacker doesn’t do it, the QB runs over your team all day.

**Defensive Back Basics**

Defensive backs are the last line of defense against the passing game, and they often are put in dangerous one-on-one situations. Good cornerbacks and safeties are up to the challenge.

You’re also called upon to blitz from the secondary from time to time and to load the offensive line with a speedy extra tackler. The rest of your secondary teammates must fill in the gap you’ve left, but if you can get to the QB, it’s worth it.

**Important Ratings**

These skills determine the effectiveness of your defensive back.

**Speed:** You need to be able to keep up with receivers who are generally very fast.

**Acceleration:** If you have a high acceleration rating, you can react to passes quickly and make fast moves to get to the ball.

**Shedding Blocks:** Defensive backs with high ratings in this area are perfect for blitzes. Those with low scores should stick to coverage.

**Tackling:** Some defensive backs have very low tackling scores. Don’t go for the big dive tackle with them—play it safe.

**Coverage:** Players with high coverage scores can be very effective against the pass, especially when controlled by the computer.

**Defensive Back Tip 1:**
**Push the Receiver to Your Safeties**

If you’re playing cornerback, get to the outside of a receiver and force him to your safeties. If you’re a safety, judge where you can help double a receiver.

**Defensive Back Tip 2:**
**Don’t Try to Intercept Every Pass**

It’s okay just to knock the ball down, and it’s less risky than trying an interception. If the pass looks like a floater or you have room, try for a grab. If it’s close, swat it down.

**Defensive Back Tip 3:**
**Know Your Opponent**

If you’re playing against a rocket-fast WR, give him space off the line of scrimmage and try to keep up. If you’re covering a slower receiver with good hands, cover him like a quilt and don’t let him get the ball.

**Defensive Back Tip 4:**
**Blitz with Intensity**

If you’re called on for a safety blitz or corner blitz, don’t be half-hearted about it. You leave a gap in the secondary that your opponent will exploit unless you put serious pressure on the QB.
Important Ratings

These skills determine the effectiveness of your defensive linemen.

**Strength:** Players with high strength ratings can push back offensive linemen who are trying to block and collapse the pocket on the QB.

**Acceleration:** Good acceleration means that your player can make quick moves to hit the QB or shut down a running play.

**Shedding Blocks:** You want your linemen to have good skills in this area. They’re always facing a block. The easier it is for them to get past it, the better they can do overall.

**Tackling:** Running backs are hard to tackle, and your linemen are called upon to tackle running backs throughout the game. A lineman with bad tackling skills can create a dream day for an opposing running back.

Defensive Lineman Tip 1: Run Line Stunts

Choose plays in which your linemen swap positions and attack the QB from different directions. This often throws the opposing offensive line off their game and gets you a shot at the QB.

Defensive Lineman Tip 2: Run Your Own Stunts

It’s okay to pull off the line and put yourself in another position for a stunt-like blitz. This leaves a gaping hole in the position you left, but if you get to the QB before he can react, it won’t matter.

Defensive Lineman Tip 3: Keep an Eye on the Running Back

If all you think about is pass rush you over-pursue on running plays and the running back blasts past you. Attack the QB, but remember that your job is to shut down the run, too.

Defensive Lineman Tip 4: Finish the Job

If you get close to a QB, quickly hit to make a dive tackle. That last-second burst is often just enough to take down the QB before he can get rid of the ball.

Secondary Adjustments

One of the best features in Fever is the ability to adjust your defense before the snap of the ball. If you’re smart, you can shut down an offense and adapt to audibles quickly and efficiently.

Before the ball is snapped, hit to bring up a menu bar at the top of your screen.

This bar gives you a set of options to adapt your defense quickly. Here’s what they do:

- **Bump:** Your cornerbacks come up to the line and bump your wide receivers. This is good for throwing receivers off their pattern and throwing offenses off their rhythm.

- **Loose:** If you know they’re going to throw deep, switch to loose coverage. This keeps your corners from getting burned deep and helps them shut down the long routes.

- **Original:** This switches you back to your original coverage settings.

- **Tight:** If the offense is throwing quick slants on your defense, switch to this defense and your secondary covers the receivers tight from the line of scrimmage, eliminating the buffer zone that short passes exploit.

- **Disguise:** If your opponents are smart enough to recognize your defensive changes, use this button to throw them off.

You can also adjust the location of your defensive line and linebackers before a play. This is useful when you are able to predict what kind of play your opponent is going to run.

Before the ball is snapped, hit . You see a menu bar at the top of your screen.

Choose to move the defensive line with . Choose to move the linebackers with .

Once you’ve picked which group to move, send them in the desired direction using the digital pad. You can cancel out of this mode at any time by hitting .
Coaching Like a Pro

Now that you’ve learned the basics of player control, it’s time to learn the basics of coaching. Football is one of the most complex sports ever invented, and strategy can seem daunting at first. The key is to keep it simple, know what your team does best, and anticipate what your opponent will do. If you can do all that, you’ll be fine. To start, here’s a primer on offensive and defensive formations.

Offensive Formations

Shotgun

The Shotgun formation is a passing formation that gives the QB four and sometimes five passing options. You get extra time to throw the ball, but you risk losing more yards if you get sacked.

Strengths
• The Shotgun provides extra time for QB to find an open man.
• You can put up to five receivers near the line.
• It makes draw plays very effective.

Weaknesses
• Running plays can be slow to set up.
• The defense can prepare for the pass.
• A sacked quarterback loses a lot of ground.

I-Formation

The I-Formation or I-Form is a balanced offensive set using two backs in the backfield and three other eligible receivers. This formation is good for both a running attack and passing attack.

Strengths
• It’s balanced—you can run and pass.
• The I-Form provides a fullback who can be the lead blocker for your HB.
• It gives your QB several options to throw.

Weaknesses
• Backs can’t get out to the deep pass quickly.
• It’s hard to flood zone defenses with two WRs and a TE.
• It’s not a strong, focused run or pass offense.

When to Use the Shotgun
• You have a strong QB and receivers.
• The defense is putting too much pressure on your QB.
• You need to get a lot of yards on a single play.

Typical Game Situations
• Second and long
• Third and long

When to Use the I-Formation
• You have a good blocking FB and good TE.
• You like running a balanced offense.
• You want to run sweeps and counters to the outside.

Typical Game Situations
• First and second down
• Third and less than seven
The Single Back formation only has one running back. It is a passing formation but with the right mix of TE's and WR's can be used effectively to run the ball.

**Strengths**
- You have more receivers on the line of scrimmage.
- You can still run effectively.
- Your TE becomes very useful.

**Weaknesses**
- Your running back doesn’t have a lead blocker.
- Your QB must often rely on the HB to block against the pass rush.
- The defense will be reading your pass.

**When to Use the Single Back**
- You don’t have a good blocking FB.
- You have a good catching and blocking TE.
- You want a third or fourth WR to throw to.

**Typical Game Situations**
- First and second down
- Third and less than ten

The Pro formation or Pro form is a balanced offensive set using two backs in the backfield and three other eligible receivers. This formation is good for both running attacks and passing attacks.

**Strengths**
- It’s balanced; you can run and pass.
- It provides a lead blocker for your HB.
- It’s good for running both inside and outside.

**Weaknesses**
- It’s not the best formation for long passes.
- It’s hard to flood zone defenses with two WR’s and a TE.
- It’s not a strong, focused run or pass offense.

**When to Use the Pro Formation**
- You have a good blocking FB.
- You like running a balanced offense.
- You have a quick running back who can take a pitch and sprint around the corner of the defense.

**Typical Game Situations**
- First and second down
- Third and less than seven
The Goal Line offensive formation should only be used in short-yardage situations, when you need that extra blocker to get that extra yard.

**Strengths**
- The Shotgun provides extra time for QB to find an open man.
- You can put up to five receivers near the line.
- It makes draw plays very effective.

**Weaknesses**
- Running plays can be slow to set up.
- The defense can prepare for the pass.
- A sacked quarterback loses a lot of ground.

**Goal Line Sets**

**When to Use the Goal Line Formation**
- You have a strong QB and receivers.
- The defense is putting too much pressure on your QB.
- You need to get a lot of yards on a single play.

**Typical Game Situations**
- Second and long
- Third and long

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The I-Formation or I-Form is a balanced offensive set using two backs in the backfield and three other eligible receivers. This formation is good for both a running attack and passing attack.

**Strengths**
- It’s balanced—you can run and pass.
- The I-Form provides a fullback who can be the lead blocker for your HB.
- It gives your QB several options to throw.

**Weaknesses**
- Backs can’t get out to the deep pass quickly.
- It’s hard to flood zone defenses with two WRs and a TE.
- It’s not a strong, focused run or pass offense.

**Special Teams Sets**

**When to use Special Teams Formations**
- You have a good blocking FB and good TE.
- You like running a balanced offense.
- You want to run sweeps and counters to the outside.

**Typical Game Situations**
- First and second down
- Third and less than seven

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**Basic Plays**

This menu describes specific offensive plays that are grouped as running plays and passing plays.

**Strengths**
- It’s easy to pick the right kind of play for your situation.
- You know exactly what the play is designed for.
- It’s less confusing if you aren’t familiar with football plays.

**Weaknesses**
- You don’t have as many plays to choose from.
- It’s hard to bluff in two-player games.
- You can’t best use your personal team selections.

**When to Use Basic Plays**
- You’re uncomfortable calling plays the regular way.
- You just need a quick play in a certain direction.
- You can’t be bothered with strategy.
If you want a high-powered passing offense, you have to do more than select a team that passes well. You have to rethink the way that you play. These 10 steps will help you develop your own passing juggernaut with any team that you pick.

**Tip 1: Know Your Quarterback**
All QBs are not created equal. Some have rocket arms and others would have difficulty throwing their way out of a paper bag. Go to the Coaching and Player Reports menu and check out your QB’s stats before you play a down.

Can he run? Does he have good passing accuracy? Is he fumble prone? You need the answers to these questions and more to get the most out of his playing abilities.

**Tip 2: Know Your Targets**
Look at the stats for your WRs, TEs, HBs, and FBs. Pay special attention to the HND rating. If your guys can’t catch, don’t waste time throwing to them.

You might also discover that a backup runner has better receiving skills than one of the starters. If you intend to commit to the pass, sub the backup in as a starter.

**Tip 3: Pick Your Top Targets**
Your primary WR probably has good SPD and HND ratings, but check out the secondary WRs, TEs, and RBs. On some teams the TE or RB is a great target. On other teams, the third receiver not only has skill but also is open a lot because the best defensive backs are covering the top two receivers.

**Tip 4: Know Your Offensive Line**
The team section of this guide has stats from 2002. Look at the number of sacks the teams gave up. Detroit has the best record, yielding 20. Houston gave up an all-time record 76 sacks. If your team is more like Detroit than Houston, you probably have time to make good, long throws. If you’re more like Houston (or you’re the Texans), develop a quick, short passing game.

**Tip 5: Learn Read and Lead Passing**
Yes, this is more difficult to master than one-button passing, but it lets you to hit the holes in the defense. If, for instance, you have a receiver slanting across the middle to the right side and you see that the safety on the left side has pulled up to the line to cover the short pass, aim your target deep to the left and lead your receiver with a long touch pass.

Don’t sweat the frustration of the occasional errant pass or bad throw on your part. As you master Read and Lead passing, your entire air attack opens up.

**Tip 6: Spread the Ball Around**
Don’t rely too heavily on a single target. Any good defender will pick up on your tendencies early and double-cover that receiver for the rest of the game. Pick plays that highlight each of your receivers as well as your tight end and backs. Once the defense learns that they can’t stop a single guy, they usually just rely on regular defense. Your top guys break open when you need them.

**Tip 7: Scramble if You Can**
Few factors open up the passing game like a QB scramble. When the defense knows that your QB is a threat to run at any time, they’re forced to commit a defender to “spy” on your passer. This unclogs the passing lanes, usually in the middle of the field.

On passing plays, roll out in the direction that you’re likely to throw, but tuck it in and run if the opportunity presents itself.

Take a QB slide whenever possible when scrambling. Your QB can easily fumble or get injured, which would leave your team stranded with a backup QB.

**Tip 8: Get Your TE and RBs in on the Action**
This has been briefly mentioned before, but it deserves emphasis. If you get the ball to your backs and TE, the defense has to take a lot of its pressure off your QB and WRs. Short Out patterns and tight crossing routes are hard to defend and can occasionally break open a big gain.

**Tip 9: Mix in the Run**
Even the best passing offenses need to use the run every so often. If not, the defense brings in extra defensive backs and sets up in a Dime defense, which is difficult to pass against. Worse, they forget about the run and try to tee off on your QB. A well-timed draw play from your HB can catch a defense off guard and make them think twice before playing a pass-only defense.

**Tip 10: Read the Defense and Make Changes at the Line**
We talk more about audibles, reading defenses, and changing passing routes later in this section. When you learn how to use these skills properly, your passing game is nearly unstoppable.
Developing a Rushing Offense

If you’re the old-fashioned football fan who believes in the “three yards and a cloud of dust” strategy, you have a lot to enjoy while playing NFL Fever. A solid rushing offense plan frustrates opponents who expect players to air it out all the time. If you develop the strategy correctly, you win a lot of games.

Tip 1: Know Your Halfback
The halfback is the core of most running games. He may be a power runner, a finesse runner, or a good pass catcher. As long as you know his abilities, you can develop a strategy around him.

If your back is strong, send him into the middle and let him bull his way down the field. If he has good speed, send him around the corner and let him outrun the opposition.

Tip 2: Know Your Fullback
Most fullbacks aren’t as quick as halfbacks, but check your fullback’s stats to be sure. If he has good SPD and STR stats, use him a lot more as a running alternative.

Check out his blocking skills, too. A fullback with good blocking skills makes your halfback’s life a lot easier. With well-designed, lead-blocking play, he usually takes out the first tackler and lets your halfback zip down the field.

Tip 3: Know Your Tight Ends
Find out which TE on your team has the best blocking skills, then run to his side whenever possible. You can even check out the blocking stats of your WRs. They won’t be nearly as high as the stats for your tight ends, but even marginal receiver blocking skills can help when you’re running a wide sweep.

Tip 4: Know Your Offensive Line
This may seem repetitive but it is very important. Your offensive line has strengths and weaknesses just like other parts of the team. Check out the blocking and strength stats of the starters and look for those you can trust to hold a block and open a hole for you.

Once you find your trustworthy offensive linemen, run to their side often or use them to pull off to the other side in front of you.

Tip 5: Pick Running Formations
If you have a good blocking FB, run out of formations like I-Form or Pro Form. You always have your FB in the play set with you and can call plays with him as a lead blocker.

If you don’t have a good blocking FB, call plays in the Single Back or Shotgun formation and use your tight end to block. Don’t waste a valuable player position on a FB that won’t help you much on the run.

Tip 6: Give the Fullback the Ball
If you only run with your halfback, it won’t take long for defenses to start keying off your halfback. Try a toss to the fullback every now and then to keep them honest. Even if he’s not the best runner, he often picks up extra yards because the defense is focusing on the halfback.

Tip 7: Run to Both Sides of the Field
Vary your running direction between the right and left side of the line. This keeps your opponent guessing. Even if you have favorite offensive linemen to run behind, call plays for them to pull to the opposite side and stay behind them safely.

Tip 8: Run both Inside and Outside
Even if your running backs have skills that work best either inside or outside, mix both types of runs into your repertoire. If you run too much to the outside, the defense switches into a 34, and the extra linebackers start cheating out and sealing off the sidelines.

Punch the ball up the middle a couple of times and they have to play honest. The same rule applies to power runners. Mix it up a little.

Tip 9: Mix in the Pass
If the defense doesn’t feel the threat of the pass, they load the line with defenders and stop any run you try. Pass often and occasionally deep to remind them that one of the greatest advantages of a running offense is that it opens the defense up to the big passing play.

Tip 10: Read the Defense and Make Changes at the Line
Have running audibles set up to for both sides of the line and have a couple deep passing routes ready. If the defense stacks players on one side, switch to the other. If they stack the line with defenders, burn them deep.
Defensive Formations

34 Defense

The 34 defense uses three down linemen and four linebackers. This gives you more speed on the field but sacrifices some size. It is a balanced defense, acceptable against both the pass and the run but not focused on stopping either one.

Strengths
• The 34 spreads out your linebackers to stop outside runs.
• It gives your defense more overall speed.
• It clogs the middle against the short passing game.

Weaknesses
• You’re vulnerable to hard runs up the middle.
• You sacrifice strength for speed.
• It’s not good for pressuring the QB without a blitz.

34 Sets

When to use the 34
• The offense is running sweeps outside.
• The offense is throwing short passes over the middle.
• You have good tackling and blitzing LBs.

Typical Game Situations
• First and ten
• Medium- to long-yardage situations

43 Defense

The 43 defense uses four down linemen and three linebackers. This gives you more size on the field but sacrifices some speed. It is a balanced defense, acceptable against both the pass and the run but not focused on stopping either one.

Strengths
• The 43 works well against the inside run.
• It gives your defense more overall size.
• It lets your linemen put pressure on the QB.

Weaknesses
• It’s vulnerable to quick runs around the outside.
• You sacrifice speed for size.
• Compared to the 34 defense, the 43 leaves fewer men back to cover short passes.

43 Sets

When to Use the 43
• The offense is running up the middle.
• The offensive is picking up your blitzes.
• You have good pass rushing linemen.

Typical Game Situations
• First and ten
• Pretty much any other situation
The Nickel defense uses four down linemen, two linebackers, and five defensive backs. It’s good at defending against the short and medium pass, but not very good against the run.

**Strengths**
- It works well against short and medium passes.
- The Nickel puts more skilled pass coverage players on the field.
- It’s better against the run than the Dime.

**Weaknesses**
- It’s vulnerable to a strong running game.
- You sacrifice size for coverage.
- Compared to the Dime defense, it’s not as good against the deep pass.

**When to Use the Nickel**
- The offense is passing medium or short.
- The offensive is not running much.
- You have good defensive linemen against the pass and run.

**Typical Game Situations**
- First and ten
- Second or third with more than five yards to go

The Dime defense uses four down linemen, one linebacker, and six defensive backs. It is good at defending against the medium and long pass, but not very good against the run.

**Strengths**
- The Dime works well against medium and long passes.
- It puts six skilled pass coverage players on the field.
- It can result in pass interceptions.

**Weaknesses**
- It’s very vulnerable to the running game.
- You sacrifice size for coverage.
- Compared to the Nickel defense, it’s not as good against the short pass.

**When to Use the Dime Defense Formation**
- The offense is passing medium or long.
- The offense is not running much.
- You have good defensive linemen who can put pressure on the QB.

**Typical Game Situations**
- Second, third or fourth and long
- Late-game passing situations
Goal Line Defense

Use the Goal Line defense only in short-yardage situations. It is good against the run, but not very good against the pass.

Strengths
- Goal Line defense works well against the run.
- It works well near the goal line.
- It makes for a strong push against the offensive line.

Weaknesses
- It is very vulnerable to the pass.
- It’s easy for opponents to identify and exploit.
- It doesn’t feature your best coverage guys.

Goal Line Sets

When to Use the Goal Line
- The offense is inside your 10-yard line.
- The offensive is only running the ball.
- You have excellent cover cornerbacks.

Typical Game Situations
- Third and short
- Plays near the end zone

Special Teams

This section has plays to defend against field goals and punts.

Special Teams Sets

When to Use a Special Team Formation
- The other team is making a kick or a punt.

Typical Game Situations
- Kicking situations

Basic Defense Plays

The 43 defense uses four down linemen and three linebackers. This gives you more size on the field but sacrifices some speed. It is a balanced defense, acceptable against both the pass and the run but not focused on stopping either one.

Strengths
- It’s easy to pick the right defense for your situation.
- You know exactly what the defense is designed for.
- It’s less confusing if you aren’t familiar with football plays.

Weaknesses
- You don’t have as many plays to choose from.
- It’s hard to bluff in two-player games.
- You can’t best use your personal team selections.

Basic Selection

When to Use Basic Defense Plays
- You’re uncomfortable calling defenses the regular way.
- You just need a quick play in a certain direction.
- You can’t be bothered with strategy.
Shutting Down the Passing Game

Football gamers tend to stick to the passing game. In fact, you often find opponents that try to run a couple of times in the first quarter and then abandon it altogether. For these opponents and, learn how to set up your defense to shut down the pass. It’s not that difficult if you follow these steps.

**Tip 1: Know Your Defensive Backs**

Your defensive backs (cornerbacks and safeties) are the bread and butter of your passing defense. On any team, you have stronger and weaker defenders. You need to know which players you can rely on and which ones can’t be trusted.

Check out the SPD, ACC, and CVG stats of each player to find out which ones you should control. If a player has high ratings for coverage and aggressiveness, let the computer control him while you control a weaker guy and use your skills to make up for his deficiencies. Also, check the SBLK and TKL skills to see if you have a good blitzer.

**Tip 2: Know Your Opponent**

Most teams have one or two top receivers who become the QB’s primary focus in the offense. Before the game, look at the stats of the players you’re facing or just check out the team listings in the next section of this guide. Check the QB, WRs, TE, HBs, and even the FB. The better you know your opponent’s weapons, the better you are at stopping them cold.

**Tip 3: Find your Pass Rushers**

Look through the stats on your team and find players with good ACC and SBLK stats. These guys usually have the best shot at getting to the quarterback. You need them once you start applying pressure on the passing game.

**Tip 4: Play Pass-Oriented Defenses**

If your opponent is dead set on passing the football, switch into a Nickel or Dime defense. This adds extra defensive backs and makes it much tougher for defenders to get open. You’re vulnerable to the run, but make your pass-happy opponents prove that they will stick to the run before you switch defenses to stop them.

Use the Nickel defense if they’re throwing short to medium passes. Use the Dime defense if they’re throwing medium to long passes with regularity.

**Tip 5: Double Cover the Top Receiver**

Players often focus on a single receiver. If you notice a pattern of a single receiver getting a lot of passes, take control of a deep safety and help the cornerback by double-covering this receiver yourself.

This forces the opposing QB out of his rhythm, frustrates his favorite plays, and makes him look for other, less talented receivers.

**Tip 6: Get Line Pressure on the QB**

One of the best ways to stop the pass is not to give the QB time to look for the open receiver. Use defensive line stunts (plays in which defensive linemen cross over or move out of normal position at the snap). This can provide quick pressure on the QB without pulling anyone from the secondary. Find your best pass-rushing lineman and have him run stunts whenever possible.

**Tip 7: Spy on Scrambling QBs**

Mobile quarterbacks can cause havoc in your defense. If you don’t cover them, they run. If you do cover them, they exploit the area you left open while chasing them. The best way to stop a mobile QB is to “spy” on him with a LB.

When you’re facing a running QB who has demonstrated that he’ll run with the ball, control one of your linebackers and call plays that put them in zone pass defense. At the snap of the ball, keep an eye on the quarterback and drift in whatever direction he travels while still watching your zone. When he fully commits to the run, run after him and hit him with all you got. A few dive tackles from a linebacker sends a QB to the locker room with injuries.

**Tip 8: Blitz Smartly**

The blitz is a great way to keep a quarterback from getting time to throw. If you’re smart about your blitzes, you make it difficult for your opponent to react and still throw complete passes.

If your opponent is constantly throwing medium or deep, mix in a lot of LB blitzes. They usually cover shorter passes and they won’t be missed as badly when they rush the QB.

If your opponent is constantly throwing short or medium passes, try a safety or corner blitz. This is a little more risky, but if you get to the QB quickly, you won’t have to worry about anyone breaking open deep.

