

***FANTASY FOOTBALL
ALMANAC***

2025

UPDATE

4

August 27th



Summary of Rankings Changes and Thoughts

I don't have much to report on this week. This week's slate of preseason games, which I comment on below, weren't particularly noteworthy when it came to fantasy football impact. The majority of teams rested their starters. The teams that did play key players did more to confirm my rankings than change them.

There will be minimal changes this week, mostly in the later tiers. I will begin to update the rankings as soon as possible. I think they will be posted Tuesday, August 26th with the rest of the supporting spreadsheets and information coming on Wednesday.

QB:

- I played with the rankings for QBs in the late 20s/early 30s including moving Flacco up, Pickett and Mason Rudolph way down and moving up some of the younger guys waiting in the wings such as Jaxson Dart

RB:

- I'll talk more about it in the game section, but Kaleb Johnson is taking a tumble in one year formats while Kenneth Gainwell is rising
- Among late (and very late) rankings:
 - Ollie Gordon II moves up
 - Isaiah Davis moves up a bit
 - Will Shipley moves up a bit
 - Jaleel McLaughlin moves up
 - Chris Brooks moves up

WR:

- I'm dropping Jordan Addison. It's only the extension, but it's the extension combined with my perceived downward trajectory of the Vikings passing game
- Tre' Harris moves up
- Jamari Thrash moves up again
- I'm dropping Brandin Cooks
- I'm dropping Roman Wilson
- I'm dropping Amari Cooper
- Troy Franklin is moving up

TE:

- I thought about moving Njoku ahead of LaPorta in all formats. Instead, I left LaPorta ahead in the tight end rankings, but moved Njoku up the overall rankings
- Mason Taylor moves up
- Brenton Strange moves up

DST:

- I moved the 49ers above the Seahawks. That's it!

K: No updates

Preseason Game Notes:

Pittsburgh Steelers vs Carolina Panthers

Steelers

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - Kaleb Johnson played well, but it's pretty clear to me that Pittsburgh intends Johnson to back up Jaylen Warren on short yardage situations. Kenneth Gainwell looks like he's locked in the third down receiving back (even though the better solution would be to have Johnson play more on early downs and have Jaylen Warren be the third down back + handle half of the early down work... but I digress). Long story short, I'm moving Johnson down the rankings. I'll say it again, but Arthur Smith's personnel decisions leave a lot to be desired.
 - For what it's worth Kenneth Gainwell did play well. He had a nice long run called back due to a hold. And he is a better pass blocker than Kaleb Johnson, which is why it is going to be harder than first thought for Johnson to see the field.
- WRs
 - NA
- TEs
 - NA

Panthers

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - Trevor Etienne had his first nice run of the preseason. Amusingly, his longest run was 28 yards. He finished with 26 yards on 3 carries, which means he lost 2 yards on his other two carries. He's no threat to Hubbard or Dowdle this season.
- WRs
 - NA
- TEs
 - NA

New York Giants vs New England Patriots

Giants

- QBs
 - Jaxson Dart's performance didn't look as impressive on the stat sheet in week 3, but I thought he played an excellent game. He narrowly missed what would have been a touchdown pass on his first drive. It was completable, but he missed. On the second drive, he made two very good throws that weren't completed. He completed 6 passes, but it could have easily been 8 or 9 with far more yardage.
- RBs
 - Cam Skattebo got the start at tailback with Tracy and Singletary resting. He only had 3 carries and looked fine. His first carry would have gone for more yardage had he not tripped over his own feet. I still like Dante Miller, though.

- WRs
 - NA
- TEs
 - NA

Patriots

The Patriots did not play any players of note this week.

Philadelphia Eagles vs New York Jets

Neither the Eagles, nor the Jets played any player of consequence this week.

Atlanta Falcons vs Dallas Cowboys

Falcons

The Falcons did not play anyone of consequence this week.

