



GAME NOTES

New England Patriots at Pittsburgh Steelers— December 17, 2017

TEAM NOTES

- Patriots qualify for the playoffs for the 25th time in 58 years.
- Clinch 19th playoff appearance in the 24 years under Robert Kraft.
- Patriots clinch ninth straight AFC East Title.
- Win 11 games for an NFL record 8th straight season

PATRIOTS CLINCH PLAYOFF SPOT FOR THE 19TH TIME IN KRAFT'S 24 YEARS

New England has qualified for the playoffs 25 times in its 58-year history. The Patriots have earned 19 of those playoff berths in the 24 seasons since Robert Kraft purchased the team in 1994. New England has won 20 division crowns overall (19 AFC East crowns) and has qualified as a Wild Card team on four occasions (1998, 1994, 1985 and 1976). The Patriots also qualified for the playoffs in 1982 as part of a 16-team tournament following a players' strike.

PATRIOTS WIN AFC EAST FOR THE 17TH TIME UNDER KRAFT

The Patriots claimed the AFC East Division title for the ninth consecutive season and for the 17th time under Robert Kraft.

DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIPS SINCE 1994

New England Patriots 17

Pittsburgh Steelers 13

Green Bay Packers 12

Indianapolis Colts 10

PATRIOTS EXTEND NFL RECORD TO NINE STRAIGHT DIVISION TITLES

The Patriots have won nine straight AFC East titles, the longest streak in NFL history. The Patriots have won 15 of the last 17 AFC East division crowns.

MOST CONSECUTIVE DIVISION TITLES

<u>Team</u>	<u>Division</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Years</u>
New England Patriots	AFC East	9	2009-17
Los Angeles Rams	NFC West	7	1973-79
Pittsburgh Steelers	AFC Central	6	1974-79
Minnesota Vikings	NFC Central	6	1973-78
Dallas Cowboys	NFL Capitol/NFC East	6	1966-71
Cleveland Browns	American/Eastern Conf.	6	1950-55

New England Patriots	AFC East	5	2003-07
Denver Broncos	AFC West	5	2011-15
Indianapolis Colts	AFC South	5	2003-07
Dallas Cowboys	NFC East	5	1992-96
San Francisco 49ers	NFC West	5	1986-90
Chicago Bears	NFC Central	5	1984-88
Oakland Raiders	AFC West	5	1972-76

PATRIOTS TIE NFL RECORD WITH NINTH STRAIGHT PLAYOFF SEASON

The Patriots have now made the playoffs for nine straight seasons (2009-17), tied with Dallas (1975-83) and Indianapolis (2002-10) for the most in NFL history

MOST CONSECUTIVE PLAYOFF SEASONS/NFL HISTORY

9 New England Patriots (2009-17)

Dallas Cowboys (1975-83)

Indianapolis Colts (2002-10)

8 Green Bay Packers (2009-16)

Pittsburgh Steelers (1972-79)

Los Angeles Rams (1973-80)

Dallas (1966-73)

San Francisco (1983-90)

7 Houston Oilers (1987-93)

San Francisco 49ers (1992-98)

PATRIOTS PLAYOFF SEASONS

The Patriots have qualified for the playoffs 25 times in their 58-year history. Nineteen of those playoff berths have come in the 24 seasons since Robert Kraft purchased the team in 1994. The Patriots have won 20 division crowns, including 15 of the last 17 seasons.

PATRIOTS PLAYOFF SEASONS (25)

Year	How Qualified	Seed	Record	Result
2017	Division Champions	??	???	????
2016	Division Champions	1	3-0	Super Bowl Champions
2015	Division Champions	2	1-1	AFC Championship Game
2014	Division Champions	1	3-0	Super Bowl Champions
2013	Division Champions	2	1-1	AFC Championship Game
2012	Division Champions	2	1-1	AFC Championship Game
2011	Division Champions	1	2-1	AFC Champions
2010	Division Champions	1	0-1	AFC Divisional Round
2009	Division Champions	3	0-1	Wild Card Round
2007	Division Champions	1	2-1	AFC Champions