**Tip 9: Find What Works for You**

In the early stages of the game, try both man and zone defenses and see which works best against your opponent’s offensive strategy. Once you have a good idea of what works, stick with it. Offensive players often settle into a play-calling routine by the middle of the second quarter. If you have a good defensive philosophy going, you frustrate them for the rest of the game.

**Tip 10: Make Changes at the Line of Scrimmage**

The offense can make audibles and change receiver routes at the line of scrimmage, and so can you. You need to be on top of your defensive adjustments if you hope to keep up with an opponent who can read defenses. Keep a close eye on the other team. If it shifts formation, calls audibles, or pauses long enough to suggest that a change in pass routes, adapt quickly and change your defense to counter. If you do this correctly, you mess up their plans.

You can also call defensive audibles at the line of scrimmage. The easiest way to do this is to hit 3, which brings up a menu letting you shuffle your players. This is a useful tool.
Shutting Down a Rushing Offense

You’re more likely to run across a pass-heavy offense than a run-heavy offense, but it’s still important to know how to shut down the run. These tips that should help you accomplish this goal.

Tip 1: Know Your Opposing Halfback
The halfback is often the center of a team’s running game. If your opponent is skilled, he uses the halfback’s best attributes with well-called plays. If you face a speedy halfback, prepare ways to seal off the outside and force him back inside. If you face a big, lumbering power back, seal off the middle and force him outside and force him back inside. If you face a speedy halfback, prepare ways to seal off the well-called plays. If you face a speedy halfback, prepare ways to seal off the well-called plays. If you face a speedy halfback, prepare ways to seal off the well-called plays. If you face a speedy halfback, prepare ways to seal off the well-called plays. If you face a speedy halfback, prepare ways to seal off the well-called plays.

More important to know are the FB’s weaknesses. If he can’t block well, you may be able to slip past his lead block almost every time. If he isn’t a good runner, key your running defense almost entirely on the halfback.

Tip 2: Know the Opposing Fullback
The FB can either be a major part of the running game or a near-useless player. If the other team’s FB has good blocking skills, watch for him to bully ahead on lead blocks. If the FB has good running skills, be prepared for him to take some of the carries.

More important to know are the FB’s weaknesses. If he can’t block well, you may be able to slip past his lead block almost every time. If he isn’t a good runner, key your running defense almost entirely on the halfback.

Tip 3: Know the Opposing Offensive Line
If your opposing offensive line is strong on the right side, your opponent may run often in that direction. You can pursue the running back from the other side and still shut down a running back with a good line by controlling a linebacker from that side and shutting down the holes.

Tip 4: Play your Linebackers
Your linebackers play a crucial role in stopping the run. Their job is to stop the rush by plugging holes in the line and to keep the running back from getting into the secondary. Play your linebackers like running backs—look for the open hole in the line and plug it quickly. If you read the line correctly, you often hit the hole just as the running back does and take him down easily.

Tip 5: Pick Running Defenses
When you’re trying to stop the run, stick with the 34 and 43 formations (we’ll discuss the differences in just a moment). Stay clear of the Nickel and Dime defenses—the running game has a field day against them. You want defenses that feature a good number of linemen and linebackers who can stop a running back.

Don’t make the mistake of playing Goal Line defense to stop the run unless you’re near the goal line. A smart opponent reads your defense and burns you deep. Break out this defense only if your foe is completely committed to the run.

Tip 6: Use the 34 Defense to Stop the Outside Run
The 34 defense puts four linebackers on the field and spreads them out over the middle. The outside linebackers are usually very quick and can cut off the running back before he turns the corner. This defense leaves you vulnerable to quick sprints up the middle of the line, where your defensive linemen are outnumbered, but it shuts down the outside run.

Tip 7: Use the 43 Defense to Stop the Inside Run
When playing against a power runner, try using the 43 defense. This puts extra linemen on the field and it allows you to plug any holes that open up with your middle linebacker. This defense makes you a little more vulnerable to sweeps and outside runs, but it is the best way (short of the Goal Line defense) to clog the middle.

Tip 8: Force Fast Runners to the Inside
When playing against a speedy runner, contain him so he can’t get around the corner of your defense and force him to run up the middle. The key is not to be too aggressive and over-pursue. Speedy backs often elude the first tackler and then bust outside for a big gain.

Instead of trying to break through the middle and tackle a speedy back in the backfield, focus on containing him by staying in front and outside of him. Move laterally down the line if he stretches out the play and deny him a clear route up the field until he hits the sideline and runs out of room. You won’t get many minus-yard tackles, but you stop the big runs and force the other team to run up the middle, which isn’t their strength.

Tip 9: Force Power Runners to the Outside
When playing against a power runner, try using LB blitzes while controlling the middle linebacker to stuff the line with defenders. If you can close up this route, the running back is forced to bounce outside and try to break around the corner.

When he’s trying to speed around the corner, that running back that could flatten your defenders can be pulled down easily from behind before he ever gains a yard.

Tip 10: Adjust Your Defense before the Snap
When playing against a running team, you’ll notice patterns in the types of runs that they prefer and the directions they usually run. Before the play, hit and a menu pops up that lets you shift either your linemen or your linebackers. If you know your opponent is going to one side, shift your team there, but be prepared to make up ground if he reverses field.

You can also call defensive audibles at the line of scrimmage. The easiest way is to hit , which brings up a menu that lets you shuffle your players to best defend against each type of play. This is an incredibly useful tool. Use it often.
Other Playcalling Options

Playcalling menus are useful features in NFL Fever 2004. In addition to the regular plays listings, you can choose from several special menus that are helpful in game situations. Here’s a quick overview.

**Coach’s Choice**

This menu shows you plays chosen by the Fever AI for your game situation. These generally feature plays that are conservative but smart. Check this menu quickly before calling your own plays.

Look to this menu, too, if you have trouble stopping an opponent on defense. Coach’s Choice gives you good ideas on how to shut down an offense, especially if your opponent keeps to a single strategy.

**My Plays**

This menu stores your custom plays (which you make in the play editor) and your favorite plays. The following are a few tips for these plays.

**Custom Plays**

When designing a custom play, start with a single target in mind. A play designed to get everyone on your team open is likely to be less useful than a play that works very well to get a single receiver open.

One smart idea is to look at a play that works well for you already and try to remake it so that it works even better. Remake the play in the play editor, and then tweak the route of your primary receiver to take best advantage of his skills. If you do it correctly, you improve the play for your specific team.

Another idea is to recreate team-specific plays. For instance, the Colts have a very useful play called IND Four Quicks. It’s not in any of the other team’s playbooks, but it works well on teams with fast number one receivers. Go to the play editor and create a version for your own team. You have to pay attention to the exact play design, but it’s easily done.

**Recent Plays**

This menu is helpful for finding a play that worked a little while back, even if you don’t remember its name. In the Recent Plays menu, you can scroll through as many as 15 of the plays you’ve called most recently. You’ll be amazed at how often this reminds you that you’re calling only a small set of plays. Expand your coaching repertoire and become less predictable to your opponents.

**Coaching Info**

As you scroll through your plays, check the Coaching Info text on the side for important information.

**Opponent Personnel:** Here you can see what kind of defense your opponent is setting up and adjust appropriately. For example, if you see five or more defensive backs, he’s expecting a pass. Try a run.

**Success Rate:** This tells you how well your play has worked in game situations. If it’s below 33 percent, steer clear of that play.

**Success Breakdown:** This shows you how the play works against different defenses. See if you can spot a weakness and exploit it.

**Coach’s Help**

Hit 4 while choosing plays. The Coach’s Help feature tells you all about the play, and often gives the perfect tip for making the play work best for you.
The Plays

We’ve broken plays into passing and running, and listed them alphabetically so you can find them more easily. You’ll find that perfect passing or running play here.

**Passing Plays**

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<th>Set</th>
<th>Formation</th>
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<td>Single Back</td>
<td></td>
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<td>All Crossed Up</td>
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<td>Pro 3WR</td>
<td>Pro Form</td>
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<td>All Crossout</td>
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<td>I-Normal</td>
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<td>Backside Flare</td>
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<td>Single Split 4WR</td>
<td>Single Back</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Quick Hit</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Big Single</td>
<td>Single Back</td>
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<td>Blue Fly Slants</td>
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<td>Chaos Flat</td>
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<td>Bull Strong I</td>
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<td>Cross M Out</td>
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<td>Shotgun 4WR Trips</td>
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<td>Curl Post Wing</td>
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**Short Passing Plays (0 to 5 Yards)**

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# Medium Passing Plays (5 to 15 Yards)

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### Passing Plays

#### Sideline Passing Plays (For Late-game Situations)

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### Fullback Plays (Your FB Runs the Ball)

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### Running Plays

#### Counter Plays

(Fake Running One Way, Then Go the Other)

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#### Lead Plays

(Your FB Lead-Blocks Ahead of You)

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#### Draw Plays

(Show Pass and Then Run Up the Middle)

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### Draw Plays

(Show Pass and Then Run Up the Middle)

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Prima’s Official Strategy Guide
### Running Plays

#### QB Runs (Sneaks and Stop-Clock Plays)

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### Outside Runs (Great Plays for a Fast Halfback)

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### Reverses (Handoffs to the WR)

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Reading the Defense

It is difficult to predict what a human opponent is going to do, although you can make a good guess by reading the defense. Against the CPU, however, you can often read exact intentions and exploit the defense for big offensive gains. Here’s a quick guide to reading defenses.

Three Defensive Linemen

The Defense: The defense is most likely playing a 34 defense with three linemen and four linebackers.
The Solution: Run the ball up the middle and let your offensive line outnumber and overpower their defensive line.

Linemen Shifted to One Side

The Defense: The defense is trying to overload one side of your offensive line.
The Solution: Call a counter play and fake running in the overloaded direction. When you cut back, you should have open daylight to the other side.

Interior Linemen Bunched Together

The Defense: The defense is most likely trying to double up against your center or guards.
The Solution: Sweep the ball to the outside and get your running back around the corner where the defensive linemen can’t catch him.

Interior Linemen Spread Apart

The Defense: The defense is most likely trying to defend against the outside run.
The Solution: Run it up the middle inside the gap left between the spread linemen. Force them to close ranks.

Eight Men in the Box

The Defense: The defense is most likely on a heavy blitz or a run-stopping play.
The Solution: Forget about the run and try to get the pass off as quickly as possible. Audible a medium or deep slant pattern, take your short drop, and then let the ball fly before the pressure gets to you.
Linebackers Sneaking up to the Line

The Defense: The defense may be trying a LB Blitz.

The Solution: Look for passing routes that are short and in the zone left open by the sneaking linebacker. Watch out for running plays. Blitzing linebackers can plug a hole as soon as it opens, but if they over-pursue, you can blast right by them.

Cornerbacks Five Yards or More off Your Receivers

The Defense: Playing zone or trying not to get burned on the deep route.

The Solution: Try a quick hook or curl to pick up three or four easy yards. This isn’t as exciting as a big gain, but it keeps your team moving forward.

Cornerbacks Playing Directly Opposite and Within Five Yards of WRs

The Defense: Most likely it’s playing bump-and-run coverage.

The Solution: Bump-and-run slow down your deep routes, but if you hot route into a slant pattern over the middle, you can usually run right under the CB and break open for an easy gain.

Both Safeties Deep

The Defense: The defense is watching out for the pass.

The Solution: Run a sweep to the outside and you won’t have to worry about the safety breaking in to stop the run. If you get past the linebackers, you have a good gain.
Strong Safety Closer than Free Safety

The Defense: The strong safety is watching out for the run.

The Solution: Watch out for your outside run. The safety is trying to shut it down. A play-action pass play could draw him in, and you may end up with single coverage on your wide receiver deep.

Calling Audibles

Audibles should be an important part of your everyday game plan. With a good set of audibles already in place, you can react quickly to situations just begging to be exploited. Prepare your audibles in advance so you don’t have to waste time setting some up before each game.

Offense Audibles

You can store a total of six audibles, and you should split them evenly between runs and passes. Set them up any way you like, but here is a suggested audible play selection.

- Run to the Left—to exploit weaknesses on the left side.
- Run to the Right—to exploit weaknesses on the right.
- Run up the Gut—to take advantage of 34 defense or line gaps.
- Deep Out Pattern—to take advantage of all out blitzes.
- Quick Slant Pattern—to take advantage of bump and run coverage.
- Short Sideline Pattern—to stop the clock in late game situations.

Defense Audibles

Defensive audibles are just as important as offensive audibles. If you can quickly adjust to an offense, you can shut them down with quick play calling at the line of scrimmage. Here’s a sample set of defenses you should have in your audible list.

- Inside Blitz—to hit the QB and shut down the inside run.
- Outside Blitz—to stop the outside run and put pressure on the QB.
- Dime Deep Zone—when you know your opponent is going deep.
- Short Man-to-Man Coverage—to take away the short passing game.
- Medium Man Coverage—to shut off the medium pass.
- Heavy Run Defense—for goal line situations.

TIP

Remember, you don’t change defensive personnel when you audible a play. You might have players in situations ill fitted to their abilities.
Check this section closely for information on the team you’re playing and the team you’re playing against. In this section, you find the players who make each team special and the plays that best use their abilities. The more you can focus your strategies on specific teams, the better you do in head-to-head matchups.

Pay close attention to individual player ratings. You need to play up each athlete’s strengths and play down his weaknesses as much as possible. But don’t read this section and skip checking the stats for yourself. There’s always key information to be gained by browsing the rosters before a game.

### Team Ratings at a Glance

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<td>Tampa Bay Buccaneers</td>
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<td>Washington Redskins</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>79</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Player Ratings

Player stats in the following section are broken down into star ratings. Here is how the ratings break down:

- 50-59 ★
- 60-69 ★★
- 70-79 ★★★
- 80-89 ★★★★
- 90-94 ★★★★★
- 95-100 ★★★★★★
### Arizona Cardinals

#### Scouting Report
Judging by the off-season losses and less-than-exciting draft picks, Arizona looks likely to continue its streak of losing seasons. A lack of depth at WR means that Emmitt Smith will likely get the ball often.

#### Team Strengths
- Young team
- Emmitt Smith
- Nowhere to go but up

#### Team Weaknesses
- Weak passing game
- Weak overall defense
- Lack of depth at key positions

#### Gameplay Tips

**How to Win with the Cardinals**
- Stick to the ground and use Emmitt for all he’s worth.
- Develop a passing offense that gets your receivers open in safe routes.
- Play conservative defense and chew up the game clock to keep scores low.

**How to Beat the Cardinals**
- Play aggressive offense and exploit the weak defense.
- Blitz heavy and force the QB to throw to untested WRs.
- Shut down Emmitt Smith.

#### Free Agency Moves

**Key Pickups**
Future Hall of Famer RB Emmitt Smith (Cowboys) may be past his glory days, but he adds a much-needed boost to this anemic offense. And Super Bowl MVP FS Dexter Jackson (Bucs) should help the defense.

**Key Losses**
QB Jake Plummer (Cardinals), WR David Boston (Chargers), WR MarTay Jenkins (Falcons), and WR Frank Sanders (Ravens) represent a wholesale turnover in the passing game.

#### 2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bryant Johnson</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Penn State</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Calvin Pace</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Wake Forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anquan Boldin</td>
<td>WR</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Gerald Hayes</td>
<td>MLB</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Kenny King</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Reggie Wells</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Clarion</td>
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<tr>
<td>6T</td>
<td>Tony Gilbert</td>
<td>MLB</td>
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#### Fever Team Ratings

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Offense: 79</th>
<th>Defense: 76</th>
<th>Special: 80</th>
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#### 2002 NFL Team Rankings

<table>
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<th>Opponents</th>
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<td>29th</td>
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<tr>
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<td>27th</td>
<td>27th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passing Offense</td>
<td>29th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing Offense</td>
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<td>Total Defense</td>
<td>29th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passing Defense</td>
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<td>Rushing Defense</td>
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<td>Points Allowed</td>
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#### 2002 Team Stats

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Total First Downs</td>
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<td>99 of 230</td>
<td>90 of 212</td>
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<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>4 of 13</td>
<td>7 of 15</td>
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<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
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<td>Sacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>15 of 21</td>
<td>22 of 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
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<td>(Rushing-Passing-Returns-Defensive)</td>
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<td>17-29-4-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>28:41</td>
<td>31:19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Jeff Blake - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BTKL ✘
- STR ✘✘

Tips
Jeff Blake’s best asset is his arm, so use that to find open receivers far down the field. If you run with Blake, remember that he’s much better at making moves than breaking tackles.

Useful Plays
- Deep Surprise
  If the safety bites to your outside receiver, you have an open man running across the middle deep. Hit him on the run for big yards.

Emmitt Smith - Halfback

Key Strengths
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★
- AGI ★★★★★
- VIS ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- HND ✘✘
- STR ✘✘

Tips
Focus on running sweeps on the outside rather than up the gut. Emmitt still has the moves, just not the straightforward muscle of previous years.

Useful Plays
- Wing Counter
  Don’t cut inside too early. Let the play develop and follow your pulling guard.

Other Offensive Stars

Bryant Johnson
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- HND ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Johnson is the most physically talented member of the Cardinal’s young receiving corps.

L.J. Shelton
Left Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- BLK ★★★★★

Shelton and LG Pete Kendall are a force on the left side of the offensive line. Stick behind them with Emmitt.

Bill Gramatica
Kicker

Key Stats
- LSTR ★★★★★
- KACK ★★★★

You need to rely heavily on Gramatica if you play it smart and keep the game low-scoring.

Duane Starks
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Starks is fast and can shut down an opponent’s top WR. He’s not much of a blitzer, however.

Wendell Bryant
Defensive Right Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- AGG ★★★★★

He’s not quick, but he can bull his way through unwary offensive lines.

Calvin Pace
Defensive Right End

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★★
- CVG ★★★★★

When you run plays that require the defensive end to drop off into coverage, rookie Calvin Pace is mighty handy.
Thanks to Michael Vick and a new set of WRs, the Falcons should be an exciting team to watch again this year. Look for a lot of passing, a lot of running by Vick, and a lot of frustrated defenses fuming in his wake.

### Team Strengths
- Agile, strong-armed QB
- Quick HB
- New WRs for Vick

### Team Weaknesses
- Weak running defense
- Not much depth at QB
- Weak at TE

### Gameplay Tips

#### How to Win with the Falcons
- Roll out with Vick and make the defense decide between covering him or the receivers.
- Run outside with Dunn.
- Run from time to time with Vick to keep the defense honest.

#### How to Beat the Falcons
- Run often.
- Keep Vick contained and don’t let him get outside.
- Play 34 defense to make Vick and Dunn run up the middle.

### Free Agency Moves

#### Key Pickups
The most important off-season pickups for the Falcons were wide receivers Peerless Price (Bills) and MarTay Jenkins (Cardinals). Now Vick has some serious weapons to throw to.

#### Key Losses
CB Ashley Ambrose (Saints) will be sorely missed in the secondary.

### 2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bryan Scott</td>
<td>SS</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Jon Olinger</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Latarence Dunbar</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Texas Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Waine Bacon</td>
<td>SS</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Demetrin Veal</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fever Team Ratings

- **Overall:** 82
- **Offense:** 85
- **Defense:** 79
- **Special:** 82

### 2002 NFL Team Rankings

- **Scoring:** 9th
- **Total Offense:** 5th
- **Passing Offense:** 7th
- **Rushing Offense:** 9th
- **Total Defense:** 7th
- **Passing Defense:** 20th
- **Rushing Defense:** 1st
- **Points Allowed:** 16th

### 2002 Season Record

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<th></th>
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<th>L</th>
<th>Tie</th>
<th>PCT</th>
<th>PF</th>
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<th>Road</th>
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<td>0.594</td>
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### 2002 Team Stats

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<td>20/26</td>
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<td>Touchdowns</td>
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<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Rushing-Passing-Returns-Defensive)</td>
<td>15-26-1-1</td>
<td>16-19-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>32:47</td>
<td>27:13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Michael Vick - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★
- ASTR ★★★
- BTKL ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BCTL ✘✘✘

Tips
Vick is perhaps the most exciting player in the NFL. He can run like an All-Pro running back and throw like a top QB. Use his legs on scrambles, draws, and open opportunities. The defense is so focused at stopping his runs, he’s free to throw deep.

Useful Plays
ATL Cross Slants
Roll to the right and if a defender drops off to cover you, look downfield. There’s bound to be an open receiver. If not, run the ball.

ATL Gun Fadeout
Same thing, but this time roll out to the right. Don’t use running as the last option—use it often to force the defense to cover you.

ATL QB Draw
Although having the option to pass is best, this play can catch a defense by surprise and give you big yards up the middle.

Warrick Dunn - Halfback

Key Strengths
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★
- AGI ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BTKL ✘✘

Tips
Dunn is at his best running to the outside or breaking up the side of the offensive line. Don’t try to bull your way through players—go around or avoid them with moves. He has decent hands, so don’t be afraid of the short HB pass.

Useful Plays
HB Toss Sweep
Get behind your pulling lineman, get around the corner and head up the field. Don’t be afraid to stretch it out a little. Dunn’s got speed.

Big I Toss
You don’t have to wait for your pulling guard to make yards on this play. If a hole opens early, bust through it.

Motion Power
You need the motion man and the FB to hit their blocks. If they do, you’ve got big yards ahead.

Other Offensive Stars

Peerless Price
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- HND ★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

He should be one of Vick’s main targets. Look for him to get open as Vick scrambles and draws the defense in.

Brian Finneran
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★

He doesn’t have the best hands for a wide receiver, but he’s got speed and acceleration and knows how to get open.

Bob Whitfield
Left Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- BLK ★★★★★

Run to the left when possible, and you have the advantage of this guy leading the way.

Defensive Stars

Keith Brooking
Middle Linebacker

Key Stats
- SBLK ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★

His combination of speed and strength makes Brooking a blitzing menace.

Ray Buchanan
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- SBLK ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

His combination of speed, getting past blocks and making the tackle makes Buchanan a near-perfect cornerback blitzer.

Keion Carpenter
Free Safety

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★
- SPD ★★★

Carpenter is dangerous in coverage or on a blitz. Use him to confuse the offense and blitz when necessary.
Scouting Report

Last year, the Ravens succeeded in the regular season despite the fact that they were decimated by the salary cap. This year, the team fared much better and defensive anchor Ray Lewis is finally healthy again. If the QB situation shapes up, the Ravens could be looking at a playoff spot.

Team Strengths

- Talented players on defense
- Solid running back
- Defensive starts and QB picked up in draft

Team Weaknesses

- Weak spots in pass defense
- No established QB
- Overall weak offense

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Ravens

- Play pressure defense and blitz often.
- Control the ball and the clock with the running game.
- Get TE Todd Heap into the action.

How to Beat the Ravens

- Force the QBs to pass under pressure.
- Focus on stopping the running game.
- Pass to the weak spots in the secondary.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups

WR Frank Sanders (Cardinals) and WR Marcus Robinson (Bears) should add some punch to the passing game. CB Corey Fuller (Browns) should be an immediate starter.

Key Losses

QB Jeff Blake (Cardinals), FB Sam Gash (Bills) and LB Shannon Taylor (Texans).