Cowboys

- QBs
 - Milton had a better game this week. I pay closer attention to his rushing because that is what would make him relevant for your fantasy team if he plays. He captured 33 yards and a TD on 4 attempts. Not bad.
- RBs
 - How many times are the Cowboys going t force me to watch Deuce Vaughn
 - OK, I admin he had his best game of the preseason. But still... enough.
 - It was nice to get a look at Jaydon Blue. You can see the potential. It would have been nice if he could have finished the half, but an ankle injury cut his time short. While he was able to get a touchdown, he finished with a lackluster 2.8 yards per carry on 9 attempts.
 - The Cowboys backfield should continue to evolve this season. I haven't seen anyone do anything that would put Javonte Williams' position as the lead back in jeopardy. Jaydon Blue could develop into that.
 - I maintain that Phil Mafah should be a threat to people higher than him on the depth chart, but the Cowboys never moved him up to play against tougher competition. You'd think, at a minimum, they would have allowed Mafah to rotate in after Jaydon Blue's 2nd quarter injury, but they didn't.
 - Based on what I've seen, if I were Dallas I'd have Javonte Williams 1, Jaydon Blue 2, Phil Mafah 3 and Miles Sanders 4. I don't believe that's what Dallas would do, however. I think they'll end up cutting Mafah and signing him to their practice squad. But we'll see what happens this week.
- WRs

- Flournoy had a nice game. I think he's secured his roster spot, but I don't see him being a factor this year for fantasy football teams.
- TEs
 - NA

Minnesota Vikings vs Tennessee Titans

Vikings

The Vikings did not play anyone of consequence this week.

Titans

- QBs
 - Cam Ward looked fine enough. Remember on draft day that he's more C.J. Stroud than Jayden Daniels. You're not going to get rushing productivity from Ward, but he will have a good passing season.
- RBs
 - Chestnut got the start and had good efficiency. But Kael Mullings looks like a future starting RB to me. I've been impressed by him this preseason. Dynasty players, take note.
- WRs
 - Nice game from Van Jefferson. I would keep my focus on Ridley and Lockett among Titan WRs. Ridley is undervalued, btw. He should have a great year.
- TEs
 - In what is one of the longest Fantasy Football Almanac traditions, I am avoiding Titan TEs this season.

Chicago Bears vs Kansas City Chiefs

Bears

- QBs
 - Ben Johnson says the offense needs to get better, but I thought they looked good. I've said this a couple of times and I'll say it again. Tyson Bagent is good. If Caleb Johnson were injured for any reason, I'd snap Bagent up on waivers. He has quality mobility and looks very comfortable in this new offense.
- RBs
 - Swift was fine. I'll repeat myself again here. I don't think Ben Johnson prefers Swift. They didn't gel during their time in Detroit and I don't see why it'll be any different in Chicago. He may make it through the season, but I expect the Bears to replace Swift's receiver/runner role next draft.
 - The big question I have is whether Kyle Monangai or Roschon Johnson will be the 2nd RB. Early in camp, it was looking like Johnson had the job locked down, but he's been injured for weeks with a mysterious foot issue (stress fracture? turf toe?). I think Monangai was closing the gap, but then he missed practice last week. I'm still moving forward w/the assumption that Johnson will handle all short yardage duties for the Bears in 2025.
- WRs
 - Rome Odunze finally showed up this week. It was nice to see him involved. I was starting to get worried.

- I love Luther Burden III's potential, but Olamide Zaccheaus will be the starting slot WR on opening day. It's going to take weeks for Burden to earn the starting job. Keep that in mind on draft day.
- TEs
 - The Bears are still using Cole Kmet, so that is going to hurt Colston Loveland's ability to break out this fantasy season. Don't overdraft the rookie.

Chiefs

- QBs
 - Mahomes is going to have his best fantasy year since the 2022 season, but I don't think he's in the top echelon of QBs this year.
- RBs
 - Good game for Pacheco, but did you notice Brashard Smith and Kareem Hunt were both also used on the first drive? I'm not surprised Hunt was involved. I am surprised Smith got some action. I liked his college tape, but was critical of him the first two weeks of training camp.
- WRs
 - Rashee Rice is going to be excellent this season, but he is also probably going to be suspended for 3 or 4 games early in the year. I don't care if a player misses early season games. But keep it in mind if that's of concern to you.
- TEs
 - Kelce will be just fine, but check out his snap counts from 2024 if you're so inclined. They aren't going to increase this season. The Chiefs are saving Kelce for 3rd downs, 4th quarters and the playoffs. That's why Noah Gray will have a bit of regular season value (emphasis on "a bit").

Baltimore Ravens vs Washington Commanders

Commanders

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - I Think Chris Rodriguez has done enough to earn the third RB position now that Brian Robinson Jr. Has been dealt to the 49ers. If he finds himself starting at any point this year, he will definitely be worth a waiver claim.
- WRs
 - NA
- TEs
 - NA

Ravens

Nobody of consequence played for Baltimore. It's worth noting their backups largely shredded their opposition this preseason. If Lamar can stay healthy, it's going to be a very good year for the Ravens.