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Terrell Suggs</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Arizona State</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kyle Boller</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Musa Smith</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jarret Johnson</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ovie Mughelli</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Wake Forest</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Aubrayo Franklin</td>
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<td>Tony Pashos</td>
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<td>Antwoine Sanders</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Utah</td>
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</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 

Offense: 

Defense: 

Special: 

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 24th
Total Defense: 22nd
Total Offense: 26th
Passing Defense: 26th
Passing Offense: 27th
Rushing Defense: 13th
Rushing Offense: 16th
Points Allowed: 19th

2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>81/215</td>
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<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
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<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
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<td>Passing (Comp-Att-Int-Avg)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>21/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>(Rushing-Passing-Returns-Defensive)</td>
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<td>17-16-2-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>27:47</td>
<td>32:13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Kyle Boller - Quarterback

Key Strengths
ASTR ★★★
PACR ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
SPD ※※
BTKL ※※
INJ ※※

Tips
Even if Boller isn’t starting for the Ravens, sub him in. He’s got better arm strength and accuracy than Chris Redman and he’s stronger overall. Look for short and middle-length passes rather than the deep bomb.

Useful Plays
BAL Wing Post Out
Flood one side of the field and watch who opens up. Look for Heap over the middle.

BAL Red Thunder
On one side you have your TE and HB, on the other you have three WRs. Throw early to Taylor if the defense is playing off the line.

Flat and Go
Roll out to the right and look for your primary receiver deep. If he’s not open, look for someone streaking across the middle.

Jamal Lewis - Halfback

Key Strengths
ACC ★★★★★
SPD ★★★★★
BCTL ★★★★★★
BTKL ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
HND ※※※

Tips
Lewis is best running to the outside, and you should use him often to open up the passing game for your young QB. His hands aren’t the best, so don’t rely on short passes to the flat for the majority of your passing game.

Useful Plays
BAL Big Single Crack
Follow your pulling guard and hit the hole already opened by Jonathan Ogden. You usually find a few free yards here.

BAL Half Plunge
Nothing fancy here. Just hit the open hole and look for daylight.

Motion Toss Big
Ogden and a host of other blockers down the field swing around to the outside. Remember to send the man in motion before hiking the ball.

Other Offensive Stars

Frank Sanders
Wide Receiver
Key Stats
ACC ★★★★★
SPD ★★★★★

Good hands, good speed, and excellent acceleration. This free agent should become a key go-to receiver.

Todd Heap
Tight End
Key Stats
SPD ★★★★★
HND ★★★★★

Although he’s not as well known as Tony Gonzalez or Jeremy Shockey, Heap is one of the league’s best tight ends.

Jonathan Ogden
Left Tackle
Key Stats
STR ★★★★★★
BLK ★★★★★★

Ogden is one of the best overall blockers in the NFL. Use him in the running game often.

Defensive Stars

Peter Boulware
Left Linebacker
Key Stats
SBLK ★★★★★
CVG ★★★★★

Boulware is a menace both covering the pass over the middle and rushing the QB. Use him in both situations and keep your opponent guessing.

Chris McAlister
Left Cornerback
Key Stats
SPD ★★★★★
AGG ★★★★★

McAlister is a rocket on defense, but remember that he’s much better in coverage than he is against the run or on the blitz.

Ray Lewis
Middle Linebacker
Key Stats
SBLK ★★★★★
STR ★★★★★

Lewis is the heart and soul of the Ravens’s defense. He’s a great player to control and use in just about any situation.
Buffalo Bills

Scouting Report
Buffalo's defense looks much improved over last year. If it can hold up, the team could be in for a lot more wins. Another key will be how Drew Bledsoe adapts to the loss of Peerless Price. If they can find a receiver to replace him, the Bills have the makings of a playoff team.

Team Strengths
• Strong quarterback
• Excellent depth in quality running backs
• Improved defense

Team Weaknesses
• Loss of key receiver
• Weak running defense
• Weak offensive line

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Bills
• Run often with Travis Henry.
• Spread the pass around.
• Pressure the QB with defensive line stunts and blitzes.

How to Beat the Bills
• Shut down Moulds and force Bledsoe to pass to other receivers.
• Crash the offensive line and sack Bledsoe.
• Run the ball often.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
The Titans didn’t make any key free agent pickups this off-season due to tight salary cap numbers.

Key Losses
CB Daimon Sidney (Bills) and CB Donald Mitchell (Cowboys) left during in free agency and the Titans were forced to draft defensive backs to replace them.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Willis Mcgahee</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Miami (Fla.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chris Kelsay</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Angelo Crowell</td>
<td>ILB</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Terrence Mcgee</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Northwestern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sam Aiken</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ben Sobieski</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lauvale Sape</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Utah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mario Haggan</td>
<td>MLB</td>
<td>Mississippi State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 81
Offense: 85
Defense: 79
Special: 73

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 11th
Total Defense: 15th
Total Offense: 11th
Passing Defense: 6th
Rushing Defense: 29th
Points Allowed: 27th

2002 Season Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Tie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Bills</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>303</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing-Passing-By Penalty)</td>
<td>90-218-47</td>
<td>107-160-36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>90/212</td>
<td>76/207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>7/12</td>
<td>10/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,591</td>
<td>5,189</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays-Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,054-5.3</td>
<td>999-5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,596</td>
<td>2,122</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays-Average Yards)</td>
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<td>473-4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3,995</td>
<td>3,067</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>25/33</td>
<td>19/26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Rushing-Passing-Returns-Defensive)</td>
<td>17-24-2-2</td>
<td>20-24-1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>30:56</td>
<td>29:04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Drew Bledsoe - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★
- VIS ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- SPD XXX

Tips
Bledsoe has a cannon for an arm and he’s accurate, too. Look downfield for your primary two receivers (Moulds and Reed), but look for short routes opening up as well.

Useful Plays
- Four Quicks
  If the cornerbacks are playing a few yards away from your primary WRs at scrimmage, one of them is probably open over the middle. If not, look outside.
- Inside Stretch
  Reed is fast. If the cornerback goes to the outside, you can hit him deep over the middle for a huge gain.
- BUF Deep Strike
  If the defense is set deep, the short outside pass is wide open.

Travis Henry - Halfback

Key Strengths
- SPD ★★★★★
- FIN ★★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BLK XXX

Tips
Henry is a quick back who has reasonably good hands. Use him mainly on outside runs, but mix it up with some inside running as well. Sam Gash is a good blocking FB; follow him whenever possible.

Useful Plays
- Lead Plunge
  Follow Sam Gash right off the side of the offensive line. Cut inside if the hole opens up that way.
- BUF Doggo Swing
  If the coverage is soft, look for Henry in the flat.
- Lead Pro Punch
  If the FB takes someone out, go inside. If not, swing it to the outside.

Other Offensive Stars

Eric Moulds
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

This speedy receiver also has great hands. Hit him deep or drag him across the middle for a quick gain.

Mike Williams
Right Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- BLK ★★★★★

Look for Williams for open holes on the right side of the line.

Josh Reed
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Look for Reed when Moulds isn’t open. He’s often in single coverage.

Defensive Stars

Takeo Spikes
Right Linebacker

Key Stats
- SBLK ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Use Spikes as a blitzing linebacker to pummel unsuspecting QBs.

Antoine Winfield
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Good, fast coverage back, but not very strong. Don’t try to shed blocks with this guy.

Sam Adams
Defensive Left Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- SBLK ★★★★★

Bull your way to the QB with Adams. Not many offensive lines can stop him for a full game.
The Panthers improved last year, and they should improve again this year. The team used free agency to upgrade the offense, but still has a long way to go on that side. The defense, however, is solid.

**Team Strengths**
- Strong defense
- New WRs
- Young, explosive defensive line

**Team Weaknesses**
- No star QB
- Lackluster running game
- Lost key WR Kevin Dyson

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to win with the Panthers**
- Play conservatively in the passing game.
- Run inside but not up the middle.
- Pressure the QB with defensive line stunts.

**How to beat the Panthers**
- Play conservative, safe offense.
- Force Stephen Davis to stretch his runs to the outside.
- Pressure the QB and look for interceptions.

**Free Agency Moves**

**Key Pickups**
WR Ricky Proehl (Rams) and WR Kevin Dyson (Titans) were signed to boost Carolina’s passing offense, but Dyson got hurt and may be out for the season.

**Key Losses**
RB Lamar Smith (Packers) wasn’t a starter, but he provided backup support to Stephen Davis. LB Hannibal Navies (Packers) bolted from Carolina’s tough defense.

**2003 Draft Picks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jordan Gross</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Utah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bruce Nelson</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mike Seidman</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ricky Manning Jr.</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Colin Branch</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kindal Moorehead</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Walter Young</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Casey Moore</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fever Team Ratings**

Overall: 79
Offense: 82
Defense: 77
Special: 75

**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

Scoring: 30th
Total Offense: 31st
Passing Offense: 30th
Rushing Offense: 25th
Total Defense: 2nd
Passing Defense: 4th
Rushing Defense: 8th
Points Allowed: 5th

**2002 Season Record**

- W: 7
- L: 9
- Tie: 0
- PCT: 0.438
- PF: 258
- PA: 302
- Home: 4-4
- Road: 3-5
- AFC: 3-1
- NFC: 4-8
- DIV: 1-5

**2002 Team Stats**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Panthers</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing-Passing-By Penalty)</td>
<td>82-133-23</td>
<td>95-155-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>64/224</td>
<td>77/234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>5/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>4,280</td>
<td>4,646</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays-Average Yards)</td>
<td>960-4.5</td>
<td>1,022-4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,586</td>
<td>1,653</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays-Average Yards)</td>
<td>452-3.5</td>
<td>448-3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>2,694</td>
<td>2,993</td>
</tr>
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<td>Passing (Comp-Att-Int-Avg)</td>
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<td>293-522-17-6.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>15/25</td>
<td>24/29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rushing-Passing-Returns-Defensive)</td>
<td>11-15-2-2</td>
<td>12-18-0-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>29:20</td>
<td>30:40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Star Players

### Rodney Peete - Quarterback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strengths</th>
<th>Useful Plays</th>
<th>Key Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASTR ★★★★</td>
<td>CAR Triple Cross</td>
<td>SPD ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACR ★★★★</td>
<td>CAR Blue Cross</td>
<td>BTKL ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STR ★★★</td>
<td>Out Sluggo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tips**

Rodney Peete isn’t the most accurate or strong-armed QB in the league, but if you provide him with open targets, he can get the ball to them.

### Stephen Davis - Halfback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strengths</th>
<th>Useful Plays</th>
<th>Key Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★</td>
<td>CAR Half Bounce</td>
<td>HND ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIN ★★★★</td>
<td>Lead Plunge</td>
<td>STR ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGI ★★★★</td>
<td>Crash Strong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIS ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
<td>STR ★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tips**

Focus on running sweeps on the outside rather than up the gut. Emmitt still has the moves, just not the straightforward muscle of previous years.

### Other Offensive Stars

#### Muhsin Muhammad - Wide Receiver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
<th>He’s quick and he can flat out catch the ball. Look to him for the big gains and clutch catches.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HND ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Kevin Dyson - Wide Receiver

| Key Stats | He’s hurt in the real NFL, but if he’s on the roster when the season starts, sub him in and use him well…especially over the middle. |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| ACC ★★★★ |                                                                                                                                  |
| HND ★★★★ |                                                                                                                                  |

#### Todd Steussie - Left Tackle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
<th>Make sure that at least some of your inside runs are to the left side behind Steussie.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STR ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLK ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Defensive Stars

#### Julius Peppers - Defensive Left End

| Key Stats | Last year’s Rookie of the Year is even better this year. He’s skilled across the board at defensive end. Wherever you use him, he excels. |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| STR ★★★★ |                                                                                                                                  |
| ACC ★★★★ |                                                                                                                                  |

#### Kris Jenkins - Defensive Right Tackle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
<th>Jenkins is another well-balanced defensive lineman to use against the pass or run.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STR ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLK ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Terry Cousin - Left Cornerback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
<th>He’s not much of a tackler, so use Cousin mainly in pass coverage.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Bears are still smarting after last year’s 4-12 season. But they’ve made some smart moves to upgrade (like picking up Kordell Stewart), and they managed to re-sign one of the league’s best defenders (Brian Urlacher) for nine more years.

### Scouting Report

#### Team Strengths
- Mobile QB
- Quick HB
- All-World MLB

#### Team Weaknesses
- Weak overall offense
- Weak overall defense
- Coming off a bad year

### Gameplay Tips

#### How to Win with the Bears
- If using Kordell, scramble and spread the passes around.
- Run Anthony Thomas up the middle.
- Terrorize the other team with Brian Urlacher.

#### How to Beat the Bears
- Keep Stewart under pressure and in the pocket.
- Force Thomas to run outside.
- Pass deep.

### Free Agency Moves

#### Key Pickups
- QB Kordell Stewart (Steelers) should spark the dismal Bears passing offense, and TE Desmond Clark (Dolphins) provides another passing target.

#### Key Losses
- WR Marcus Robinson (Ravens) will be missed, but he freed up salary cap room and the Bears still have a trio of talented WRs.

#### 2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Michael Haynes</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Penn State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rex Grossman</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Charles Tillman</td>
<td>CB</td>
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<td>Lance Briggs</td>
<td>LILB</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Todd Johnson</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ian Scott</td>
<td>DT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bobby Wade</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Justin Gage</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tron Lafavor</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Florida</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Joe Odom</td>
<td>LB</td>
<td>Purdue</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Brock Forsey</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Boise State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bryan Anderson</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fever Team Ratings

- Overall: 79
- Offense: 81
- Defense: 79
- Special: 77

### 2002 NFL Team Rankings

- Scoring: 27th
- Total Offense: 29th
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- Rushing Offense: 32nd
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- Passing Defense: 24th
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### 2002 Season Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Tie</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Road</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>1-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFC</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIV</td>
<td>2-4</td>
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</table>

### 2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Bears</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing-Passing-By Penalty)</td>
<td>79-156-25</td>
<td>110-185-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>71/210</td>
<td>85/230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>10/21</td>
<td>9/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>4,395</td>
<td>5,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays-Average Yards)</td>
<td>969-4.5</td>
<td>1,086-5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>2,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays-Average Yards)</td>
<td>382-3.5</td>
<td>504-4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3,051</td>
<td>3,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing (Comp-Att-Int-Avg)</td>
<td>310-543-18-6.11</td>
<td>335-547-9-6.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>35</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>27:42</td>
<td>32:18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Kordell Stewart - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BTKL ★★

Tips
Kordell is useful as both a running threat and a passing threat. And while he doesn’t have the strongest or most accurate arm, he can cause havoc against a defense trying to decide whether to cover his pass or his run.

Useful Plays
- Chaos Strong
  Send your man in motion. If no one on the defense follows him, you have an open receiver against this zone.
- Icy Flag Post
  Roll to your right and look to the guy breaking outside for the open pass deep. If no one comes up, tuck the ball and run for a gain. Try running to throw the defense off balance.
- Over Flat
  If the safety picks up the TE or the WR streaking deep, look for the other WR crossing the middle in the open.

Anthony Thomas - Halfback

Key Strengths
- ACC ★★★★
- SPD ★★★★
- STR ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- HND ★★

Tips
Thomas is great for stuffing it up the middle and he has enough speed to run up the sides of the line. Steer clear of sweeps and outside runs—he’s not at his best on the outside.

Useful Plays
- Normal HB Belly
  Pure, simple power running. Let the hole open up and then hit it with speed.
- CHI Crash Strong
  Follow your fullback and flip this play to the other side from time to time.
- CHI Motion Draw
  When they’re expecting a pass, fake them out with this draw up the middle.

Other Offensive Stars

Marty Booker
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- HND ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Booker should be your number one receiver. Give him routes that take advantage of his explosive acceleration.

Dez White
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

He doesn’t have the best hands, but White is a strong number two receiver who is open often.

Olin Kreutz
Center

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- BLK ★★★★★

He opens many holes up the middle for Thomas and keeps the center of the line from crushing in on your QB.

Defensive Stars

Brian Urlacher
Middle Linebacker

Key Stats
- SBLK ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

He has a lot of top skills that can control a game. He’s a great guy to use against any offense.

Michael Haynes
Defensive Left End

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- TKL ★★★★★

Haynes also has very good acceleration. Run line stunts and let him take a shot at the QB.

Mike Brown
Free Safety

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★
- SPD ★★★★

He’s fast, but doesn’t have strong tackling skills. Use him in coverage mostly.
Cincinnati Bengals

Scouting Report
The Bengals got their first good news in several years when the team hired coach Marvin Lewis. His leadership has already been evident in the off season. The team won’t be contending with the best in the league in just one year, but they definitely are improving.

Team Strengths
- Improved defense
- Powerful running back
- New, hard-nosed coaching philosophy

Team Weaknesses
- Weak offensive line
- Missing a breakout number two receiver
- A franchise history of losing

Gameplay Tips
How to Win with the Bengals
- Promote Carson Palmer to QB.
- Get the ball to the receivers.
- Run with Corey Dillon to set up the pass.

How to Beat the Bengals
- Contain Corey Dillon.
- Push back the weak offensive line.
- Get to the QB with your defensive linemen.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
Cincinnati upgraded its defense with DE Carl Powell (Redskins), DT John Thornton (Titans), and CB Tory James (Raiders). LB Kevin Hardy (Cowboys) doesn’t replace Takeo Spikes, but he fills the hole.

Key Losses
LB Takeo Spikes (Bills) will be missed dearly on defense.

2003 Draft Picks

Fever Team Ratings

2002 NFL Team Rankings

2002 Team Stats

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<tr>
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2002 Season Record

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Star Players

Carson Palmer - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- SPD XXX
- STR XXX

Tips
Marvin Lewis may choose to start Jon Kitna, but that doesn’t mean that you have to. Palmer’s got better stats and the arm strength and accuracy to go long. Keep short options open if the pressure starts coming at you.

Corey Dillon - Halfback

Key Strengths
- BTKL ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BLK XX

Tips
Corey Dillon has the rare combo of speed and power. If only he had a good offensive line. Run plays that provide lead blockers to take out defenders and pass occasionally so the defense can’t key up on the run.

Other Offensive Stars

Peter Warrick
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

He’s Palmer’s top target. He’s been a disappointment in the NFL so far, but his stats are good for this game.

Chad Johnson
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★
- SPD ★★★★

Although his stats aren’t great, Johnson is the team’s most reliable receiver.

Willie Anderson
Right Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- BLK ★★★★★

He’s slow, but he’s strong. Follow him like a train.

Defensive Stars

Kevin Hardy
Left Linebacker

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★
- CVG ★★★★★

Kevin Hardy is good in coverage, but isn’t a strong tackler. Use him to shut down the short passing game.

Jeff Burris
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★

Keep Burris back in the secondary. He doesn’t have the block-shedding moves or tackling ability to be effective on the blitz.

John Thornton
Defensive Left Tackle

Key Stats
- SBLK ★★★★★
- STR ★★★

Thornton, a new addition to the Bengals, should help their pass rush significantly. Try some stunts to get him close to the QB.

Useful Plays

CIN Post Hook
Look first to Warrick breaking deep. If he’s doubled, you should have Johnson over the middle.

CIN Twin Slant Out
Roll to the left with Johnson and Warrick and toss it to whoever’s open, or tuck it in and grab a few yards yourself.

CIN Strong Corner
If they single-cover your primary receiver, you get have a huge gain if you can get him the ball.

CIN Half Bounce
Follow your pulling guard and then make some of the defensive backs pay with Dillon’s bruising running style.

CIN HB Offtackle
Stay on the outside shoulder of your blocking FB and then bust it up the middle.

I Counter
Don’t beat your pulling guard to the line. Be patient and take the hole inside or outside, whichever opens up.
Cleveland Browns

Scouting Report
The Browns finally have quality skilled-position players surrounding their QB. The only problem is that the QB isn’t set. Top draft pick Tim Couch competes with Kelly Holcomb for the starting job. On defense, the team looks improved, but the LB corps is untested.

Team Strengths
- Talented players in skilled positions
- Improved offensive line
- Strong defensive line

Team Weaknesses
- Inexperienced LBs
- No established QB
- Poor special teams

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Browns
- Spread the ball to a variety of your talented receivers.
- Run to the outside.
- Use line stunts and defensive line pressure to get to the QB.

How to Beat the Browns
- Test their linebackers with short passes and runs outside.
- Make their QB throw under pressure.
- Play 34 defense and contain the outside run with your LBs.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
LB Barry Gardner (Eagles) adds some experience to the LB corps.

Key Losses
CB Daimon Sidney (Bills) and CB Donald Mitchell (Cowboys) left during in free agency and the Titans were forced to draft defensive backs to replace them.

2003 Draft Picks

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<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Chris Crocker</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Lee Suggs</td>
<td>RB</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Ryan Pontbriand</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Mike Lehan</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Antonio Garay</td>
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Fever Team Ratings

- Overall: 78
- Offense: 78
- Defense: 79
- Special: 79

2002 NFL Team Rankings

- Scoring: 19th
- Total Offense: 23rd
- Passing Offense: 18th
- Rushing Offense: 23rd
- Total Defense: 21st
- Passing Defense: 15th
- Rushing Defense: 27th
- Points Allowed: 10th

2002 Team Stats

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>29:45</td>
<td>30:15</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Star Players

### Tim Couch - Quarterback

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★
- INJ ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- SPD ★★
- ACC ★★★

**Tips**
Tim Couch may be fighting for his job in the NFL, but he’s got better stats in *Fever* and deserves the starting slot. He is definitely not a running QB, so keep him in the pocket and look for open receivers.

### William Green - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- ACC ★★★★
- SPD ★★★★
- BCTL ★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- BTKL ★★★
- HND ★★★

**Tips**
William Green is best used as an outside runner. Don’t try to use him on long sweeps. He just doesn’t have the speed to get around the corner. Run him up either side of the line.

## Useful Plays

- **CLE Clear Dig**
  Look first for an open man coming across the middle, but keep an eye out deep. If you have single coverage and pass protection, you have a huge gain coming.

- **CLE Wild Slant**
  Take only a three-step drop and then hit the primary receiver as he makes the slant across the middle. If the middle’s clogged, look left and then deep.

- **CLE Iso Slant Cross**
  If the middle is open, get the ball there quick. If not, look to the deep routes for the open man.

## Other Offensive Stars

### Kevin Johnson
Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★

One of many quick Browns receivers. Look for Johnson on deep routes.

### Quincy Morgan
Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- HND ★★★

Here’s another quick receiver who can get open across the middle. Look for him when Johnson is double-covered.

### Chris Gardocki
Punter

**Key Stats**
- PSTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★

A good punter can be the difference between a win and a loss during a tight, defensive struggle.

## Defensive Stars

### Courtney Brown
Defensive Right End

**Key Stats**
- STR ★★★
- AGG ★★★★

This powerful defensive lineman is good at stopping the run as well as pressuring the quarterback.

### Daylon McCutcheon
Right Cornerback

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

He’s quick and also has decent blitzing skills. Use him from time to time to hassle the QB.

### Gerard Warren
Defensive Left Tackle

**Key Stats**
- TKL ★★★
- STR ★★★★

He’s a furious run-stopper who can push offensive linemen back to the QB.


Dallas Cowboys

Scouting Report
After three straight 5-11 seasons, the Cowboys are cleaning house. Although the team isn’t stacked with talent, new coach Bill Parcells will certainly find some diamonds in the rough and the team will almost surely improve.

Team Strengths
• Legendary new coach
• Improved defense
• Young, quick secondary

Team Weaknesses
• Tepid offense
• No solid starting QB
• No solid starting HB

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Cowboys
• Avoid turnovers and play conservatively.
• Chew up the clock with short passes and the running game.
• Don’t make big risks on defense because it’s tough to score with the Cowboys.

How to Beat the Cowboys
• Force their QB to throw under pressure.
• Play aggressive defense to force turnovers.
• Play aggressive offense to outscore the Cowboy offense.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
WR Terry Glenn (Packers) will help the passing game. FB Richie Anderson (Jets), OT Ryan Young (Texans), TE Dan Campbell (Giants) should all be new starters on offense.

Key Losses
HB Emmitt Smith (Cardinals) may be past his prime, but the Cowboys don’t have anyone who can replace the future Hall of Fame halfback.

Team Strengths

Team Weaknesses

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Cowboys

How to Beat the Cowboys

2003 Draft Picks

Fever Team Ratings

2002 NFL Team Rankings

2002 Team Stats

2002 Season Record

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Star Players

**Joey Galloway - Wide Receiver**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTKL</td>
<td>✘✘</td>
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**Tips**
Joey Galloway is the top receiver for a team without a standout QB. Find plays that use his speed to get him open and make safe, low-risk passes when he’s in the clear.

**Useful Plays**

- **DAL Deep Strike**
  If they double up Galloway, look for the short out or the receiver crossing to his side. They should be wide open.

- **Blue Cross**
  In tight coverage, look for Galloway as soon as he crosses inside.

- **DAL Dino Weak**
  If you have the patience and pass protection to wait until Galloway hits his three moves, you’re usually rewarded (an even better play when Carter is QB).

---

**Chad Hutchinson - Quarterback**

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<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>✘</td>
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**Tips**
Hutchinson has a weaker arm but much better passing accuracy than fellow Dallas QB Quincy Carter. Use Hutchinson to spread the field with throws short and medium as well as inside and out. A balanced attack should gain you some key passing yards.

**Useful Plays**

- **Strong Sluggo**
  With so much action on one side of the field, you may find a WR streaking downfield in single coverage. If not, look for the short middle pass to the back.

- **Four Quicks**
  If the corners give your receivers a big cushion, hit the pass quickly. If not, look down the field.

- **DAL Twin Thunder**
  Make the safety choose which route on the right side to cover. When he does, you throw to the other man.

---

**Other Offensive Stars**

- **Terry Glenn - Wide Receiver**
  Key Stats
  - HND ★★★★
  - SPD ★★★★★

  Look for crossing patterns and long routes for this receiver.

- **Jason Witten - Tight End**
  Key Stats
  - ACC ★★★★
  - HND ★★★

  Don’t forget to bring the TE into your passing game to mix things up for the defense.

- **Larry Allen - Left Guard**
  Key Stats
  - AGG ★★★★★
  - STR ★★★★★

  He’s better at pass blocking than run blocking, but you can still follow him with your HB for nice gains.

---

**Defensive Stars**

- **La’Roi Glover - Defensive Right Tackle**
  Key Stats
  - STR ★★★★
  - SBLK ★★★★★

  Glover can make a QB’s life miserable if you use him correctly. He also has very good coverage skills.

- **Darren Woodson - Strong Safety**
  Key Stats
  - SBLK ★★★★★
  - TKL ★★★★★

  He’s not as fast as some defensive backs, but Woodson is a great tackler who can fight his way through blocks to take down a ball carrier.

- **Roy Williams - Free Safety**
  Key Stats
  - SPD ★★★★★
  - ACC ★★★

  You can pick off errant passes when controlling the speedy Williams on defense.
Denver Broncos

Scouting Report
Jake Plummer may be the missing piece for this franchise. A strong passing game in conjunction with Denver’s always-solid running game makes this team tough to beat. One key question will be whether or not the defensive line will get the team some sacks.

Team Strengths
• Perennially strong running game
• Fresh quarterback
• Strong defense against the run

Team Weaknesses
• Young, unproven secondary
• Tough division

Gameplay Tips
How to Win with the Broncos
• Wear down opponents with the run.
• Get pressure on the opponent’s QB.
• Once the run is established, bring in a strong passing game.

How to Beat the Broncos
• Test the secondary with passes against man coverage.
• If the Bronco rush isn’t heavy, pass from the pockets.
• Shut down the running game.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
QB Jake Plummer (Cardinals) could be key to getting the Bronco passing game up and running. The team also acquired several defensive linemen to build the pass rush.

Key Losses
The loss of RB Olandis Gary (Bills) thins out this team’s usually deep lineup of running backs.

2003 Draft Picks

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<tr>
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<th>School</th>
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<td>7</td>
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Fever Team Ratings
Overall: 81
Offense: 83
Defense: 81
Special: 77

2002 NFL Team Rankings
Scoring: 7th
Total Defense: 6th
Total Offense: 3rd
Passing Defense: 17th
Rushing Defense: 4th
Points Allowed: 15th

2002 Team Stats

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2002 Season Record

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2002 NFL Team Rankings

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Of Possession</td>
<td>32:47</td>
<td>27:13</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Star Players

### Clinton Portis - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- BLK ✘✘
- STR ✘✘✘

**Tips**
Portis is a speed back who can get to the outside in a hurry. Run sweeps and quick pitches, but also mix things up with an occasional burst up the middle.

**Useful Plays**
- **Motion Toss Big**
  Burst to the outside and turn it up the field. If you get the right blocking, you’ll have a free run up the sidelines for a first down.
- **Motion HB Go**
  If a defender doesn’t follow your WR in motion, there’s a great chance that Portis is open for a long pass down the middle.
- **Wing Toss Weak**
  Wait until your receiver picks up his man and then zip your way around the outside corner.

### Rod Smith - Wide Receiver

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★
- HND ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- STR ✘✘

**Tips**
This speedy veteran receiver should be at the center of your passing offense. Wait until the coverage is right and get him the ball.

**Useful Plays**
- **Release and Go**
  Send your offside receiver into motion to overload the right side, opening Rod Smith for single coverage.
- **All Slant**
  If your opponent uses man coverage, these crossing patterns provide a clean pick to get Smith open.
- **Double Post**
  When Smith gets open deep, get some air under the ball.

### Other Offensive Stars

- **Tom Nalen**
  Center
  - **Key Stats**
    - BLK ★★★★★
    - STR ★★★★★
  - Look for holes up the middle created by this guy.

- **Jake Plummer**
  Quarterback
  - **Key Stats**
    - ASTR ★★★★
    - PACR ★★★★
  - Don’t be afraid to let Jake the Snake air it out from time to time.

- **Jason Elam**
  Kicker
  - **Key Stats**
    - LSTR ★★★★★
    - KACR ★★★★★
  - He’s a rock-solid kicker and gives you opportunities to boot long ones.

### Defensive Stars

- **Trevor Pryce**
  Defensive Left End
  - **Key Stats**
    - STR ★★★★★
    - SBLK ★★★★★
  - Pryce is strong both on pass rush and dropping back into pass coverage.

- **Al Wilson**
  Middle Linebacker
  - **Key Stats**
    - CVG ★★★★★
    - ACC ★★★
  - Use Wilson to plug up the middle in short passing defenses.

- **Deltha O’Neal**
  Left Cornerback
  - **Key Stats**
    - ACC ★★★★★
    - SPD ★★★★★
  - Use his speed and acceleration to catch up to deep receivers and help out other DBs when the ball is thrown elsewhere.
The big news in Detroit is the acquisition of coach Steve Mariucci, who’s known for taking young teams and making them better. He has a good young QB who now has a set of quality WRs to look for. The defense, however, still needs a lot of work.

**Team Strengths**

- Cadre of good WRs
- Young, talented QB
- Good pass-protection offensive line

**Team Weaknesses**

- Weak defense
- Really weak passing defense
- Young, inexperienced team

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Lions**

- Spread the ball to the WRs.
- Break things up with occasional Stewart runs.
- Help your secondary by getting defensive line pressure on the QB.

**How to Beat the Lions**

- Pass deep.
- Pass often.
- Force them to run the ball with Dime and Nickel packages.

**Scouting Report**

CB Dre’ Bly (Rams) provides some much-needed help for the Lion’s beleaguered secondary.

**Key Losses**

LB Chris Claiborne (Vikings) will be sorely missed, but the Lions are hoping that early draft pick Boss Bailey will fill the gap.

### 2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
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**Fever Team Ratings**

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**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

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**2002 Team Stats**

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**2002 Season Record**

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Star Players

Joey Harrington - Quarterback

Key Strengths

- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★

Key Weaknesses

- SPD ★★
- STR ★
- ACC ★

Tips

Under the tutelage of Mariucci, Harrington most likely blossoms into a solid quarterback. More important, Detroit has surrounded him with good receivers. Try them in the middle until the defense shuts that down. Then go deep.

Useful Plays

- **DET Wide Clear**
  - Take a short drop, and look for the WR streaking near the line. If he’s covered, someone should be open deep.

- **DET Cross Flank**
  - With all the action headed to the right, your primary receiver has a good chance at one-on-one coverage deep.

- **DET Fly Slants**
  - Look to the middle first and then check off deep. When someone’s open, they’re usually open big.

James Stewart - Halfback

Key Strengths

- SPD ★★★
- STR ★★★
- BTKL ★★★
- BCTL ★★★★

Key Weaknesses

- ACC ★★★
- HND ★★★

Tips

Stewart doesn’t have the explosive acceleration to bust around the corners on sweeps, but he can hit holes up the middle and he’s hard to bring down if he’s got blockers. Keep him running inside when possible.

Useful Plays

- **DET HB Dive Lead**
  - Follow your FB through the open hole in the line and pound out a few yards.

- **DET 4WR HB Dive**
  - If you pass often, this formation makes the defense think you’re throwing the ball. Surprise them with a run up the middle.

- **DET Wide Counter**
  - After a few runs up the middle, run this counter play. The defense is off guard, and you grab a few yards around the corner.

Other Offensive Stars

Az-Zahir Hakim
Wide Receiver

Key Stats

- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

Hakim is one of the quickest WRs in this game. Send him on deep routes that take advantage of his speed and acceleration.

Charles Rogers
Wide Receiver

Key Stats

- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

The number one Lions draft pick sees a lot of action. He has good speed and hands to catch the tough catches.

Bill Schroeder
Wide Receiver

Key Stats

- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Schroeder is another speedy target for Harrington. He’s often open when the defense is doubling the big names.

Defensive Stars

Robert Porcher
Defensive Left End

Key Stats

- SBLK ★★★★★
- TKL ★★★★★

Porcher is strong, fast, and good against the run and the pass. Use him in a variety of situations. He’s useful any way you control him.

Luther Elliss
Defensive Left Tackle

Key Stats

- STR ★★★★★
- SBLK ★★★★★

With the Lion’s weak secondary, you need to get a lot of pressure on the QB with guys like Elliss.

Boss Bailey
Middle Linebacker

Key Stats

- ACC ★★★★
- STR ★★★★★

Bailey could end up the heart of the Lions LB corps. Use him in pass coverage, against the run, or on the blitz.
Green Bay Packers

Scouting Report
Although the Packers retained their key offensive players, the team took a hit in free agency on the defense and especially in the secondary. With Favre at the helm, however, this team is capable of making the playoffs again this year.

Team Strengths
- Future Hall of Fame QB
- Excellent RB
- Quality players at most skill positions

Team Weaknesses
- Free agency-depleted defense
- Inexperienced group of WRs
- Facing a tougher division this year

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Packers
- Throw the ball with Favre.
- Run often with Ahman Green.
- Protect your secondary by calling pass-oriented defenses.

How to Beat the Packers
- Test the new defensive backs.
- Force Green to stretch his runs to the outside.
- Get in Favre’s face when he throws.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
DE Chukie Nwokorie (Colts) and LB Hannibal Navies (Panthers) should be key additions for the defense.

Key Losses
The defense will miss DL Billy Lyon (Vikings), LB Nate Wayne (Eagles), S Matt Bowen (Redskins), CB Tyrone Williams (Falcons), CB Tod McBride (Falcons), DE Vonnie Holiday (Chiefs) and LB Hardy Nickerson (retired).

2003 Draft Picks

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<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>James Lee</td>
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Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 81
Offense: 86
Defense: 77
Special: 74

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 6th
Total Offense: 12th
Passing Offense: 10th
Rushing Offense: 12th
Total Defense: 12th
Passing Defense: 3rd
Rushing Defense: 21st
Points Allowed: 12th

2002 Team Stats

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2002 Season Record

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<th>PF</th>
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Prima’s Official Strategy Guide
**Star Players**

**Brett Favre - Quarterback**

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★
- BCTL ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- BTKL ✘

**Tips**

Favre has a cannon for an arm and accuracy to match. Although he doesn’t have the most experienced receivers, he has the tools to get them the ball when they’re open. Go deep and go deep often.

**Useful Plays**
- **GB Gun Spread**
  Look deep first, if nothing opens up, hit the crossing pattern over the middle or dump the ball to Green up the sideline.
- **GB Twin Slant Out**
  You want to hit the receivers going down the field, but if you have to you’ve got short dropoff options on either side.
- **GB 2 Over Out**
  This is the perfect place for a Favre frozen-rope bullet pass over the middle, but keep an eye on the deep route—it occasionally breaks open.

**Ahman Green - Halfback**

**Key Strengths**
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★
- STR ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- BLK ★★★

**Tips**

Green is a fast and powerful back who can run inside and outside as well as catch the ball. As if that weren’t enough, he’s playing behind a good blocking fullback and tight end. Run often to prime the defense for the deep passing game.

**Useful Plays**
- **GB Half Bounce**
  Get behind your fullback and head up the field. Don’t stretch this play too far to the sidelines. Find your hole and get your yards.
- **GB HB I Plunge**
  Wait for the block and then bust it up the middle. Keep pushing even if you’re stopped. Be prepared to cut outside if the middle is stuffed.
- **Twins HB Pitch**
  Another quick run, but this time your whole team is blocking. Look for the blocks and hit the holes.

**Other Offensive Stars**

- **Bubba Franks**
  **Tight End**
  **Key Stats**
  - HND ★★★★★
  - SPD ★★★

  Franks should be a key part of your offense. He’s fast, he can catch, and he can block for the run. Make him do all three.

- **Donald Driver**
  **Wide Receiver**
  **Key Stats**
  - ACC ★★★★★
  - HND ★★★★★

  Driver should be one of Favre’s most frequent targets. He has good hands, so don’t be afraid to zing the ball to him on a slant pattern.

- **William Henderson**
  **Fullback**
  **Key Stats**
  - HND ★★★★★
  - BLK ★★★★★

  Henderson is a very useful all-around fullback. He’s so useful that you should stick to formations that feature him in the backfield.

**Defensive Stars**

- **Darren Sharper**
  **Free Safety**
  **Key Stats**
  - SBLK ★★★★★
  - SPD ★★★★★

  Sharper is good in coverage, but he’s devastating on the blitz. Bring him in and give the QB nightmares.

- **Bryant Westbrook**
  **Left Cornerback**
  **Key Stats**
  - SBLK ★★★★★
  - SPD ★★★★★

  Here’s another good coverage guy who can come in on the Blitz.

- **Joe Johnson**
  **Defensive Right End**
  **Key Stats**
  - STR ★★★★★
  - TKL ★★★★★

  Johnson can play against the run or the pass and he can shed blocks on the way to a QB sack.
Houston Texans

Scouting Report
On defense, the Texans are surprisingly solid for an expansion team, and they should improve upon last year’s showing. The Texans still need a lot of work, but QB David Carr looks like the real deal.

Team Strengths
- Strong young quarterback
- Solid defense
- Strong drafts for offense

Team Weaknesses
- Dismal offensive line
- Not many receiving weapons for Carr
- Abysmal overall offense

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Texans
- Look for short, quick routes to get rid of the ball before pressure hits.
- Run just enough to get the defensive focus off Carr.
- Pressure with your defensive line and blitz with your cornerbacks.

How to Beat the Texans
- Sack Carr and cause him to make bad throws.
- Force the running game inside and defend against the pass.
- Run the ball often.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
OL Zach Wiegert (Jaguars) will have an immediate effect on an offensive line that gave up an NFL record 76 sacks last season.

Key Losses
The Texans can ill afford to lose offensive weapons like WR Jermaine Lewis (Jaguars).

2003 Draft Picks

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<td>7</td>
<td>Chance Pearce</td>
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2002 NFL Team Rankings

Fever Team Ratings
Overall: 79
Offense: 81
Defense: 75
Special: 79

2002 Season Record

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2002 Team Stats

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2002 Team Stats

2002 Season Record

2002 Team Stats

2002 Season Record

2002 Team Stats

2002 Season Record
Star Players

David Carr - Quarterback

Key Strengths
ASTR ★★★★
PACR ★★★★★
ACC ★★★

Key Weaknesses
SPD ✘✘
STR ✘

Tips
Because of the weak Texan offensive line, Carr spends a lot of his time facing defensive pressure. Develop quick, short routes and slant patterns that slow down the pass rush and let Carr get the throw off before he’s planted on the turf.

Jonathan Wells - Halfback

Key Strengths
ACC ★★★★
SPD ★★★★
STR ★★★

Key Weaknesses
HND ✘✘
BTKL ✘✘

Tips
Wells needs to run the ball from time to time to take the pressure off Carr. He doesn’t have great speed, but he has good strength. Run him up the middle and the side of the offensive line. Try to follow Boselli when possible.

Other Offensive Stars

Jabar Gaffney
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
HND ★★★★
SPD ★★★★★

Gaffney is the closest thing the Texans have to a big play receiver. Use him especially on quick slants to provide Carr a good target.

Corey Bradford
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
SPD ★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

Here’s another good target for Carr. Remember, you won’t always have time for the big, deep route, so be creative.

Tony Boselli
Left Guard

Key Stats
STR ★★★★★
BLK ★★★

Boselli is one of the best offensive linemen in this game. Run to his side often.

Defensive Stars

Aaron Glenn
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
SBLK ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

Glenn is quick and can blitz with the best of them, so send him after the QB when you get the chance.

Gary Walker
Defensive Left End

Key Stats
STR ★★★★
ACC ★★★

Walker is fast and strong. Use him to get some heat on the QB and to shut down the running game.

Marcus Coleman
Right Cornerback

Key Stats
SPD ★★★
TKL ★★★

Coleman is another fine blitzing cornerback. Alternate blitzes between him and Glenn to keep the other team guessing.
Indianapolis Colts

Scouting Report
The Colts and their triumvirate of skill-position players (Manning, Harrison, and James) are back and looking better than ever. The team drafted for speed on both sides of the ball and should be improved this year. Another playoff berth is likely in the offing.

Team Strengths
• Excellent QB
• Top WR and HB
• Stingy pass defense

Team Weaknesses
• Not much depth at WR
• Disappointing running game in 2002
• Tough season schedule

Gameplay Tips
How to Win with the Colts
• Throw the ball to Harrison.
• Run and pass to James.
• Focus on the run while your secondary stops the pass.

How to Beat the Colts
• Double Harrison.
• Keep Edgerrin James from breaking outside.
• Run the ball on offense.

Free Agency Moves
Key Pickups
S Rich Coady (Titans) should improve the Colt’s already impressive secondary.

Key Losses
LB Mike Peterson (Jaguars) led the Colts in interceptions and in tackles last year. He will be missed by the defense.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
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<td>Makoa Freitas</td>
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2002 NFL Team Rankings
Scoring: 17th
Total Offense: 9th
Passing Offense: 4th
Rushing Offense: 26th

Points Allowed: 7th

Fever Team Ratings
Overall: 81
Offense: 87
Defense: 76
Special: 83

2002 Team Stats

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2002 Season Record

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Star Players

Peyton Manning - Quarterback

Key Strengths
ASTR ★★★★★
PACR ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
SPD XXX
STR XX

Tips
Manning has some of the best pure passing stats in the game. Plus, he has the acceleration to scramble occasionally. Throw it deep and don’t be afraid to thread the needle if you have Harrison open across the middle.

Edgerrin James - Halfback

Key Strengths
ACC ★★★★★
SPD ★★★★★
BTK ★★★★★
HND ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
BLK XXX

Tips
James is one of the league’s premiere running backs. He can run inside and outside and he has good hands. Work him into the offense as much as possible and open up the passing game for Manning and Harrison.

Other Offensive Stars

Marvin Harrison Wide Receiver

Key Stats
ACC ★★★★★
HND ★★★★★

Harrison is one of the quickest players in the entire game, and he has All-Pro hands and a QB who can get him the ball deep. Use him often.

Marcus Pollard Tight End

Key Stats
ACC ★★★★
HND ★★★★

Pollard should be a featured part of the passing game, but remember that he’s a good blocker too, so follow him on the run.

Reggie Wayne Wide Receiver

Key Stats
HND ★★★★
SPD ★★★★

Wayne is a solid number two receiver who is open often if the other team doubles Harrison.

Defensive Stars

Chad Bratzke Defensive Right End

Key Stats
SBLK ★★★★
STR ★★★★

He’s a good run-stopper and pass-toggler. Use him often.

Walt Harris Left Cornerback

Key Stats
SPD ★★★★
SBLK ★★★★

Harris is a quick defensive back who’s good on the blitz. Let him bring the heat from time to time.

David Macklin Right Cornerback

Key Stats
ACC ★★★★
SPD ★★★★

Macklin has speed, but keep him back on coverage. He has lousy blitzing skills.
With new coach Jack Del Rio at the helm, the Jaguars should improve on defense this year. They’ve started early with big-name free agent signings. On offense, the team still needs depth at receiver (although they addressed that somewhat by signing JJ Stokes), but HB Fred Taylor is healthy and takes a lot of pressure off the passing game.

**Team Strengths**
- Good QB
- Power running back
- Much improved defensive talent

**Team Weaknesses**
- Lack of depth at WR
- Overall lackluster offense
- Weak kicking game

---

**Scouting Report**

**Free Agency Moves**

**Key Pickups**

All Pro DE Hugh Douglas (Eagles) was by far the biggest free agency signing for this team. He anchors the Jag defense. LB Mike Peterson (Colts) adds speed to the Jaguars’ LB group. And WR JJ Stokes (Niners) adds depth at WR.

**Key Losses**

Losing OL Todd Fordham (Steelers) and OL Zach Wiegert (Texans) could leave big gaps on the offensive line.

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Jaguars**
- Pass the ball to Smith.
- Run outside and inside with Taylor.
- Pressure the opposing QB with Hugh Douglas and the D-line.

**How to Beat the Jaguars**
- Double-cover Jimmy Smith.
- Contain Taylor to the inside, where the line is weak.
- Run the ball often.

---

**Fever Team Ratings**

**Overall:** 80

**Offense:** 84

**Defense:** 78

**Special:** 75

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**2003 Draft Picks**

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<th>Rnd</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Labrandon Toefield</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>LSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Brandon Green</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>David Young</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Georgia Southern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Marques Ogden</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Howard</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Malaefou MacKenzie</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>USC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

- Scoring: 21st
- Total Offense: 25th
- Passing Offense: 28th
- Rushing Offense: 10th
- Total Defense: 20th
- Passing Defense: 14th
- Rushing Defense: 25th
- Points Allowed: 9th

---

**2002 Team Stats**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Jaguars</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>324</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing–Passing–By Penalty)</td>
<td>105–156–14</td>
<td>112–188–24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>71/207</td>
<td>83/212</td>
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<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>18/26</td>
<td>11/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>4,851</td>
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<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
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<td>2,089</td>
<td>2,071</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>455–4.6</td>
<td>487–4.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>2,762</td>
<td>3,264</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>19/27</td>
<td>23/34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>19–18–1–0</td>
<td>14–19–0–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>28:39</td>
<td>31:21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Star Players

#### Mark Brunell - Quarterback

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- SPD ✘✘
- ACC ✘✘

**Tips**
Brunell is a good, strong-armed pocket QB who doesn’t have a lot of top targets to throw to. Look for patterns that get Jimmy Smith, Fred Taylor and Jermaine Lewis into open slots in the defense.