Indianapolis Colts vs Cincinnati Bengals

Colts

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - I liked how DJ Giddens looked. I think Tyler Goodson is probably the backup of choice in Indianapolis, but Giddens is the one I would want if Taylor gets injured.
- WRs
 - NA
- TEs
 - NA

Bengals

After playing their offensive starters for a good portion last week, the Bengals rested all of their key players this week.

LA Rams vs Cleveland Browns

Rams

Once again, the Rams rested all of their key players as well as their up and comers.

Browns

- QBs
 - It's no surprise to me that Flacco looked sharp. He's played well in this system. I don't care much about his age, but I don't have him higher in my rankings because I don't know what the Browns intend to do at QB this season. Will they go to a young guy if and when they are eliminated from playoff contention? Also, Flacco doesn't pick up yards on the ground. Flacco will be a very good "buy-low" option in 2 QB leagues and will have waiver wire plugin value in one QB formats if your team is thin at QB.
- RBs
 - I like where my rankings are with Browns RBs. I've noticed that Jerome Ford is largely written off in terms of average draft position. He's going to be the first and second down back for at least the first 4 games this year. Judkins isn't going to be in football shape if he signs (whenever that may be). Assuming Judkins is signed, this backfield will probably produce three players (Ford, Sampson and Judkins) who score roughly the same amount of points. Two backs will have value week to week. Early in the year, those two will be Ford and Sampson. Later in the year, it'll be Judkins and Sampson (if Judkins signs). The only player who will have consistent play will be Dylan Sampson who looks to me like he's locked in a third down role.

- WRs
 - There's not much here in terms of game play to sway rankings. Though I am intrigued to watch the development of Isaiah Bond. He was a standout in college, but was undrafted after a sexual assault charge led teams to stay away.
- TEs
 - The Flacco-to-Njoku connection I wrote about in the book is going to be alive and well. Dynasty players really need to pay attention to rookie Harold Fannin Jr. The Browns will not have the money to sign Njoku to an extension after the season. Fannin could be a star in 2026.

Houston Texans vs Detroit Lions

Texans

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - Dameon Pierce started over Woody Marks, but Marks is clearly the better running back. I think he'll end up as RB3 for the Texans sooner rather than later. It was nice to see him shake off his poor preseason debut over the last couple of weeks.
- WRs
 - I'm liking Jayden Higgins a bit more each week.
- TEs
 - NA

Lions

- QBs
 - Allen has definitely won the backup QB job.
- RBs
 - NA
- WRs
 - TeSlaa will open the season as the 4th Lions WR, but I think he should be starting. Further, I think he *will* be starting by the mid point of this season.
- TEs
 - NA

Denver Broncos vs New Orleans Saints

Broncos

- QBs
 - Nix looked much sharper. He was 10 of 14, but even his incompletions looked like good throws to me. He wasn't looking as sharp as we saw him end the 2024 season, but he bounced back in week 3.
- RBs

- Harvey didn't look particularly good, but he did start the game and I wouldn't worry about the stat line just yet given the lack of workload
- I think it's very possible Estime is cut.
- **WRs**
 - Sutton looked great this week. Nix is definitely continuing to feed him plenty of quality targets. He's the only Bronco WR I'd draft. I think either Franklin or Mims will have roster value, but I'd rather wait until after the waiver cycle to declare which one I'd prefer on my team. There are safer choices (even among sleepers) later in the draft.
- **TEs**
 - NA

Saints

- **QBs**
 - I'm unsure which direction Kellen Moore will go. I think he likes Rattler's mobility (though Shough did have scramble yardage and a TD this week), but he keeps turning the ball over. Based on what I've seen, Tyler Shough is the clear winner of the position battle. But I'm unsure whether Moore agrees. Naming Rattler the starter would be a mistake in my opinion and even if he is the opening day starter, he won't keep his job long.
- **RBs**
 - Not much to note other than I thought Kendre Miller looked livelier than I'd seen him. Devin Neal should end up the 3rd back for the Saints sooner than later as well.
- **WRs**
 - Olave looked in good form, as did Shaheed. Those are the only two Saint receivers worth drafting.
- **TEs**
 - NA

Seattle Seahawks vs Green Bay Packers

Seahawks

- **QBs**
 - Milroe looked about how I thought he would. He was up and down as a passer and showed good run ability. He'll be a fun prospect to track, but I think he's at least 1-2 seasons away from having a real fantasy impact. That said, if Darnold was hurt and Milroe starts, I'd snap him up on waivers based purely on his running ability.
- **RBs**
 - I came into the season thinking Damien Martinez could make some noise in this RB room, but I think he's close to being cut and signed to the practice squad. Jacardia Wright certainly outplayed him this week.
- **WRs**
 - Nothing of note here. This WR group is all about JSN and Tory Horton in my opinion. Beware, Horton could take some time to break through in the regular season. I'm not sure how immediate his impact will be.