---

#### Fred Taylor - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★
- HND ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- STR ✘✘✘

**Tips**
Fred Taylor is finally healthy coming into the 2003 season. He should be at the center of your offense with quick dashes and sweeps to the outside. He has good hands too, so work him into the passing game.

---

#### Other Offensive Stars

**Jimmy Smith**
Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- HND ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

Smith is rocket-fast and has good hands. He’s often double-covered, but if you call the right pass patterns, you can get him open deep.

**Jermaine Lewis**
Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Lewis doesn’t have hands as good as Jimmy Smith’s, but he has quickness to spare and can pull down most passes. Look to him when Smith is doubled.

**Byron Leftwich**
Quarterback

**Key Stats**
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★

Right now Brunell is the better passer, but first-round draft pick Leftwich is the future of the Jags.

---

#### Defensive Stars

**Fernando Bryant**
Left Cornerback

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Bryant is rocket-fast, but don’t try to use him on blitzes. He has lousy tackling and block-shedding skills.

**Hugh Douglas**
Defensive Right End

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- SBLK ★★★★★

Douglas was a key pickup for the Jaguars. Use his speed to get to the QB or stuff the outside run.

**Tony Brackens**
Defensive End

**Key Stats**
- SBLK ★★★★★
- TKL ★★★★★

Brackens is another tough Jaguars lineman who can terrorize QBs and RBs alike.
Kansas City Chiefs

**Scouting Report**
Kansas City picked up the right players in both free agency and the draft to shore up the league’s worst defense while also improving the team’s already smoking offense. With Priest Holmes returning and Heisman candidate Larry Johnson looking strong, the running game should be deep. Look for even more action out of Dick Vermeil’s high-potency passing offense.

**Team Strengths**
- Potent passing offense
- Excellent tight end
- Powerful offensive line

**Team Weaknesses**
- Weak against passing offenses
- Weak against rushing offenses
- Lack a proven number one WR

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Chiefs**
- Use TE Tony Gonzalez to open up the short passing play.
- Pound the ball with Priest Holmes.
- Keep it close on defense and let your offense keep ahead in points.

**How to Beat the Chiefs**
- Control the clock and keep their offense off the field.
- Pass deep whenever possible.
- Mix in the run if the Chiefs start focusing on the pass.

**Free Agency Moves**

**Key Pickups**
Solid defenders LB Shawn Barber (Eagles), CB Dexter McCleon (Rams), and DE Vonnie Holliday (Packers) help shore up what is statistically the worst defense in the league.

**Key Losses**
P Dan Stryzinski is the only big free agency loss.

**2003 Draft Picks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Larry Johnson</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Penn State</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kawika Mitchell</td>
<td>MLB</td>
<td>South Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Julian Battle</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Brett Williams</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Florida State</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Jordan Black</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Notre Dame</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Jimmy Wilkerson</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Montique Sharpe</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Wake Forest</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Willie Pile</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>Virginia Tech</td>
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**Fever Team Ratings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Chiefs</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>76</td>
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**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Opponents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scoring</td>
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<td>Total Defense: 32nd</td>
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<td>Passing Defense: 31st</td>
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<td>11th</td>
<td>Rushing Defense: 24th</td>
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<td>Rushing Offensive</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Points Allowed: 28th</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2002 Team Stats</th>
<th>Chiefs</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>367</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing–Passing–By Penalty)</td>
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<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>77/185</td>
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<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
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<td>26/32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
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<th>2002 Season Record</th>
<th>Chiefs</th>
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<td>W</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tie</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFC</td>
<td>6–6</td>
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<td>NFC</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIV</td>
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</table>

Prima's Official Strategy Guide
Star Players

Tony Gonzalez - Tight End

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strengths</th>
<th>Useful Plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★★</td>
<td>TE Spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND ★★★★★★</td>
<td>Send the WR in motion and then Gonzalez busts across the short middle. You should pick up some good yards after the catch here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTKL ★★★★★</td>
<td>Motion Shorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLK ★★★</td>
<td>Your FB stays in to block and gives you time to look for Tony Gonzalez deep across the middle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Weaknesses

ACC XXX

Tips

Few teams have as dangerous a weapon as the Chiefs’ TE Tony Gonzalez. He has excellent hands and great speed. Target him often—he’s typically covered by a defender who can’t match up.

Priest Holmes - Halfback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strengths</th>
<th>Useful Plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★★</td>
<td>KC Half Bounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★★★</td>
<td>Tony Gonzalez and pulling guard open the hole for you. Look for the open slot and power through.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTKL ★★★★★</td>
<td>KC HB I Plunge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGI ★★★★★★</td>
<td>Strong inside running play that lets Priest Holmes show his power.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Weaknesses

BLK XXX

Tips

Running inside, running outside, catching the ball, going deep…there isn’t much this running back can’t do. Use him all over the field to confuse and wear down your opponent.

Other Offensive Stars

Trent Green - Quarterback

Key Stats

ASTR ★★★★★

PACR ★★★★

Will Shields - Right Guard

Key Stats

STR ★★★★★

BLK ★★★

Dante Hall - Wide Receiver

Key Stats

ACC ★★★★★

HND ★★★★★

Dexter McCleon - Right Cornerback

Key Stats

SPD ★★★★★

ACC ★★★

Kawika Mitchell - Left Linebacker

Key Stats

SPD ★★★

CVG ★★★

Derrick Ransom - Defensive Right Tackle

Key Stats

STR ★★★

SBLK ★★★★

Priest Holmes - Tight End

Key Strengths

SPD ★★★★★

HND ★★★★★★

BTKL ★★★★★

AGI ★★★★★★

Key Weaknesses

BLK XXX

Tips

Running inside, running outside, catching the ball, going deep…there isn’t much this running back can’t do. Use him all over the field to confuse and wear down your opponent.

Other Offensive Stars

Trent Green - Quarterback

Key Stats

ASTR ★★★★★

PACR ★★★★

Will Shields - Right Guard

Key Stats

STR ★★★★★

BLK ★★★

Dante Hall - Wide Receiver

Key Stats

ACC ★★★★★

HND ★★★★★

Dexter McCleon - Right Cornerback

Key Stats

SPD ★★★★★

ACC ★★★

Kawika Mitchell - Left Linebacker

Key Stats

SPD ★★★

CVG ★★★

Derrick Ransom - Defensive Right Tackle

Key Stats

STR ★★★

SBLK ★★★★

Primagames.com 69
After last year’s disappointing season, the Dolphins improved their already solid defense. The hope is to stop opponents’ offenses and ride Ricky Williams and a solid, but not flashy, defense to the playoffs.

Scouting Report

Team Strengths
- Powerful running back
- Strong defense
- Depth at QB

Team Weaknesses
- Not much depth at WR
- Young offensive line
- Not much else

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Dolphins
- Use your running game to open up your WRs deep
- Lean heavy on short passes to the TE and RB
- Run line stunts on defense to put pressure on opposing QBs and take pressure of your secondary.

How to Beat the Dolphins
- Force them to pass.
- Key on Ricky Williams.
- Balance your playbook to keep this talented defense on its heels.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
LB Junior Seau (Chargers) will add fire and experience to an already talented defense. CB Terrell Buckley (Patriots) and S Sammy Knight (Saints) also improve the secondary.

Key Losses
The Dolphins lost several WRs in free agency and they released backup QB Ray Lucas. The team picked up QB Brian Griese (Broncos), who fits nicely in his place.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eddie Moore</td>
<td>OLB</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wade Smith</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Taylor White</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Donald Lee</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Mississippi State</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>J.R. Tolver</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>San Diego State</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Corey Jenkins</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
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<td>Tim Provost</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Jeremiah Bell</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Eastern Kentucky</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Davern Williams</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Troy State</td>
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</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 80
Offense: 75
Defense: 86
Special: 74

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 12th
Total Offense: 15th
Passing Offense: 26th
Rushing Offense: 2nd
Total Defense: 3rd
Passing Defense: 8th
Rushing Defense: 6th
Points Allowed: 4th

2002 Season Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Tie</th>
<th>PCT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.562</td>
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2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Dolphins</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
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<td>285</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing–Passing–By Penalty)</td>
<td>139–155–24</td>
<td>86–162–37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>76/199</td>
<td>66/201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>4/13</td>
</tr>
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<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,392</td>
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<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>24/31</td>
<td>28/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>24–18–0–2</td>
<td>9–20–0–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>31:24</td>
<td>28:36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Jay Fiedler - Quarterback

Key Strengths
ASTR ★★★★
PACR ★★★★
AGG ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
ACC ✘✘
SPD ✘✘✘

Tips
Jay Fiedler isn’t among the league’s marquee QBs, but with Ricky Williams behind him, he can still move the Dolphin offense. If he isn’t working out, sub in Brian Griese, who has better stats in some key areas.

Useful Plays
MIA PAP Post Arrow
Once you’ve established the run, break out this play. If the defense bites on the play, your primary receiver is wide open, breaking to the sideline.

MIA Hitch X Dino
Look for the open receiver on a crossing route or hit Williams streaking down the sideline.

MIA 4 WR Wheel
Great for third and long or for getting the clock stopped with a pass downfield and then out of bounds.

Ricky Williams - Halfback

Key Strengths
SPD ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★
BTKL ★★★★★
BCTL ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
AGG ★★★★★

Tips
Ricky Williams is perhaps the best power back in the NFL at this time. He’s also incredibly fast. Work your running game both inside and outside (with an emphasis on inside running). That should wear down the defense and open up the passing game.

Useful Plays
MIA Half Plunge
Wait for your blocker, then follow him through the hole with authority.

Wide Counter
Here’s another play in which you must follow your pulling guard. Even if you have to slow down to do it, it’ll net you several extra yards.

HB I Plunge
Keep pounding the defensive line with Williams. When they try to stop the run, go to the passing game.

Other Offensive Stars

Olindo Mare
Kicker

Key Stats
KSTR ★★★
KACR ★★★

He has a strong leg and good accuracy. When playing with the Dolphins, you can try longer field goals than you would normally attempt.

Brian Griese
Quarterback

Key Stats
ASTR ★★★★
PACR ★★★★

Even though he’s a backup, Griese is a talented QB. If Fiedler isn’t making the grade, don’t be afraid to call up Griese.

Mark Dixon
Left Guard

Key Stats
BLK ★★★★
AGG ★★★★★

Mark Dixon should open up quite a few holes for Williams on the inside, and also by pulling to the outside.

Defensive Stars

Sam Madison
Right Cornerback

Key Stats
SPD ★★★★★
TKL ★★★★★

Sam Madison is a fast and fearsome defender who can take down even the toughest ball carriers when they hit the secondary.

Zach Thomas
Middle Linebacker

Key Stats
SBLK ★★★★★
TKL ★★★★★

Thomas is as dangerous covering the middle against the pass as he is at stopping the run. He’s a great all-purpose defender for hands-on players.

Jason Taylor
Defensive Right End

Key Stats
STR ★★★★
CVG ★★★★★

Taylor is a force to be reckoned with. Make him the other QB’s worst nightmare by pressuring on the rush or dropping back in short coverage.
The Vikings should have an explosive offense again this season, with Culpepper, Moss, and Bennett all returning. The team focused on bettering their defense during the off season, and should be much improved this year.

### Team Strengths
- Strong running and passing QB
- All-World WR Randy Moss
- Quick HB

### Team Weaknesses
- Weak passing defense
- Not much depth at WR
- Worst in the league on turnovers

### Gameplay Tips

#### How to Win with the Vikings
- Throw to Moss often.
- Scramble with Culpepper and put the defense on its heels.
- Run Bennett to the outside to keep the defense honest.

#### How to Beat the Vikings
- Throw the ball deep.
- Pressure Culpepper and keep him from running outside.
- Double-cover Randy Moss.

### Free Agency Moves

#### Key Pickups
CBs Ken Irvin (Saints) and Denard Walker (Broncos) provide an immediate improvement in the Vikings’ secondary. LB Chris Claiborne (Lions) has shed pounds and looks to be in his best playing condition in years.

#### Key Losses
After years of getting murdered in free agency, the Vikings came off without any major losses this off season.

### 2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kevin Williams</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Oklahoma State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E.J. Henderson</td>
<td>MLB</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nate Burleson</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Nevada-Reno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Onterrio Smith</td>
<td>RB</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Eddie Johnson</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Idaho State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mike Nattiel</td>
<td>OLB</td>
<td>Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Keenan Howry</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Fever Team Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Vikings</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2002 NFL Team Rankings

- Scoring: 8th
- Total Offense: 2nd
- Passing Offense: 9th
- Rushing Offense: 1st
- Total Defense: 26th
- Passing Defense: 29th
- Rushing Defense: 10th
- Points Allowed: 30th

### 2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Vikings</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>92/209</td>
<td>75/193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>8/17</td>
<td>5/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>6,192</td>
<td>5,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,080–5.7</td>
<td>963–6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>2,507</td>
<td>1,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>473–5.3</td>
<td>394–4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3,685</td>
<td>4,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>23/29</td>
<td>21/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>26–19–2–1</td>
<td>15–33–0–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>31:30</td>
<td>28:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Star Players**

**Duante Culpepper - Quarterback**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strengths</th>
<th>Useful Plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★</td>
<td>MIN Dino Weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTR ★★★★★</td>
<td>If Culpepper can avoid the rush long enough for Moss to make his triple move, you have a wide-open target deep all day long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACR ★★★</td>
<td>Shallow Wheel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the safety on the left side comes in to help, look for Moss streaking across the middle and lead him with a touch pass. If the safety stays back, look for the short dump to Bennett.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Weaknesses**

- BCTL X
- ACC XX

**Tips**

Culpepper is a powerful mobile quarterback who can punish defenders who take him on head-to-head. Scramble with Culpepper when possible and always look deep for Moss. Just watch out for fumbles.

**Michael Bennett - Halfback**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Strengths</th>
<th>Useful Plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
<td>MIN Big Counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★</td>
<td>Your pulling guard shows you where to go. Follow his lead and break it upfield.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTKL ★★★</td>
<td>Motion Jolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In man-to-man defense, the motion takes a defender out of the play. Break it outside if this happens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Weaknesses**

- BLK XX

**Tips**

Bennett should run occasionally out to the outside, but more often around the side of his offensive line. He has decent hands and can catch passes as a dump-off valve in case Moss is covered deep.

**Other Offensive Stars**

**Randy Moss - Wide Receiver**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HND ★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moss is the most explosive WR in the NFL. He faces lots of double coverage, but when he gets open, make sure to get him the ball.

**Byron Chamberlain - Wide Receiver**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HND ★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chamberlain is also a very good blocking tight end. Use him in the passing game and go to his side in the running game.

**Matt Birk - Center**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLK ★★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STR ★★★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With Birk pushing bodies back on the offensive line, don’t be afraid to break out a QB sneak from time to time.

**Defensive Stars**

**Cory Chavous - Left Cornerback**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chavous has good blitzing skills. Sneak him in on the QB from time to time.

**Greg Biekert - Middle Linebacker**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLK ★★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He’s good in pass coverage or blitzing the QB. Use him both ways to keep the offense honest.

**Kevin Williams - Defensive Left End**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STR ★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVG ★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This rookie should see a lot of playing time on defense. He can also get past blockers very well.
The Patriots loaded up on defense during the off season in the hopes of getting back to Super Bowl form after a disappointing season last year. Although the running game isn’t as good as hoped, this team could easily ride its defense into the playoffs.

**Team Strengths**
- Strong passing defense
- Solid QB
- Quick receivers

**Team Weaknesses**
- Weak running game
- Coming off a bad year defensively
- Poor running defense

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Patriots**
- Focus on short and long passing with Brady.
- Only mix in the run when necessary to throw off the defense.
- Pressure the QB with corner and safety blitzes.

**How to Beat the Patriots**
- Force them to run with Dime and Nickel packages.
- Run the ball up the middle.
- Don’t force the passing game deep.

**Free Agency Moves**

**Key Pickups**
S Rodney Harrison (Chargers), CB Tyrone Poole (Broncos), and S Chris Akins (Browns) should bolster the secondary nicely. While LB Don Davis (Rams) and LB Rosevelt Colvin (Bears) will fill in the linebacker slots.

**Key Losses**
The slot left by S Tebucky Jones (Saints) has been filled in free agency, but TE Cam Cleeland (Rams) will be missed on the offensive side.

**2003 Draft Picks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ty Warren</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Eugene Wilson</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bethel Johnson</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dan Klecko</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Asante Samuel</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Central Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dan Koppen</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Boston College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kliff Kingsbury</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>Texas Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spencer Nead</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Brigham Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tully Banta-Cain</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ethan Kelley</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Baylor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fever Team Ratings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall:</th>
<th>82</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offense:</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense:</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special:</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

- Scoring: 10th
- Total Defense: 23rd
- Total Offense: 21st
- Passing Offense: 12th
- Rushing Offense: 28th
- Total Defense: 23rd
- Passing: 11th
- Rushing: 31st
- Points Allowed: 17th

**2002 Team Stats**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Patriots</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>94/220</td>
<td>95/221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>10/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,085</td>
<td>5,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,031–4.9</td>
<td>1,032–5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,508</td>
<td>2,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>395–3.8</td>
<td>467–4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3,577</td>
<td>3,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>27/30</td>
<td>20/34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>9–28–0–4</td>
<td>17–23–2–1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>29:11</td>
<td>30:49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Star Players**

**Tom Brady - Quarterback**

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★
- AGG ★★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- STR ✘✘
- SPD ✘✘✘

**Tips**
You need to lean heavily on Tom Brady if you want to win with the Patriots. He’s not a running QB and he doesn’t have the strongest arm, but if you use him smartly with short and medium passes, you can take down opposing defenses.

**Antowain Smith - Halfback**

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- BCTL ✘✘
- HND ✘✘✘

**Tips**
Antowain Smith had a disappointing season in 2002, but that doesn’t mean that you can’t use him well in this game. Take advantage of his speed and power by running to the sides of the line just off the tackle. Just don’t run him too much—he’s fumble-prone.

**Other Offensive Stars**

**Troy Brown**

- **Key Stats**
  - HND ★★★★★
  - SPD ★★★★★

With the other receivers crossing the middle, send Troy Brown long. He often outruns the defender.

**Bethel Johnson**

- **Key Stats**
  - ACC ★★★★★
  - HND ★★★

This rookie receiver should be able to break open across the middle as well as down the sidelines.

**Damien Woody**

- **Key Stats**
  - BLK ★★★★★
  - STR ★★★★★

Don’t be afraid to run it up the middle behind this big lineman.

**Defensive Stars**

**Ty Law**

- **Key Stats**
  - SPD ★★★★★
  - SBLK ★★★★★

With his speed and ability to shed blocks, Ty Law is a wicked weapon on a corner blitz.

**Lawyer Milloy**

- **Key Stats**
  - SBLK ★★★★★
  - SPD ★★★★★

Milloy is good in coverage, but don’t be afraid to blitz him from time to time as well.

**Rodney Harrison**

- **Key Stats**
  - SBLK ★★★★★
  - CVG ★★★★★

Another great blitzer from the secondary. Keep the QB guessing by sending in these guys whenever possible.
New Orleans Saints

Scouting Report
The Saints’ high scoring offense could continue to get better with Aaron Brooks, Deuce McAllister, and Joe Horn at the core. On the defensive side, the Saints worked to improve overall team speed. If their efforts pay off, this team should be a force in 2003.

Team Strengths
• Agile, strong-armed QB
• Speedy HB
• Strong at WR

Team Weaknesses
• Weak overall defense
• Weak at LB position
• Weak at TE

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Saints
• Pass downfield to Horn and Stallworth.
• Pound the ball behind the tackles with McAllister.
• Scramble with Brooks.

How to Beat the Saints
• Pass often.
• Run to the outside.
• Contain McAllister and double Joe Horn.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
The Saints spent the off season looking for speed on defense. With CB Ashley Ambrose (Falcons), FS Tebucky Jones (Patriots), and LB Derrick Rodgers (Dolphins), they accomplished their goal.

Key Losses
OT Kyle Turley (Rams) was the team’s top offensive lineman.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Johnathan Sullivan</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jon Stinchcomb</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Willie ‘Cie’ Grant</td>
<td>OLB</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Montrae Holland</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Florida State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Melvin Williams</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Kansas State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kareem Kelly</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>USC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Talman Gardner</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Florida State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 80
Offense: 84
Defense: 77
Special: 81

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 3rd
Total Defense: 27th
Total Offense: 19th
Passing Defense: 27th
Passing Offense: 16th
Rushing Defense: 19th
Rushing Offense: 17th
Points Allowed: 26th

2002 Season Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
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<td>Tie</td>
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<td>4–4</td>
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<td>Road</td>
<td>5–3</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFC</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFC</td>
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<td>DIV</td>
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</table>

2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Saints</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>92/224</td>
<td>87/223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>8/13</td>
<td>12/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,205</td>
<td>5,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,001–5.2</td>
<td>1,071–5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,764</td>
<td>1,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>426–4.1</td>
<td>439–4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3,441</td>
<td>3,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>31/35</td>
<td>23/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>28:44</td>
<td>31:16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Star Players

### Aaron Brooks - Quarterback

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- STR ★★★

**Tips**
Brooks is a mobile QB with a strong and accurate arm. Mix in lots of plays in which you roll out while passing, and keep some deep passes in your playbook.

### Deuce McAllister - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★
- STR ★★★
- BTL; ★★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- INJ ★★★

**Tips**
McAllister is quick and powerful. Use him to go to the outside and to make quick runs right up the sides of your line. He also has decent hands, so mix him into the passing game.

### Useful Plays

- **NO Angle X Pro**
  - Give time for McAllister to bust across the middle. If he’s guarded by a slow linebacker, he’s open almost every time.

- **NO HB Flag**
  - Scramble to your right. Look first for Stallworth deep and then check for Horn coming across the middle. If the defense doesn’t cover you, run toward the sidelines.

- **NO Buckle Out**
  - Give your receivers on the left time to get open deep, and then let it fly if one of them is open. Otherwise, look to one of the side routes.

### Other Offensive Stars

- **Joe Horn**
  - Wide Receiver
  - **Key Stats**
    - HND ★★★★★
    - ACC ★★★★★

  Joe Horn can get open deep or break free on slant passes, and he has good hands to pull down passes.

- **Donte Stallworth**
  - Wide Receiver
  - **Key Stats**
    - SPD ★★★★
    - HND ★★★★★

  He’s a good clutch receiver who leads the Saints in touchdowns. Look for him when Horn is covered.

- **John Carney**
  - Kicker
  - **Key Stats**
    - LSTR ★★★★★
    - KACR ★★★★★★

  A dependable kicker is worth his weight in gold. It’s nice to know he’s there when you need him.

### Defensive Stars

- **Dale Carter**
  - Left Cornerback
  - **Key Stats**
    - SPD ★★★★★
    - ACC ★★★★★

  He’s fast but doesn’t have good blitzing skills. Keep him in coverage whenever possible.

- **Tebucky Jones**
  - Free Safety
  - **Key Stats**
    - SPD ★★★★★
    - ACC ★★★★★

  Another quick coverage defensive back who doesn’t have the best tackling skills. Don’t try taking down running backs with Jones.

- **Johnathan Sullivan**
  - Defensive Left Tackle
  - **Key Stats**
    - STR ★★★★★
    - SBLK ★★★★★

  The Saints’ first round draft pick could see a lot of playing time, and opposing QBs could see a lot of Johnathan Sullivan.
New York Giants

Scouting Report
The Giants look ready for a serious championship run. Their offense ignited during the second half of last year and the defense was as solid as ever. The special teams’ play that tripped them up last year has been totally revamped. This team has a lot of momentum heading into 2003.

Team Strengths
• Multipurpose HB
• Strong QB with many weapons to chose from
• Stingy defense

Team Weaknesses
• Reshuffled offensive line
• Unspectacular LBs
• Totally revamped special teams

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Giants
• Get Tiki Barber into the passing and rushing offense.
• Use TE Jeremy Shockey to throw off the passing defense.
• Try to outscore your defense.

How to Beat the Giants
• Throw short over the middle and force their LBs to cover.
• Test out their offensive line with stunts and blitzes.
• Focus on stopping the short HB and TE passes.

2002 Team Stats

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2003 Draft Picks

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<td>3</td>
<td>Vishante Shiancoe</td>
<td>TE</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Wayne Lucier</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Kevin Walter</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Eastern Michigan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 79
Offense: 82
Defense: 78
Special: 78

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 22nd
Total Offense: 6th
Passing Offense: 6th
Rushing Offense: 14th

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
KR/PR Brian Mitchell (Eagles), P Jeff Feagles (Seahawks), and K Mike Hollis (Bills) remake the special teams.

Key Losses
The loss of G Jason Whittle (Bucs) and OT Mike Rosenthal (Vikings) force the Giants to reshuffle their offensive line.

2002 Season Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>10</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tie</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
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<tr>
<td>PF</td>
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<td>8–4</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIV</td>
<td>5–1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Jeremy Shockey - Tight End

Key Strengths

SPD ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★
HND ★★★★★★
BTKL ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses

BLK ✘✘✘

Tips

A tight end like Jeremy Shockey can be very useful in Fever 2004. Use him short out of the flat, across the middle, and streaking deep. You often find that he’s facing mismatched coverage, giving you an easy target.

Useful Plays

Icy Flag Post

The WR often pulls off the safety, leaving Shockey open streaking to the outside.

NYG Iso Slant Cross

Look for Shockey across the middle for a short but easy gain.

NYG Twins Cross

Against a zone, you can find open holes underneath and give Shockey a chance to run after the catch.

Tiki Barber - Halfback

Key Strengths

HND ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★
SPD ★★★
BCTL ★★★★★★

Key Weaknesses

STR ✘✘

Tips

Tiki Barber is a good outside runner and has fantastic hands for a running back. Use him in both the passing game and the running game to confuse and spread out the offense.

Useful Plays

NYG Normal HB Belly

Wait for the hole to open up. If it doesn’t, bounce outside and turn it upfield.

NYG Power Knife

Here’s another well-designed running play. Flip directions from time to time to mix things up.

NYG Motion HB Go

Send the receiver in motion. If the defense doesn’t follow, they’re in a zone, and Barber should be wide open up the middle.

Other Offensive Stars

Amani Toomer
Wide Receiver

Key Stats

HND ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

He’s got great hands and quick moves. Send him across the middle, or air it out deep.

Kerry Collins
Quarterback

Key Stats

ASTR ★★★★★
PACR ★★★★

The key for this QB is to spread the ball around to the WRs, TE, and running back.

Ike Hilliard
Wide Receiver

Key Stats

SPD ★★★★★
PACR ★★★★

Hilliard is another top target for Kerry Collins. He should be open when defenses double-team Toomer.

Defensive Stars

Michael Strahan
Defensive Left End

Key Stats

TKL ★★★★★
SBLK ★★★★★

Strahan is a fearsome defensive lineman who can get to the QB, stuff the run, and cover the short pass. Use him often.

William Peterson
Right Cornerback

Key Stats

SPD ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★

Peterson is a fast cornerback who can shut down opposing receivers. He’s also a good tackler, which makes him useful on run blitzes.

Kenny Holmes
Defensive Right End

Key Stats

SBLK ★★★★★
TKL ★★★★

Holmes makes a perfect bookend with Strahan on the other side of the line for a tough defensive front.
New York Jets

Scouting Report
The Jets are coming off a good year in 2002 and look to build on that momentum. They were poached heavily in free agency, but the team drafted well and improved its already stellar defensive line.

Team Strengths
• Great defensive line
• Hot quarterback
• Veteran running back who puts up numbers

Team Weaknesses
• Weak secondary and LBs
• Weak special teams
• Lost their number-one receiver

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Jets
• Mix it up between Martin runs and Pennington passes.
• Spread the passes evenly between your receivers.
• Pressure the QB with defensive line stunts.

How to Beat the Jets
• Pass often.
• Control the kicking game.
• Contain Martin and force Pennington to throw.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
G Tom Nutten (Rams), WR Curtis Conway (Chargers), and K Doug Brien (Vikings) all were signed to fill high-profile holes left by free agency.

Key Losses
The Redskins snapped up WR Laveranues Coles, KR Chad Morton, and K John Hall. All will be missed, but Coles will be missed the most.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
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<th>School</th>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Matt Walters</td>
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Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 81
Offense: 83
Defense: 81
Special: 79

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 15th
Total Defense: 24th
Total Offense: 22nd
Passing Defense: 21st
Rushing Offense: 17th
Rushing Defense: 18th
Points Allowed: 14th

2002 Team Stats

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2002 Season Record

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Star Players

Chad Pennington - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- STR ✘
- AGG ✘✘

Tips
Pennington has the acceleration to get out of immediate danger, but he’s not a full-fledged running QB. Use his arm strength and passing accuracy to spread the field and hit a variety of receivers.

Useful Plays
- NYJ Quick X Hit
  - Look for Conway breaking open on the left side slant. If not, look at Chrebet and the short pass.
- NYJ Post V-Stretch
  - If the defense covers the crossing routes, look to Curtis Martin in the flat.
- NYJ Fake Flag
  - The defense can’t both rush the QB and cover the FB. Look deep. If nothing opens up, drop it off to the short man.

Curtis Martin - Halfback

Key Strengths
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★
- HND ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- INJ ✘✘✘✘

Tips
Curtis Martin is best running to the outside, but he can also take it to the middle of the field. He has good hands for a running back, so integrate him into your passing game.

Useful Plays
- NYJ I Power
  - Get to the outside quick and hit the open lane.
- NYJ Ace Punch
  - Send the man in motion and then punch it right up the middle for a nice gain.
- Weak I Sweep
  - Your FB isn’t much of a blocker, but if he even gets some part of the outside defender, you have a free run at a first down.

Other Offensive Stars

Wayne Chrebet
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- HND ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

He may have lost some steam in recent years, but he still has the stats to do well in this game. Look for crossing patterns and post routes.

Curtis Conway
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

His hands aren’t as good as you’d want in a top receiver, but he has quickness to spare.

Kevin Mawae
Center

Key Stats
- BLK ★★★★★
- STR ★★★★★

Follow the center Mawae and the LG David Szott to daylight whenever you can.

Defensive Stars

Donnie Abraham
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- SBLK ★★★★★

With his speed and ability to shed blocks, Donnie Abraham is a wicked weapon on a corner blitz.

John Abraham
Defensive Right End

Key Stats
- AGG ★★★★★
- STR ★★★★

He’s quick for a defensive end. Use him to get to the QB or ball carrier in a hurry.

Sam Cowart
Right Linebacker

Key Stats
- AGG ★★★★★
- CVG ★★★★★

He’s excellent in coverage over the middle, and aggressive to boot. It may be best to control another player and let him do wreak havoc.
The Raiders have most of their offensive weapons back from last year, and although they’re all a year older, they should still be hard to stop. Most of the defense is back, too, except for a few key linemen lost in free agency. The team needs to avoid injuries, however, because depth in some positions (especially in the secondary) is not as good as managers would like.

**Team Strengths**
- Excellent passing game
- Strong running game
- Great players at skill positions

**Team Weaknesses**
- Not much depth on defense
- Team age/injury vulnerability
- Possible weaknesses on defensive line

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Raiders**
- Spread the passes around to your three big receivers.
- Mix in the run and short passes with Charlie Garner.
- Control either Rod or Charles Woodson to stop the pass.

**How to Beat the Raiders**
- Test their defensive line with the running game.
- Stay away from their star defenders.
- Play Nickel and Dime defenses to slow the passing game.

**Scouting Report**

Because of salary cap issues, the Raiders did not add many free agents. DT Dana Stubblefield (49ers) helps fill those defensive line slots left open during free agency.

**Key Pickups**
- Veterans DT Sam Adams (Bills) and DE Regan Upshaw (Redskins) will be sorely missed in both the locker room and the defensive line.

**2002 Season Record**

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**2002 Team Stats**

**2003 Draft Picks**

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<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
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<td>Tyler Brayton</td>
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<td>Teyo Johnson</td>
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<td>Sam Williams</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Doug Gabriel</td>
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<td>Brigham Young</td>
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<td>Jeremy Shabazz</td>
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<td>7R</td>
<td>Ryan Hoag</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Gustavus Adolphus College (Minn.)</td>
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**2002 Team Ratings**

- Overall: 84
- Offense: 87
- Defense: 82
- Special: 82

**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

- Scoring: 2nd
- Total Defense: 11th
- Total Defense: 1st
- Passing Defense: 23rd
- Rushing Defense: 3rd
- Points Allowed: 6th

<table>
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<th>Opponents</th>
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<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>92/203</td>
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<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
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<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
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<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>21–26–3–3</td>
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<td>28:38</td>
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**Star Players**

**Rich Gannon - Quarterback**

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★
- VIS ★★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- SPD XXX
- STR XX

**Tips**
Rich Gannon is one of the league’s best pocket quarterbacks. He has tremendous arm strength and passing accuracy and a group of veteran receivers to throw to. Don’t try scrambling with him, though— stick to the pocket.

**Charlie Garner - Halfback**

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★
- BTKL ★★★
- HND ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- STR XXX
- BLK X

**Tips**
Use Garner as an outside runner who uses speed more than brute strength. Also remember that he has excellent hands for a halfback, so integrate him into the passing game.

**Useful Plays**
- **Project X**
  Look for one of your big three receivers to separate from the defense and hit him on the run.

**Other Offensive Stars**

**Tim Brown - Wide Receiver**

**Key Stats**
- HND ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

Tim Brown has speed and some of the best hands in the NFL. Lay it out deep for him, and he gets to it.

**Jerry Rice - Wide Receiver**

**Key Stats**
- HND ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

The Legendary One is still a force to be reckoned with. And since he’s a number two receiver, he often face mismatches.

**Jerry Porter - Wide Receiver**

**Key Stats**
- ACC ★★★★★
- HND ★★★

Yet another incredible receiver, Porter often sees single coverage as defenses try to stop Brown and Rice.

**Defensive Stars**

**Charles Woodson - Left Cornerback**

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- SBLK ★★★★★

Woodson is deadly in pass coverage, but use him often in corner blitzes as well.

**Rod Woodson - Free Safety**

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

This future Hall of Famer is the perfect guy to play if you like controlling the secondary as a safety.

**Dana Stubblefield - Defensive Right Tackle**

**Key Stats**
- STR ★★★★★
- CVG ★★★

He’s slow as molasses, but Stubblefield is a good run-stopper and very proficient at covering short passes.
Scouting Report
The Eagles took a painful hit to the defense during the off season, but the team also picked up solid replacements. McNabb still lacks big WR targets; nonetheless, he’s a force to be reckoned with. Despite the off-season changes, the Eagles should be in the playoff mix again this year.

Team Strengths
• Strong-armed mobile quarterback
• Solid running game
• Great overall defense (especially the secondary)

Team Weaknesses
• Lost key LBs and Hugh Douglas on defense
• Lack of star receivers
• Thin on offensive line

Gameplay Tips
How to Win with the Eagles
• Use McNabb’s mobility to scramble and arm to throw deep.
• Take pressure off the WRs by running Duce Staley.
• Use the defensive backs to shut down the pass.

How to Beat the Eagles
• Pressure the QB with defensive line stunts and blitzes.
• Keep McNabb from running to the sides.
• Don’t make risky plays in the passing game.

Free Agency Moves
Key Pickups
FB Jon Ritchie (Raiders) will provide much-needed blocking for McNabb and Duce Staley. LB Nate Wayne (Packers) and LB Mark Simoneau (Falcons) were brought in to replace the departing Shawn Barber (Chiefs) and Barry Gardner (Browns).

Key Losses
LBs Barber and Gardner will be sorely missed, but DE Hugh Douglas (Jaguars) was the heart and soul of the Eagle defense. PR Brian Mitchell (Giants) will also be missed on special teams.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
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<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
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<td>DE</td>
<td>Miami (Fla.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>L.J. Smith</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Rutgers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wilbur “Billy” McMullen Jr.</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jamaal Green</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Miami (Fla.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Jeremy Bridges</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Southern Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Norman Lejeune</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>LSU</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Fever Team Ratings
Overall: 81
Offense: 83
Defense: 80
Special: 81

2002 NFL Team Rankings
Scoring: 4th
Total Offense: 10th
Passing Offense: 19th
Rushing Offense: 7th
Points Allowed: 2nd
**Star Players**

**Donovan McNabb - Quarterback**

**Key Strengths**
- **SPD** ★★★★
- **ACC** ★★★★★
- **ASTR** ★★★★★
- **PACR** ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
None

**Tips**
McNabb is a threat both running and throwing the ball. Use him well, and you have defenses scratching their heads trying to figure out what to do to stop him.

**Useful Plays**
- **PHI HB Swing**
  Roll out in the same direction as the HB. If his defender comes to you, toss it to Staley and he has clear running room. If not, tuck it away and run it yourself.
- **PHI QB Draw**
  It’s easy to get sacked by a blitz, so be prepared to audible another play. If the defense is right, though, this is a very useful play.
- **PHI Dino Weak**
  Use McNabb’s scrambling abilities to let Thrash get through his triple move deep. When he’s done, you have a wide-open target.

**Duce Staley - Halfback**

**Key Strengths**
- **HND** ★★★
- **ACC** ★★★
- **SPD** ★★★
- **BCTL** ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- **STR** ★★★

**Tips**
Duce Staley is a good overall runner who doesn’t have All-Pro stats but works well in the Eagle offense. Use him in the passing game and rush with him often to set the defense back on its heels.

**Useful Plays**
- **PHI Big Single Crack**
  Follow the pulling guard and head up the outside. If he doesn’t make the block, however, you’re toast.
- **PHI Crash Strong**
  This is all about judging where the hole opens. You’re tempted to go outside, but the big yards are up the side of the line.
- **PHI Clean Counter**
  Your biggest threat on this play is from the defender coming around the back side. Wait for your blocks, but don’t get caught from behind.

**Other Offensive Stars**

**Chad Lewis - Tight End**

**Key Stats**
- **HND** ★★★
- **BLD** ★★★

He has good hands, good speed, and he can block. Make him a key in both your passing and rushing offense.

**James Thrash - Wide Receiver**

**Key Stats**
- **SPD** ★★★★★
- **BLK** ★★★★★

Thrash is fast enough to provide McNabb a good target. Look for him deep downfield.

**Tra Thomas - Left Tackle**

**Key Stats**
- **STR** ★★★★★
- **BLK** ★★★★★

He should open up holes in the line for the running game. Watch for plays that have him pulling for the HB.

**Defensive Stars**

**Brian Dawkins - Free Safety**

**Key Stats**
- **SPD** ★★★★★
- **SBLK** ★★★

He’s good on coverage and can shed blocks on a blitz. Use him often.

**Troy Vincent - Left Cornerback**

**Key Stats**
- **SPD** ★★★★★
- **ACC** ★★★

He has speed and decent blitzing skills. Bring him in from time to time to hassle the QB.

**Corey Simon - Defensive Left Tackle**

**Key Stats**
- **SBLK** ★★★★★
- **STR** ★★★★★

With Hugh Douglas gone, it’s up to Simon to anchor the defensive line. He’s strong against the run and can rush the QB.
In part because of an injury to Jerome Bettis last season, the Steelers developed a dangerous passing game. This season they should have both the pass and the run. On defense, they have a talented group of linebackers but the secondary is suspect.

**Team Strengths**
- Strong WR tandem in Ward and Burress
- Talented LBs
- Strong running defense

**Team Weaknesses**
- Weak secondary
- Running game not as strong as it once was
- Reorganized offensive line

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Steelers**
- Pass the ball often.
- Run Bettis between the tackles.
- Help your secondary by dropping LBs back into coverage.

**How to Beat the Steelers**
- Pass deep.
- Force Bettis to run outside.
- Play Dime and Nickel defense to shut down the pass.

**Free Agency Moves**

**Key Pickups**
TE Jay Riemersma (Bills) and WR Chris Doering (Redskins) should add even more pop to the passing game.

**Key Losses**
It was time for QB Kordell Stewart (Bears) to go. But the secondary will feel the absence of S Lee Flowers (Broncos) if the first-round draft pick doesn’t pan out.

**2003 Draft Picks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>J.T. Wall</td>
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**Fever Team Ratings**

Overall: 80
Offense: 82
Defense: 79
Special: 74

**2002 NFL Team Rankings**

Scoring: 9th
Total Offense: 5th
Passing Offense: 7th
Rushing Offense: 9th
Total Defense: 7th
Passing Defense: 20th
Rushing Defense: 1st
Points Allowed: 16th

**2002 Team Stats**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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Star Players

Tommy Maddox - Quarterback

Key Strengths
ASTR ★★★★
PACR ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
SPD XX
STR X
ACC XX

Tips
Maddox has plenty of weapons to throw to, but he should look to Hines and Burress whenever possible. Keep him in the pocket and look for open routes.

Useful Plays
PIT M Post Flag
If the safeties double the deep route, look for your receivers crossing over the middle. If not, throw it long.

Jerome Bettis - Halfback

Key Strengths
ACC ★★★★
SPD ★★★★
STR ★★★★
BTKL ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
HND XXX

Tips
Bettis may have lost a step or two over the years, but he still has great strength. Run him up the middle and put the line on its heels. Every time he bulls his way through, he wears down the defense.

Useful Plays
PIT HB I Plunge
Get through the line and power your way downfield.

Other Offensive Stars

Hines Ward
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
HND ★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

Ward can get open just about anywhere on the field, and he has great hands. Send him deep on man coverage.

Plaxico Burress
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
STR ★★★★★
BLK ★★★

When the defense is keying on Hines Ward, Burress often faces mismatches. Make the defense pay for its mistakes.

Alan Faneca
Left Guard

Key Stats
HND ★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

Bettis should have Faneca’s numbers in his view when running up the left side of the line.

Defensive Stars

Joey Porter
Right Linebacker

Key Stats
SPD ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★

His combination of speed and strength makes Porter absolutely crushing on a linebacker blitz.

Jason Gildon
Left Linebacker

Key Stats
STR ★★★★
AGG ★★★★★

Gildon is another great LB. Because of his high aggressiveness rating, you can control another LB and let him cover his responsibilities on his own.

Kendrell Bell
Middle Linebacker

Key Stats
ACC ★★★★
CVG ★★★★★

Another fast linebacker, Bell is especially talented in pass defense.
San Diego Chargers

Scouting Report
San Diego features future stars Drew Brees and LaDainian Tomlinson at the core of the offense, and the franchise has worked hard to improve its defensive problems. The team has to improve on both sides of the ball in 2003 if it hopes to compete in the talent-stacked AFC West.

Team Strengths
- Fast, young running back
- Good QB/WR combo in Brees and Boston
- Team momentum on an upswing

Team Weaknesses
- Weak offensive line
- Weak passing defense
- No solid second receiver

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Chargers
- Get the ball to Boston.
- Find creative ways (like using the FB) to get blocking for Tomlinson.
- Help your defensive backs by pressuring the QB.

How to Beat the Chargers
- Pressure the offensive line with blitzes.
- Contain Tomlinson by forcing him up the middle.
- Pass often.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
WR David Boston (Cardinals) should open up the passing game while FB Lorenzo Neal (Bengals) should provide key blocks for young running back LaDainian Tomlinson.

Key Losses
Legendary LB Junior Seau (Dolphins) will be sorely missed.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Sammy Davis</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Andrew Pinnock</td>
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Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 81
Offense: 84
Defense: 78
Special: 81

2002 NFL Team Rankings
Scoring: 20th
Total Offense: 16th
Passing Offense: 22nd
Rushing Offense: 8th
Total Defense: 30th
Passing Defense: 32nd
Rushing Defense: 11th
Points Allowed: 22nd

2002 Season Record

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<td>Touchdowns</td>
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Star Players

Drew Brees - Quarterback

Key Strengths
ASTR ★★★★
PACR ★★★★★
SPD ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
ACC XX
STR XX

Tips
Brees is a pocket passer, so don’t try to run with him. He does have a very strong arm, however, and he can send the ball downfield with good accuracy. Work some deep plays into your passing offense.

LaDainian Tomlinson - Running Back

Key Strengths
SPD ★★★★★
ACC ★★★★★
HND ★★★

Key Weaknesses
BLK XX

Tips
Tomlinson is an all-around useful back who can run to the outside or power through the inside. He also has great hands for a running back and has a strong blocking FB in front of him.

Other Offensive Stars

Lorenzo Neal
Fullback
Key Stats
BLK ★★★
ACC ★★★★★

He’s fast and a great blocker. Use him to open holes for Tomlinson whenever possible.

Cory Raymer
Center
Key Stats
STR ★★★★★
BLK ★★★

Raymer can open up the center for some hard-nosed running. Use his skills whenever possible.

David Boston
Wide Receiver
Key Stats
SPD ★★★★★
ACC ★★★

Boston is likely to be one of the Chargers’ most useful weapons this year.

Defensive Stars

Donnie Edwards
Middle Linebacker
Key Stats
CVG ★★★★
ACC ★★★

Edwards is excellent at stopping the pass in the middle of the field. He can also blitz well.

Quentin Jammer
Left Cornerback
Key Stats
SPD ★★★★
ACC ★★★

He’s incredibly fast. Use him to cover or plant the QB on a blitz.

Marcellus Wiley
Defensive Left End
Key Stats
SBLK ★★★★★
CVG ★★★

Wiley is also incredibly aggressive. Let the computer control him, and drop him into coverage in short passing situations.
San Francisco has virtually the same team heading onto the field that got into the playoffs last year. This year, however, there’s a new coach (Dennis Erickson) at the helm, and the rest of the division should be a lot more competitive. If the team can keep the offense rolling and fill the holes made by free agency in the defensive line, they could return to the playoffs.

**Team Strengths**
- Potent passing game
- Fast running backs
- One of the league’s best receivers (Terrell Owens)

**Team Weaknesses**
- Green defensive secondary
- Two solid players on the defensive line lost
- Weak special teams

**Gameplay Tips**

**How to Win with the Niners**
- Pass often.
- Use the running game when the defense sets up for the pass.
- Play conservative defense while putting up big numbers on offense.

**How to Beat the Niners**
- Throw deep on their secondary.
- Double-cover Terrell Owens.
- Blitz the QB on Hearst’s side—he doesn’t block well.

### Free Agency Moves

**Key Pickups**
The Niners didn’t add much through free agency this year, but they did pick up TE Jed Weaver (Dolphins), DT Travis Kirschke (Lions), and DT Ross Kolodziej (Giants). The two defenders should mostly be fighting for backup snaps.

**Key Losses**
The loss of DT Dana Stubblefield (Raiders) and DE Chike Okeafor (Seahawks) is significant to the Niner defensive line.