- TEs
 - I've been waiting on his position grouping to show me something during preseason and they haven't. There are other sleeper TEs to focus on at this point.

Packers

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - Not that I was doubting it, but this game confirmed Chris Brooks is the clear RB2 and Josh Jacobs' backup this season.
- WRs
 - I like Matthew Golden's ability a lot, but I continue to be concerned about his potential workshare. I don't know how many targets we'll see the rookie accumulate this season so I'm not going to move him up. The Packers have historically spread the ball around and that will continue in 2025.
- TEs
 - NA

Jacksonville Jaguars vs Miami Dolphins

Jaguars

The Jaguars rested all players of fantasy substance this week. I have nothing to report.

Dolphins

- QBs
 - Tua looked fine. He's not someone I would prioritize on draft day. Not only do I consider him a fantasy backup, but I think he's below average in that capacity.
- RBs
 - I've been critical of Jaylen Wright's vision this preseason. An injury held him out of the preseason finale which gave Ollie Gordon II a chance to play a substantial role this past week. He made the most of his opportunity. Wright is still listed as the backup RB, but Gordon has had the better preseason performance. I think we'll see both Wright and Gordon rotate in, but as much as it pains me to say it, Wright's prospects aren't looking good at the moment.
- WRs
 - I love what Malik Washington has done this preseason, but I think the routes and receptions he's gathering will be going to Waddle and Hill during the regular season. It feels to me like Washington is only someone you should draft if Hill/Waddle are injured.
- TEs
 - NA

Buffalo Bills vs Tampa Bay Buccaneers

Bills

- QBs
 -
- RBs
 - I was glad to see Gore get more volume. I've seen him look better in other games. He's no threat to Cooks, but I will enjoy monitoring his development in the years to come for dynasty players.
- WRs
 - Tyrell Shavers looked great once again. He's strung together a great preseason. I think he'll be the fourth Bills WR. That means he'll probably get a couple of starts this year when injuries take their toll. I'm excited to see what he can do assuming that happens.
- TEs
 - NA

Buccaneers

There's not much to report for the Bucs this week. With the Jalen McMillan injury, Egbuka is the clear #3 WR and I think Ryan Miller moves up to WR4. Other than that, it was a quiet week in Tampa where fantasy football reporting is concerned.

Los Angeles Chargers vs San Francisco 49ers

Chargers

The Chargers rested their key players. Outside of this game, it looks like Najee Harris' prospects are up, but I never downgraded him in my rankings due to his injury status.

49ers

- QBs
 - NA
- RBs
 - I wasn't a believer in Isaac Guerendo. Similar to what I'm seeing from Jaylen Wright this year, he can break a big play when the offensive line creates a huge hole for him to run through, but when it comes to creating yardage on poorly blocked plays, he hasn't shown that ability. That's why I thought Jordan James could be a factor this season, but obviously that injury really hurt his ability to develop.
 - So it is no surprise to me that San Fran traded for Brian Robinson Jr. this week. Think of Robinson like you would Jordan Mason. I think Mason is a better runner, but Robinson has better hands. He'll be an excellent backup to CMC.
- WRs
 - Just noting that the 49ers acquired Skyy Moore from the Chiefs. I've never been a fan, but he will have opportunities to contribute early in the season thanks to injuries and suspensions among other 49er WRs. Pearsall is the clear 49er WR to target on draft day.
- TEs

- NA

Las Vegas Raiders vs Arizona Cardinals

Raiders

- QBs
 - After Aidan O'Connell broke his wrist, the Raiders are looking for a new backup QB. The good news is that Geno Smith is healthy and looked solid once again.
- RBs
 - Jeanty didn't look as impressive as he looked in week 2, but he's the clear top RB and top pick in rookie drafts.
- WRs
 - I still see people ranking Jack Bech relatively high i rookie drafts, but he's very clearly a backup. Remove him from draft day consideration.
- TEs
 - NA

Cardinals

The Cardinals rested all of their impactful fantasy players. The only thing of note is that Michael Carter had a bounce-back game (or at least, one bounce-back carry). I'm thinking Demercardo is the clear RB3, but the only RBs you need to concern yourself with are Benson and Connors.