#### 2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Kwame Harris</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anthony Adams</td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Penn State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Andrew Williams</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Miami (Fla.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Brandon Lloyd</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Aaron Walker</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Arnaz Battle</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Notre Dame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ken Dorsey</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>Miami (Fla.)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Fever Team Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offense</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special</td>
<td>72</td>
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### 2002 NFL Team Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>49ers</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Offense</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass Offense</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>340</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing Offense</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>340</td>
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### 2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>49ers</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Downs (Rushing–Passing–By Penalty)</td>
<td>141–182–19</td>
<td>96–188–23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>127/243</td>
<td>99/211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>8/13</td>
<td>8/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,701</td>
<td>5,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,082–5.3</td>
<td>978–5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>2,244</td>
<td>1,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>489–4.6</td>
<td>394–4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3,457</td>
<td>3,506</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passing (Comp–Att–Int–Avg)</td>
<td>354–571–10–6.26</td>
<td>340–552–19–6.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>26/36</td>
<td>22/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>16–23–2–1</td>
<td>14–23–2–1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>32:00</td>
<td>28:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Players

Terrell Owens - Wide Receiver

Key Strengths
- **SPD** ★★★★★
- **ACC** ★★★★★
- **HND** ★★★★★
- **END** ★★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- **BLK** ✘✘

Tips
Owens has quickly become one of the best and most explosive WRs in the NFL. Get him open however you can. If the ball’s even in his vicinity, he’s likely to come down with it.

Useful Plays
- **SF Deep Strike**
  Get air under the ball and leave Owens with enough room to accelerate to it.
- **SF Dino Week**
  It takes time for this play to develop, but if the defense isn’t pressuring Garcia, Owens can often free himself for a big gain.
- **Iso Chaos**
  Owens splits across the middle. Hit him on the run for some extra yards after the catch.

Garrison Hearst - Halfback

Key Strengths
- **SPD** ★★★★
- **ACC** ★★★★
- **HND** ★★
- **AGI** ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- **BLK** ✗

Tips
Hearst is a finesse runner, so use him to the outside. He also has good hands for a halfback, so don’t be afraid to get him into the passing game. He’s not much of a blocker, however, so don’t rely on him for lead blocks or QB protection.

Useful Plays
- **SF Half Bounce**
  If the blocking sticks, you find plenty of open space to run with this play.
- **SF Angle X Pro**
  Give Hearst time to get open deep before releasing the pass.
- **SF Ace Punch**
  Spread the defense with motion and catch a blitzing defense off guard.

Other Offensive Stars

Jeff Garcia
Quarterback

Key Stats
- **ACTR** ★★★★
- **PAC R** ★★★★★

Garcia, a very accurate QB, should look to Owens when he’s open. When he’s not, Garcia should look to a secondary receiver or back for a short pass.

Jeremy Newberry
Center

Key Stats
- **STR** ★★★★★
- **BLK** ★★★★★

Look for big holes up the middle, thanks to Newberry.

Kevan Barlow
Halfback

Key Stats
- **ACC** ★★★★★
- **BLK** ★★★

Barlow is quicker and a better blocker than Hearst. Platoon him in when you need pass protection blocking more than an outlet receiver.

Defensive Stars

Bryant Young
Defensive Left Tackle

Key Stats
- **STR** ★★★★★
- **TKL** ★★★★★

Young is one of the game’s best tackling defenders. Use him to shut down the run and pressure the QB.

Derek Smith
Right Linebacker

Key Stats
- **SPD** ★★★
- **TKL** ★★★

Smith is a good coverage linebacker for players who like to control that position.

Ahmed Plummer
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- **SPD** ★★★★
- **ACC** ★★★★★

Not as fast as some CBs, but still fast enough to keep up with most receivers.
Seattle Seahawks

Scouting Report
QB Matt Hasselbeck finally approached his potential in the second half of last year and has raised hopes for the passing game this year. Defensive guru Ray Rhodes stepped onboard as defensive coordinator. If he can improve this defense, this team could be a playoff contender.

Team Strengths
• Strong passing game
• Quick, powerful running back
• New depth at secondary

Team Weaknesses
• Awful run defense
• Totally revamped kicking game
• QB still hasn’t reached his potential

Gameplay Tips
How to Win with the Seahawks
• Don’t run with Hasselbeck, stay in the pocket and hit open receivers.
• Mix up the run with Shaun Alexander, but don’t overuse him and fumble.
• Use your cornerbacks to shut down the passing game.

How to Beat the Seahawks
• Force them to throw to WRs other than Mason
• Keep McNair contained and play short passing defenses
• Find and test their greenest defensive backs

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
DT Norman Hand (Saints) should help improve Seattle’s league-worst run defense, and DE Chike Okeafor (49ers) should put a little more line pressure on opposing quarterbacks.

Key Losses
The loss of both P Jeff Feagles (Giants) and Rian Lindell (Bills) could set the special teams back.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Marcus Trufant</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Washington State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ken Hamlin</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Arkansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wayne Hunter</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Seneca Wallace</td>
<td>QB</td>
<td>Iowa State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Solomon Bates</td>
<td>ILB</td>
<td>Arizona State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chris Davis</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Syracuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rashad Moore</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Josh Brown</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Taco Wallace</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Kansas State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fever Team Ratings
Overall: ................................................. 80
Offense: .................................................. 81
Defense: .................................................. 80
Special: ................................................... 76

2002 NFL Team Rankings
Scoring: 16th
Total Offense: 7th
Passing Offense: 3rd
Rushing Offense: 20th
Total Defense: 28th
Passing Defense: 18th
Rushing Defense: 32nd
Points Allowed: 24th

2002 Season Record
W 7
L 9
Tie 0
PCT 0.438
PF 355
PA 389
Home 3–5
Road 4–4
AFC 2–2
NFC 5–7
DIV 2–4

2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Seahawks</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>93/216</td>
<td>100/215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>6/21</td>
<td>6/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,818</td>
<td>5,852</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,050–5.5</td>
<td>1,083–5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,740</td>
<td>2,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>430–4.0</td>
<td>500–4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>4,078</td>
<td>3,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>23/29</td>
<td>22/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rushing–Passing–Returns–Defensive)</td>
<td>17–19–3–2</td>
<td>18–21–2–1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>28:55</td>
<td>31:05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Star Players

### Matt Hasselbeck - Quarterback

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★☆☆
- PACR ★★★☆☆
- VIS ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- SPD XXX
- BTKL ✘

**Tips**
Don’t run with Hasselbeck. You won’t get far. He has a decent arm and decent passing accuracy, though, so don’t be afraid to air it out a little. You can’t thread a needle at 40 yards, but you should be able to tag the open man.

**Useful Plays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wide Drag</td>
<td>Drift in the same direction as your open receiver and buy a few more seconds to get him open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thunder Pass</td>
<td>This play keeps a blocker back to buy some time. Look for one of your two primary receivers to break open deep.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Shaun Alexander - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★
- BTKL ★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- HND XXX
- BCTL XXX

**Tips**
Alexander is a quick back who can get to the outside. Use him to take some pressure off Hasselbeck and give the receivers time to get open. He only has marginal hands, however, and he has a low ball control rating—which means that fumbles are a possibility if you use him too often.

**Useful Plays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEA HB Iso Power</td>
<td>No lead blocker, but Alexander has the speed to hit the open hole. Don’t forget to send the receiver into motion before the play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA Ace Punch</td>
<td>Spread the field, and then take it up the middle of the defensive line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Iso Toss</td>
<td>This play is all about reading the blocks. Pick the right path and you chew up some yards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Offensive Stars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Darrell Jackson</th>
<th>Koren Robinson</th>
<th>Walter Jones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wide Receiver</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wide Receiver</strong></td>
<td><strong>Left Tackle</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Stats</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Stats</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Stats</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND ★★★★</td>
<td>STR ★★★★</td>
<td>HND ★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
<td>BLK ★★★★</td>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jackson is best in routes that have him cut and accelerate. Send him over the middle whenever possible. Robinson is a deep threat, especially when Jackson is double-teamed. When you see number 71 laying down a block, follow him to daylight.

### Defensive Stars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shawn Springs</th>
<th>John Randle</th>
<th>Norman Hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Left Cornerback</strong></td>
<td><strong>Defensive Right Tackle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Defensive Left Tackle</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Stats</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Stats</strong></td>
<td><strong>Key Stats</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD ★★★★</td>
<td>STR ★★★★</td>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC ★★★★</td>
<td>AGG ★★★★</td>
<td>CVG ★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phenomenal speed and good tackling skills make Springs a threat in coverage or on a blitz. Use Randle to stalk opposing QBs and to shut down the run on his side of the field. Hand is excellent when dropping back into coverage, but you can also use him to bulldoze his way to the QB.
St. Louis Rams

Scouting Report
After being decimated by injuries to key stars last year, the Rams hope to return to their previous dominance. All the pieces are in place on offense (as long as Kurt Warner rebounds from last season’s disappointments), if the defense can bounce back as well.

Team Strengths
- Great receivers
- Talented running back
- Wide-open offense

Team Weaknesses
- Can Kurt Warner bounce back?
- Lack of depth at running back position
- No standout middle linebacker

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Rams
- Pass deep and pass often.
- Use Faulk as both running back and a receiver.
- Balance your offense and keep pushing the ball down the field.

How to Beat the Rams
- Force the Rams to slow down their offense.
- Play defenses that don’t allow Faulk to get around the corner.
- Push your offense to score often and control the clock when you’re ahead.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
Adding OT Kyle Turley (Saints) and C Dave Wohlabaugh (Browns) immediately gives the Rams one of the best offensive lines in football. TE Cam Cleeland (Patriots) is yet another weapon on the Rams’ offense.

Key Losses
The Rams traded Trung Canidate (Redskins). They won’t miss his fumbles, but they will miss having a proven backup to Marshall Faulk.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jimmy Kennedy</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Penn State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pisa Tinoisamoa</td>
<td>OLB</td>
<td>Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kevin Curtis</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Utah State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Shaun McDonald</td>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Arizona State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dejuan Groce</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dan Curley</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Eastern Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shane Walton</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Notre Dame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kevin Garrett</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>SMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Scott Tercero</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Scott Shanle</td>
<td>OLB</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Richard Angulo</td>
<td>TE</td>
<td>Western New Mexico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 83
Offense: 87
Defense: 80
Special: 80

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 23rd
Total Defense: 13th
Total Offense: 13th
Passing Defense: 12th
Passing Offense: 2nd
Rushing Defense: 14th
Rushing Offense: 30th
Points Allowed: 23rd

2002 Season Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rams</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total First Downs</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Down Conversions</td>
<td>81/206</td>
<td>71/197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
<td>6/10</td>
<td>5/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Offensive Yards</td>
<td>5,559</td>
<td>5,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offense (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>1,024–5.4</td>
<td>944–5.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Rushing Yards</td>
<td>1,405</td>
<td>1,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushing (Plays–Average Yards)</td>
<td>343–4.1</td>
<td>445–4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>4,154</td>
<td>3,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>19/25</td>
<td>26/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>30:38</td>
<td>29:22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2002 Team Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rams</th>
<th>Opponents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tie</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCT</td>
<td>0.438</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PF</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>6–2</td>
<td>6–10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>4–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFC</td>
<td>2–2</td>
<td>0–16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFC</td>
<td>5–7</td>
<td>12–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIV</td>
<td>4–2</td>
<td>1–7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Star Players

#### Kurt Warner - Quarterback

**Key Strengths**
- ASTR ★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★
- AGG ★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- SPD XXX
- INJ XXX

**Tips**
Kurt Warner has the skills of a top QB. More important, he has a ton of great WRs and a MVP-caliber RB at his disposal. Spread the ball around. Always look for the open man, even if he’s your third or fourth option.

**Useful Plays**
- STL Blue Cross
  - If the corners are tight on Bruce, hit him quickly, just as he makes his move to the middle.

#### Marshall Faulk - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★
- HND ★★★★★
- BCTL ★★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- INJ XXX
- BLK XX

**Tips**
Faulk is one of the best multipurpose backs in the game. He’s fast, he can break tackles, he has great endurance, he rarely fumbles, and he can catch the ball better than most WRs. Just take care not to overuse him and get him injured.

**Useful Plays**
- STL 4WR HB Sweep
  - Watch your pulling guard’s block and go outside or inside accordingly.
- Big Pro Belly
  - Try flipping the direction of this play and using the other side of your talented offensive line.
- HB Swing
  - Time your throw right and Faulk has the sidelines all to himself.

### Other Offensive Stars

#### Isaac Bruce
- Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- HND ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Isaac Bruce is just one of the Rams’ many good receivers. He has good hands and good speed, so lean heavily on him.

#### Torry Holt
- Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- HND ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★

He’s not quite as quick as Bruce, but Torry Holt has very good hands. He won’t drop many passes.

#### Orlando Pace
- Left Tackle

**Key Stats**
- BLK ★★★★★
- AGG ★★★★★

Pace is one of the best tackles in the league. Faulk should be right behind him on many of your running plays.

### Defensive Stars

#### Aeneas Williams
- Left Cornerback

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Williams is mainly a coverage back, but he can be useful on blitzes if he has an open shot at the QB.

#### Grant Wistrom
- Defensive Right End

**Key Stats**
- SBLK ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★

Wistrom, fast for a defensive end, can get to the QB before he knows what hit him.

#### Adam Archuleta
- Strong Safety

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- CVG ★★★

Archuleta is a rock in coverage. But don’t expect to take down a running back with him alone.
The Super Bowl champs are heading into 2003 with essentially all the same pieces. The defense still dominates, and the offense is still passable. The main difference is that this year, the entire league is gunning for them.

Scouting Report

Team Strengths
• League’s best defense
• Accurate, conservative passing offense
• Big, running fullback

Team Weaknesses
• Lackluster running game
• Low-scoring offense
• Not much depth at HB

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Buccaneers
• Play conservative mistake-free offense.
• Pound the running game with Alstott.
• Play aggressive defense and force turnovers.

How to Beat the Buccaneers
• Play smart and conservative offense.
• Run as much as possible.
• Attack the line and force Alstott to string his runs outside.

Scoring: 18th
Total Offense: 24th
Passing Offense: 15th
Rushing Offense: 27th

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
LB Dwayne Rudd (Browns) and LB Clayton White (Giants) should add depth to Tampa’s already world-class defense.

Key Losses
Super Bowl MVP FS Dexter Jackson (Cardinals) got a contract offer he couldn’t refuse. The Bucs have to fill his spot.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Pos</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dewayne White</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Louisville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chris Simms</td>
<td>QB</td>
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<td>Lance Nimmo</td>
<td>OT</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Austin King</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Northwestern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sean Mahan</td>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Notre Dame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Torrie Cox</td>
<td>CB</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 81
Offense: 81
Defense: 83
Special: 78

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 18th
Total Defense: 1st
Total Offense: 24th
Passing Defense: 1st
Rushing Offense: 15th
Rushing Defense: 5th
Points Allowed: 1st

2002 Season Record

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<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>L</td>
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2002 Team Stats

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<td>Fourth-Down Conversions</td>
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<td>17/23</td>
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<td>Touchdowns</td>
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<td>Time of Possession</td>
<td>31:43</td>
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</table>
## Star Players

### Brad Johnson - Quarterback

#### Key Strengths
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★★
- ACC ★★★

#### Key Weaknesses
- BTKL ✘✘
- INJ ✘✘

#### Tips
Brad Johnson is not the flashiest QB in the league, but he plays smart football and doesn’t make a lot of stupid mistakes. When controlling him, do the same. Look for short, open passes, but keep an eye downfield at all times.

### Mike Alstott - Fullback

#### Key Strengths
- ACC ★★★★
- SPD ★★★★
- STR ★★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★★

#### Key Weaknesses
- None

#### Tips
Alstott is an incredibly useful tool in this offense. He can run up the middle with power. He’s fast enough to go a little bit outside, he can block, and he has good hands. Use him as much as possible.

### Useful Plays

- **TB Double In-Out**
  - If the defender follows when you run motion, they’re in man defense. Look for someone crossing the middle in the open.

- **Post Over Go**
  - The two deep routes should open up the middle for Dilger to get open on the crossing pattern. If he’s covered, look for Alstott in the flat.

- **Motion TE Under**
  - If a defender follows the motion, look for Dilger or McCardell crossing the middle. If he doesn’t follow the motion, one of your left side receivers is in single coverage.

- **Split FB Drive**
  - After passing several times, pound the ball up the middle and make the defense remember the run.

- **FB Power Weak**
  - Let your HB make the block and then turn on the speed with Alstott.

- **FB Iso Big**
  - Once you get past the defensive line, you should have some open space. Don’t string this run to the outside.

### Other Offensive Stars

- **Keyshawn Johnson**
  - Wide Receiver
  - Key Stats
    - ACC ★★★★★
    - SPD ★★★★★

  Keyshawn Johnson has good hands and quick feet. The Buccaneer offense is conservative, but don’t be afraid to hit him with the long ball.

- **Ken Dilger**
  - Tight End
  - Key Stats
    - SPD ★★★★
    - HND ★★★★★

  Dilger is very important to this short, accurate passing offense. Look for him in the short routes and hit him with a crisp pass.

- **Keenan McCardell**
  - Wide Receiver
  - Key Stats
    - SPD ★★★★
    - HND ★★★★★

  McCardell is a solid second receiver who often is open when Johnson is double-covered.

### Defensive Stars

- **Warren Sapp**
  - Defensive Right Tackle
  - Key Stats
    - STR ★★★★★
    - SBLK ★★★★★

  Sapp is a force of nature on the defensive line. If you like controlling lineman, you’re hard pressed to find a better one.

- **Derrick Brooks**
  - Right Linebacker
  - Key Stats
    - ACC ★★★★★
    - SBLK ★★★★★

  Brooks is a fearsome blitzer and a dangerous cover man. Use him in both situations.

- **John Lynch**
  - Strong Safety
  - Key Stats
    - ACC ★★★★★
    - TKL ★★★★★

  Lynch is great in coverage, and he’s downright nasty on a safety blitz. If you use one, he’s your man.
The Titans are coming back from a strong 2003 season with a healthy QB Steve McNair at the helm. McNair looks better than ever, but RB Eddie George has been slowing down over the last two years, and the running game may not be as powerful as usual. If the top two draft picks pan out, however, the Titans have all the tools necessary for a Super Bowl run.

Team Strengths
- Balanced offense
- Strong-armed running QB
- Young, powerful defensive line

Team Weaknesses
- Running game slowing down
- Inexperienced secondary
- Not much depth at WR

Gameplay Tips

How to Win with the Titans
- Use your running game to open up your WRs deep.
- Use short passes to the TE and RB.
- Pressure the QB with your defensive line.

How to Beat the Titans
- Double-cover Mason and force McNair to throw to other receivers.
- Keep McNair contained and play short passing defenses.
- Find and test their greenest defensive backs.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
The Titans didn’t make any key free agent pickups this off-season due to tight salary cap numbers.

Key Losses
CB Daimon Sidney (Bills) and CB Donald Mitchell (Cowboys) left during free agency and the Titans were forced to draft defensive backs to replace them.

2003 Draft Picks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rnd</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andre Woolfolk</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Rien Long</td>
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<td>Donnie Nickey</td>
<td>FS</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Todd Williams</td>
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<td>Florida State</td>
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</table>

Fever Team Ratings

Overall: 81
Offense: 83
Defense: 80
Special: 83

2002 NFL Team Rankings

Scoring: 14th
Total Offense: 17th
Passing Offense: 20th
Rushing Offense: 11th
Total Defense: 10th
Passing Defense: 25th
Rushing Defense: 2nd
Points Allowed: 11th

2002 Season Record

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2002 Team Stats

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Third Down Conversions</td>
<td>94/216</td>
<td>76/202</td>
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<td>Fourth Down Conversions</td>
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<td>9/18</td>
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<td>372 - 3.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Passing Yards</td>
<td>3320</td>
<td>3540</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacks</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Field Goals</td>
<td>25/31</td>
<td>14/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Touchdowns</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Time Of Possession</td>
<td>32:47</td>
<td>27:13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Star Players**

### Steve McNair - Quarterback

**Key Strengths**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ASTR ★★★★★★
- PACR ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- AGI ★★★

**Tips**
McNair can kill other teams, with his arm and with his legs. Throw deep if you have an open man (preferably Mason), but tuck it in and run whenever the opportunity presents itself.

**Useful Plays**
- **TEN Icy Flag Post**
  Wycheck runs deep, Mason crosses the middle, and George runs into the flat. Pick your target or run it with McNair.
- **Double Post**
  Let McNair air it out to Mason if he is open deep. Otherwise look for Eddie George in the flat.
- **TE Quick Shot**
  Short, but deadly passing play. Look for Wycheck breaking open.

### Eddie George - Halfback

**Key Strengths**
- SJD ★★★★
- ACC ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★★★
- BCTL ★★★★★★

**Key Weaknesses**
- SPD ★★★
- ACC ★★★

**Tips**
Eddie George may have lost a step or two, but he can still run with the best in the league. Vary your game between inside and outside runs and throw to him out of the flat. He doesn’t tire easily or fumble much.

**Useful Plays**
- **TEN Half Wing Belly**
  Run between your two left side blockers. There’s usually a hole.
- **TEN Pro Strong Flood**
  George is tough to tackle after a catch.
- **Twins Bounce**
  Follow your FB and pulling guard, and let them pick up the first defenders.

### Other Offensive Stars

**Derrick Mason**
- Wide Receiver

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Mason is McNair’s most reliable target, both deep and across the middle.

**Frank Wycheck**
- Tight End

**Key Stats**
- HND ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★

This TE is a reliable workhorse in the short passing game.

**Brad Hopkins**
- Left Tackle

**Key Stats**
- AGG ★★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Eddie George should always look for holes opened by this tough left tackle.

### Defensive Stars

**Jevon Kearse**
- Left Tackle

**Key Stats**
- STR ★★★★★
- SBLK ★★★★★

Use line stunts to get “The Freak” a clean shot at the QB.

**Samari Rolle**
- Cornerback

**Key Stats**
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

Rolle is great for CB blitzes or covering the opposing team’s best WR.

**Keith Bulluck**
- Left Linebacker

**Key Stats**
- ACC ★★★★★
- SPD ★★★★★

Use him on blitzes or covering the middle on passing plays.
Washington Redskins

Scouting Report
The Redskins were phenomenally busy during the off season, and they should be a better team for the effort. Although the Redskins lost some key players, this upgraded team could be fighting for a wild card spot this season.

Team Strengths
- Excellent overall defense
- New top-quality WRs
- Explosive offensive philosophy

Team Weaknesses
- Still no solid, established QB
- Lack of star receivers
- Weak special teams

Gameplay Tips
How to Win with the Redskins
- Use the new WRs and take it to the air.
- Get Trung Canidate into the game.
- Read the defense and make quick, short passes when available.

How to Beat the Redskins
- Pressure the QB and make him throw rushed passes.
- Force Canidate to run to the inside.
- Balance your offense and don’t let them tee off on your QB.

Free Agency Moves

Key Pickups
The Redskins made so many free agent pickups, we only have space to list some of them here: G Randy Thomas (Jets), G Dave Fiore (49ers), DT Brandon Noble (Cowboys), DE Regan Upshaw (Raiders), K John Hall (Jets), WR Patrick Johnson (Jaguars), WR Laveranues Coles (Jets), KR Chad Morton (Jets), RB Trung Canidate (Rams).

Key Losses
RB Stephen Davis (Panthers) was a good runner but not a good fit for this offense. DT Daryl Gardener (Broncos), however, was one of the most important players on the team last year.

2003 Draft Picks

Rd  Player   Pos   School
2   Taylor Jacobs   WR   Florida
3   Derrick Dockery   OG   Texas
7   Gibran Hamdan   QB   Indiana

Fever Team Ratings
Overall: 79
Offense: 78
Defense: 82
Special: 79

2002 NFL Team Rankings
Scoring: 25th
Total Offense: 20th
Passing Offense: 21st
Rushing Offense: 13th
Total Defense: 5th
Passing Defense: 5th
Rushing Defense: 12th
Points Allowed: 21st

2002 Team Stats

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<tbody>
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2002 Season Record

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<td>1–5</td>
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</table>
Star Players

Patrick Ramsey - Quarterback

Key Strengths
- ASTR ★★★★
- PACR ★★★

Key Weaknesses
- SPD ✘✘
- STR ✘
- INJ ★★★

Tips
Ramsey isn’t the highest-rated QB in the league or even the highest-rated offensive player on the Redskins. He does have a variety of receivers to throw to, so you can still develop a solid offense. Just don’t try to run.

Key Strengths
- ACC ★★★★
- SPD ★★★★

Key Weaknesses
- BCTL ★★★★
- BTKL ★★★★
- HND ✘✘
- INJ ✘

Tips
It’s best to know Canidate’s weaknesses before starting. He’s fast, but prone to injury and fumbling. He also doesn’t have good hands. Despite these weaknesses, it’s imperative to run with him to open up the passing game. Look for plays that protect him from the big hits.

Tips
Rod Gardner
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★★
- HND ★★★★★

Gardner has the speed and acceleration to get distance from the defensive backs.

Laveranues Coles
Wide Receiver

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

This free agent pick-up could help kick the Redskins’ passing game into overdrive. Get him open over the middle or deep down the field.

Chris Samuels
Left Tackle

Key Stats
- STR ★★★★★
- BLK ★★★★★

Samuels is a rock on the offensive line for both the passing game and the running game. Go to his side whenever possible.

Defensive Stars

LB 57
Left Linebacker

Key Stats
- ACC ★★★★★
- CVG ★★★★★

LB 57 is one of the fastest and best linebackers you can control. Send him in on blitzes or to cover against the pass.

Champ Bailey
Left Cornerback

Key Stats
- SPD ★★★★★
- ACC ★★★★★

One of the fastest players in the game, he’s better in coverage than on the blitz. But try to use his speed to pressure the QB whenever possible.

Jessie Armstead
Right Linebacker

Key Stats
- SBLK ★★★★★
- CVG ★★★★★

Here’s another top linebacker for the Redskins. Control one LB and let the other cause havoc under computer control.
Wearing the Owner’s Hat

Once you have the onfield action covered, you’re probably looking for more. This is where you find it. In this section, we look at the game from a perspective that goes beyond the playing field.

We start with the Classic Challenge and then move on to Fever’s in-depth Dynasty mode. Each adds countless hours to your gameplay experience, and you should try your hand at both of them before you move on to the Fever superstar strategies in the next section.

Classic Challenge

After you’ve proven that you can beat the best in the NFL, take a shot at the best football teams of all time. In the Classic Challenge mode, you take on all-time great teams like the ’72 Dolphins and ’85 Bears. If you’re good enough, you can take them down.

Here’s a quick look at each team you face.

1998 Broncos

Stats
Overall: 84
Offense: 87
Defense: 82
Special: 83

1967 Packers

Stats
Overall: 82
Offense: 84
Defense: 81
Special: 86

1993 Cowboys

Stats
Overall: 86
Offense: 91
Defense: 83
Special: 84
### Dynasty Mode

In Dynasty mode, you really test your skills as an all-around football guru. If you hope to create a dynasty worth remembering, you must be good on the field and also stay ahead of the competition during the off season. Tame the salary cap, the draft, and the free agent market, and create a team for the ages.

### Fantasy Draft

The Fantasy Draft randomly gives your team a slot in the draft order. Our team started at 11, so we still get some good picks. Build a team that suits your playing style. If you like running the ball, pick a good HB early. If you’re more comfortable passing, start with a top QB.

We started with Michael Vick because we like mobile quarterbacks. We’ll build around him. The next step is to get some offensive linemen around him and then a core for our defense.

Don’t waste time on kickers and punters, even ones with high ratings. They’re still around late in the draft, and their skills are largely based on how good you are with the kicking meter.

Also, use your top picks for your starting lineup. It won’t do you much good to have high-ranked backups, at least not in your first season.

Pay attention to your salary cap. If you see two players with similar skills, pick the one with the lower salary. Next year, you’ll have more money for big free agent signings. Veteran stars usually command high salaries, even though their skills are declining. Pick cheap and young—you’ll do better over the long haul.

### Setting Up Your Franchise

To start, either pick your own team or start with a Fantasy Draft. We’ll walk through the Fantasy Draft, but if you want to take your favorite team through Dynasty, switch off the Fantasy Draft option.
Starting the Season

Next up is the regular season. By this point, you’re familiar with playing through a season, so start the action. We’ll pick up again when the season ends.

TIP

During the season, keep your eyes open for trades. The computer won’t often offer up exactly what you need, so be proactive and test the trading market before you start each game.

Trade Proposals

Other teams offer their players in exchange for yours at this point in the Dynasty mode. Pay close attention to the player’s position and salary. If everything lines up right, you may improve your team dramatically with a smart trade. Look for trades offered in positions in which your team is deep. If you can make the trade and still have a quality player in that position, you’ve done well.

We picked our team to get the best possible starting lineup, so we don’t have depth this year. A trade would leave us stranded at almost any position. We’ll pass.

The Draft

Now comes the draft—the most crucial period in Dynasty mode. Your performance here determines the success of your team more than any other aspect of the Dynasty mode. Here are a couple of quick pointers to help you with the draft.

Tip 1: Draft for Your Needs

Don’t just pick the best player. Remember, you’re trying to fill slots with the best players possible. But if the best available players have stats way in excess of your needs for the positions you need filled, go ahead and pick them. They’ll make great trade bait in the future.

Tip 2: Bide Your Time on Special Teams Players

Kickers and punters often last well into the draft. Don’t worry about grabbing them early, even if they’re the best player on the board. They’re usually around a few rounds.

Tip 3: Check Out the Suggested Picks

These usually are players you could use on your roster.

Tip 4: Don’t Stress over Low-Round Picks

They’re usually just role players. Pick them to play as backups.

We picked our punter on the third round because there wasn’t much else we needed on the draft board. We probably could have waited until the fourth round and still picked up a great punter. We used the rest of our picks on role players and a highly rated backup guard that we will use for trade bait down the road.

Retiring and Departing

Now that the season is over, check out your retiring players. You have to fill their empty slots.

We lost QB Doug Flutie and P Chris Gardocki. This actually helps us: Flutie has a high salary and punters are easy to replace.

Contract Negotiations

Here’s where you make or break your dynasty. You must be brutal and cut players who have high salaries, even if they’re fan favorites. There’s little room for nostalgia under the salary cap.

We cut Gilbert Brown because his numbers are waning and a lower-priced journeyman easily tops his stats. As far as the other players are concerned, we kept only those with low salaries.

Sign Free Agents

Free agency is a good way to pick up a couple of impact players. Be wary of spending the big bucks on a single star, however. Unless he’s a missing piece in your starting rotation or a key backup, you’ll often do better through trades and the draft.

We didn’t see anyone that we really needed right off the bat. We were tempted to pick up a punter, but decided to wait. They’re easy to get in the draft.
Rookie Contracts

Sign your players. Lock the good ones down to a long contract; keep short contracts on the role players.

The Start of the Next Season

Now it’s time to see how good your off season was. Start the next season and play it through. Keep trades in mind during the season. Good luck and have fun doing it all over again!

Our team made the playoffs the second year without any major signings. In the second year, we were able to pick up a top HB in free agency. We also traded for a high draft pick from the Bears, which helped us shore up our defense. By the fifth year, we made the Super Bowl.

5 Tips For Keeping Your Dynasty on Top

Tip 1: Don’t Get Attached to Names

In the Dynasty mode of NFL Fever, forget that you’re dealing with real players. Sentimental attachment to your top players results in bad moves.

Think of your players as statistics and numbers. Look at their age, their salary, and their player rankings. When the rankings start to slip, jettison your player, no matter how important he’s been to the franchise in the past.

Tip 2: Trade for High Draft Picks

Most of the useful players you get in the draft come in the first two or three rounds. Don’t be afraid to trade players and lower-round draft picks for a high-round draft pick. Rounds five, six, and seven rarely, if ever, provide a starter for your squad. Use these picks to trade up to a first- or second-round draft pick.

Tip 3: Trade During the Season

Don’t wait until the last moment to try to pick up some draft picks with a smart trade. Watch the injury wire to see when a team loses a top player in a position where you have depth. If you time it right, you can make a trade in their hour of need and steal away a top draft pick for the off season.

Tip 4: Don’t Go Crazy in Free Agency

If you spend too much money before you reach the draft, you won’t be able to sign your top draft picks. That much money invalidates all the work you did trying to get these picks. Pick players to fill slots, and don’t get sucked in by big names.

Tip 5: Focus on Players Who Help Your Style of Play

You’re the one playing through the seasons, so don’t waste a lot of salary money, drafting focus, or trading power on positions that you really don’t care about. If you play mostly a passing game and only run to shake things up a bit, keep a journeyman halfback on board and spend the extra cash on top receivers.

Think about how you play defense as well. Some player love to stay back in a Nickel or Dime defense and stop the run themselves. If you do this, you don’t need a lot of great linebackers—but you’d better pick up some good cornerbacks and safeties.
In our final section, learn what it takes to be a *Fever* superstar. Here are tricks for players who’ve mastered the skills taught in the rest of the guide and still want to learn more.

If you plan to play *Fever* on Xbox Live, pay close attention. The competition is fierce, and you need every advantage you can get.

**Custom Assignments**

Knowing how to tweak your Custom Assignments, through a menu buried deep in your personal profile menu, can give you a huge advantage over the competition. Here’s a quick overview of the items you can tune.

**Broken Route Action**

This controls what your receiver does when he can’t go through his route. In Trigger Passing mode, hit the left button and your receiver automatically follows this route.

**Options:**
- To end zone
- To sideline
- To open zone
- To QB

**Read Route Delay**

This determines how long your running back waits to block in case of a blitz.

**Options:**
- Short
- Medium
- Long

**Disguise Coverage**

This controls what your defensive backs do before the snap of each ball. You can tell them always to disguise the coverage, but they may not be in position at every snap. It’s often a tradeoff.

**Options:**
- Always
- Never
- Sometimes

**Zone Defense**

This toggles between a pure zone and a combination man-to-man/zone defense.

**Options:**
- Pure zone
- Man zone

**DB Match-Up**

This determines how your defensive backs match up with your wide receivers.

**Options:**
- Nearest
- Best on best

**DB Cover Style**

This determines how your DBs cover—tight, inside, or outside. Use this to push receivers in the direction you want them to go.

**Options:**
- Tight
- Inside
- Outside

**Linebacker Matchup**

This controls your linebacker matchups.

**Options:**
- Nearest
- Best on best

**LB Cover Style**

This determines how your LBs cover.

**Options:**
- Tight
- Inside
- Outside

**Safety Cover Depth**

This sets up your safeties to play it safe deep or watch for the run.

**Options:**
- Balanced
- Run Support
- Over the top
You'll probably start out playing against the computer in *NFL Fever 2004*. And if you don't have Xbox Live™, you'll probably play a lot of games against the computer. Here are some tips for winning against this sometimes-cagey opponent.

**Tip 1: Find Your Strong Plays**

You won't find many 'money plays' in this game, but some plays work well against computer opponents. For instance, Indianapolis can use IND Four Quicks very successfully because the team has a quick number one WR in Marvin Harrison. You can rely heavily on this play against the CPU. Other teams have equally effective plays. Pick your team and then find your set of five or six well-designed plays.

**Tip 2: Give Them the Old One-Two**

If you run the pass over and over, eventually the computer adjusts and shuts down the air attack. Mix in the run to keep the computer honest. You can lean heavily on one or the other, but go the other way every third play or so.

You'll be surprised how well even a marginal runner can do against a CPU defense that expects the pass. Mix the run in often enough and the computer never gets a foothold on how to stop you.

**Tip 3: Scramble with Your QB**

To give the computer fits, use your QB to scramble. The defense struggles to stop the run and when they do, you likely find open passing lanes in the middle of the field. Even if your QB isn't a Michael Vick-like super athlete, you can still roll out and make short blasts up the field. Remember to use © for a QB Slide to avoid injuries or fumbles.

**Tip 4: Play Pass Defense First**

Force the CPU to run the ball. Start off in Dime and Nickel packages and see if you can shut down the passing game. If the offense starts making big runs against you, drop into 43 and 34 defenses, but otherwise think about stopping the pass before stopping the run.

**Tip 5: Control the Clock**

If you think you can hold the computer on defense, slow down the game and run down the clock as you play. This gives you an advantage because you are thinking tactically every second of the game. The computer is still waiting until the end of the second and fourth quarters to play clock management.

If you're up by two scores, you can run down more than a complete quarter (when playing five-minute quarters). This isn't in the spirit of real football, but it's a good way to get a win against a tough CPU opponent.

**Tip 6: Spread the Passes Around**

It's easy to get into a habit of throwing to one or two main receivers, but you must spread the ball around if you want to keep the CPU guessing. Otherwise it focuses its defense on your top receiver and shuts him down.
Tip 7: Audible, Audible, Audible

Learn to read the defense (check out the previous sections of this strategy guide) and call audibles on every play if you have to. With a good mix of audibles and a good eye for reading defenses, you can quickly assess your opposition and call a quick play that’s extra hard to stop.

Tip 8: Use Hot Routes

Before each snap, look to see if you can make a hot route adjustment to give one of your players a better chance at making a play. In the passing game, check the cornerbacks to see how they’re covering your WRs and then adjust accordingly. In the running game, take every opportunity to hot route your runner and your lead blocker to the weakest part of the defense.

Tip 9: Master Read and Lead Passing

Read and Lead passing is especially useful against computer opponents. Send your receiver on his route, but keep an eye for open spots in zone defenses or single coverage in man-to-man defenses. Both of these are ripe for exploitation by a good Read and Lead pass. If you’re able to hit your receivers on the fly, your after-catch yards skyrocket.

Tip 10: Adjust on Defense

The defensive adjustments in Fever aren’t just for looks. They’re very effective against a top offense. Practice their use against weaker teams. When you’re comfortable, start using them against the tougher teams. Before long, it’s difficult for any CPU squad to score on you with regularity.

Tip 1: Don’t Show Your Cards Too Early

If you have a favorite play or two, don’t use them in the first quarter and most of the second quarter unless you really need to. If you save them until late in the game, you can go back to them again and again while your opponent prepares for the plays you used in the early part of the game.

Tip 2: Swap Strategies

Don’t start the first quarter with your favorite strategy. If, for instance, you like to pass deep, play through the first and second quarter using your running game and short passing game. Players tend to set their playing patterns for the rest of the game based on what you do in the first half. If you establish any kind of momentum, your opponent is still trying to keep the short game closed in the second half, while you burn him over the top deep.

10 Tips for Dominating on Xbox Live™

Playing against human opponents on Xbox Live™ presents its own unique challenges. Human opponents tend to get in ruts, have favorite plays, and always seem to go for it on fourth and short. But you never know for sure what they’re going to do next. These tips help you stay ahead of the competition.

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Tip 3: Scramble with Your QB

This strategy works against the computer and against human opponents. When your QB is a threat to run, the other team always has to commit a man to cover him. That leaves receivers open somewhere on the field. This drives people crazy.

Tip 4: Play Pass Defense First

This tactic works against the computer, but it works even better against human opponents. Fever players tend to go to the air when possible. If you can force them to run the ball, you’ve likely taken away their favorite plays and favorite players. This should give you an advantage over even a more experienced foe.

If your opponent is able to establish the run, switch quickly into a regular defensive pattern to avoid giving up too many easy yards on the ground.

Tip 5: Fake a Primary Receiver

Another trick is to throw to a receiver who is not your favorite for the first and second quarters. Pick plays that get this receiver open and keep throwing the ball. By the time the second half rolls around, your opponent is focused on double-covering that receiver, and you start to see your primary receiver running free in single coverage.

Tip 6: Stay in Two-Minute Drill

Play every down as if it’s the last two minutes of the game. Snap the ball and play as quickly as possible so as not to give your opponent time to adjust to your offense. Keep good audibles handy so you can choose your plays at the line. An opponent who doesn’t have a good set of audibles is in big trouble.

Tip 7: Call Audibles Frequently

Human opponents are more likely to get in ruts and take huge risks on defense than computer opponents. When you see your opponent cue up a huge blitz, audible up a deep route and toss it long. When you see your opponent drop back to cover the pass, send a run his way and pound your way through the open field. Audibles help you counter every move and can frustrate even the best playcallers.

Have a good set of defensive audibles on hand in case your opponent tries to run the two-minute drill on you. If you have both offensive and defensive audibles set, you’re hard to surprise.

Tip 8: Vary Your Plays

Don’t get into a playcalling rut yourself. A human opponent with a sharp eye can pick up on those things. Do you always pass on first down? Do you always run on third and short? Do you always go for two? Look into your playing style and try to find the areas that you most tend to repeat yourself. Throw in a little variety.

Tip 9: Try a Little Razzle-Dazzle

Don’t get carried away, but if you throw a trick play like a Flea Flicker or QB Draw into your playcalling, the defense always has to keep an eye out and can’t fully commit to the play they suspect. One or two trick plays each game (in safe situations) really keeps the other team on its heels.

Tip 10: Get Pressure on the QB

The number one way to throw a team off its passing rhythm is to get pressure on its QB. You often have to risk a blitz to make this happen, but if you can get in the QB’s face, he won’t have time to let his favorite plays develop and his favorite receivers won’t have the time to get open.
Making Yourself a Superstar

Once you’ve climbed the heights of NFL Fever, put yourself into the Hall of Fame. With this simple process, a healthy dose of skill, and a lot of playing time, you can earn yourself a spot in the Hall of Fame with the all-time greats.

Step 1: Enter your Personal Data

You can’t get into the Hall of Fame if your name’s not on a jersey.

Step 2: Pick Your Position

Choose a skill position, such as QB, HB, or WR. Or pick a defensive position that you like to control. For this situation we chose WR.

Step 3: Choose Your Stats

Boost your stats in the sections that matter most for your player. Don’t worry about blocking and other unimportant details. Your player is the center of your offense and you control him for most of the game. Don’t worry about the salary; you can cut another player from your team to make room under the salary cap.

Remember to boost endurance, ball control, and injury stats. If you rely on one player often, he risks tiring, fumbling, or getting injured. All three could cost you on your journey to the Hall of Fame.

Step 4: Personalize Your Player

Looks don’t matter on the field, but it’s nice to have a player you can quickly recognize. Pick your player’s clothes and move forward.

Step 5: Join Free Agency

Now head to the Free Agent Sign/Release section of the menu. Here you can get your favorite team to pick you up in free agency. If you have to drop another player to make yourself fit, do it.

Step 6: Set Up Substitutions

Go to the Global Substitutions menu and put yourself in the appropriate spots on the roster. Don’t forget to add yourself as a kick returner or punt returner if you have good speed and acceleration. Every all-purpose yard helps.

Step 7: Start Up Dynasty Mode

Turn the Fantasy Draft off and pick your favorite team as your Dynasty team. Before starting the first game, make sure you’re on the roster and in the right spots.
Step 8: Play the Games
You don’t have to give the ball to yourself every time, but get it often. You want huge stats, so that you can earn weekly awards for best player. Shoot for the Pro Bowl and an MVP season if possible.

Step 9: Pay the Price
You quickly find out that your virtual self is not cheap. The better you play, the more money your doppelganger wants during the off season. Sign him up for the longest contract possible.

Step 10: Repeat Season Over and Over
You can’t enter the Hall of Fame after one good season. You have to play through a bunch of them. You also have to play the games yourself, because the CPU won’t give your player the same attention.

Step 11: Wait for the Hall of Fame to Call
After seven or more great seasons, you can start to relax. Let the game simulate through a couple more seasons or play them yourself. Eventually your player retires, and you get the call from Canton, Ohio. You’re in the Hall of Fame.

Developer Tips: The Ins and Outs of Defensive Macros
Defensive macros are a great way to shut down a predictable opponent, but each of them has one or more drawbacks that you should be aware of so that you can use them efficiently.

Defend Inside Run
This macro will move your linebackers closer to the line and tell them to play the run before the pass. The drawback is that they will almost always be fooled by play action pass plays, resulting in poor pass coverage. You can compensate for this by playing a safety and helping cover the area’s that your linebackers were assigned to cover. This is also useful when you have linebackers who are blitzing and you want to move them a bit closer to the line.

Defend Inside Pass
This tells your secondary to play outside of the receiver, and to play pass before run. This makes it extremely hard for your opponent to complete slant and in routes. Unfortunately, you can only compensate a little with this macro. You can play a safety and manually cover the outside left of the field, or the outside right of the field, but not both at the same time, so use it wisely.

Defend Outside Pass
This tells your secondary to play a prevent defense. They will stay deeper than they usually do, and they will play pass before run. It is effective near the end of the game or half when you know your opponent needs to go deep for a quick score, but it leaves you extremely open to both runs and short passes, so use it sparingly.

How to Defeat Defensive Macros
If your opponent is using defensive macros against you, then all you need to do is use their weaknesses against him. If you see his secondary shift towards the outside, then hot route your receivers to complete routes such as a slant. If you see his secondary shift inside, hot route to an outside route like an out. If you are running, and you see his linebackers step up, hot route your running back to run outside. If you see his linebackers step left or right, just hot route your running back in the other direction. Be careful though, a good defensive player will use deception against you. He might first shift his players to the outside after you have made your hot routes.
Are you ready to become a legend?

Remember playing against a single friend—or maybe two or three? If you could get them all to your house at the same time, that is. And, if you couldn’t, you’d sit and play all alone on your couch with no one to witness your glory except the AI.

Well, those days are over, my friend. This is NFL Fever 2004, and it’s time to show the world—that’s right, the world—exactly how good you are. Here’s the deal….

First off, you’re gonna need a high-speed internet connection and an Xbox Live™ account. If you’ve got those, then put down your Xbox controller (for the moment), and get in front of your home computer. Log on to the Internet, and surf your way to www.xsnsports.com.

When you’re there, sign up as a member, and get ready to play in a whole new way. Use the website to join a league, or become a commissioner, and set up your own league. You can be the commissioner of up to three NFL Fever leagues and a member of as many as five.

What else can you do on the Web site? Plenty. Xsnsports.com also makes it possible for you to arrange tournaments, view schedules for upcoming games, check out results from games that have already been played, check out stats on yourself and your opponents, read and post to message boards, and… well, lots more than we can list here. Just go to the site, and see for yourself.

When you sign up for a league on the website, you’re gonna get a password. You’ll need to write down that password and carry it back over to your Xbox console. When it’s time for you to play a game for that league or in a tournament, pick up your controller, and log on to the Xbox Live service. Enter your password and the name of the league or tournament you’re going to play. You’re in.

Oh, yeah. One more thing. Got an e-mail address? Of course you do. You’re going to enter that address when you sign up on the website. And what will you get for your troubles? You’ll get game invitations. You’ll get schedule updates. You’ll get personal messages from other league members. Again, you’ll get lots more than we can mention here.

So, what have we learned? Go online to www.xsnsports.com to sign up. Log on to Xbox Live to play leagues or tournaments. Beat the cleats off your friends, your neighbors, your friends’ neighbors, some guy in Toledo, all 2,364 citizens of Westchester County—basically everyone else who has a broadband connection and signs up for XSN Sports. And they’re all gonna know your gamertag. That’s right. Yours. Think you can handle that? Good.

Note
XSN Sports™ requires a computer, an internet connection, and a subscription to the Xbox Live™ service.