2006	Division Champions	4	2-1	AFC Championship Game
2005	Division Champions	4	1-1	AFC Divisional Round
2004	Division Champions	2	3-0	Super Bowl Champions
2003	Division Champions	1	3-0	Super Bowl Champions
2001	Division Champions	2	3-0	Super Bowl Champions
1998	Wild Card	6	0-1	Wild Card Round
1997	Division Champions	3	1-1	AFC Divisional Round
1996	Division Champions	2	2-1	AFC Champions
1994	Wild Card	5	0-1	Wild Card Round
1986	Division Champions	3	0-1	AFC Divisional Round
1985	Wild Card	5	3-1	AFC Champions
1982*	16-Team Format	7	0-1	First Round
1978	Division Champions	2	0-1	AFC Divisional Round
1976	Wild Card	4	0-1	AFC Divisional Round
<u>1963</u>	<u>Division Champions</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>1-1</u>	<u>AFL Championship Game</u>

*-Strike Year 32-19 Record

PATRIOTS WIN 11 FOR RECORD 8TH STRAIGHT YEAR

The Patriots have won 11 games 19 times in team history, including a current streak of eight years dating back to 2010. The eight straight 11-win seasons is an NFL record, surpassing the seven straight 11-win seasons by Indianapolis (2003-09). The Patriots have had 11 or more wins 15 times in Robert Kraft's 24 seasons of ownership after having only four 11-win seasons prior to Kraft purchasing the team (1976, 1978, 1985 and 1986).

PATRIOTS WIN 11 GAMES FOR 7TH STRAIGHT SEASON

<u>Team</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Consecutive Seasons with 11+ Wins</u>
New England	2010-2017	8
Indianapolis	2003-2009	7
Dallas	1976-1981	6
San Francisco	1994-1998	5

WRAPPING IT UP

The Patriots clinched the division with the 27-24 win at Pittsburgh.

PATRIOTS DIVISION-CLINCHING GAMES

Year	Date Clinched	Opp.	Score	Record	2nd Place
2017	12/11/17	at PITT	27-24	??	??
2016	12/18/16	at DEN	16-3	14-2	MIA (10-6)
2015	12/13/15	at HOU	27-6	12-4	NYJ (10-6)
2014	12/14/14	MIA	41-13	12-4	BUF (9-7)
2013	12/15/13	at BAL	41-7	12-4	NYJ (8-8)
2012	12/02/12	at MIA	23-16	12-4	MIA (7-9)
2011	12/18/11	at DEN	41-23	13-3	NYJ (8-8)
2010	12/26/10	at BUF	34-3	14-2	NYJ (11-5)
2009	12/27/09	JAX	35-7	10-6	NYJ (9-7)
2007	11/25/07	PHI	31-28	16-0	BUF (7-9)
2006	12/24/06	at JAX	24-21	12-4	NYJ (10-6)
2005	12/17/05	TB	28-0	10-6	MIA (9-7)
2004	12/12/04	CIN	35-28	14-2	NYJ (10-6)
2003	12/07/03	MIA	12-0	14-2	MIA (10-6)
2001	01/06/02@	at CAR	38-6	11-5	MIA (11-5)
1997	12/22/97@	at MIA	14-12	10-6	MIA (9-7)
1996	12/15/96	at DAL	6-12	11-5	BUF (10-6)
1986	12/22/86@	at MIA	34-27	11-5	NYJ (10-6)
1978	12/10/78	BUF	26-24	11-5	MIA (11-5)
1963	12/28/63*	at BUF	26-8	7-6-1	BUF (7-6-1)

@Season Finale *Division-deciding playoff in Buffalo, NY

BOUNCING BACK

Since the beginning of 2003, the Patriots are 45-6 (.882) in regular season games following a loss. They have dropped back-to-back regular season games in 2006, 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2015 (twice). As a starter in his career, Tom Brady is 45-10 in games following a loss.

The Patriots have now followed all three of their 2017 losses with a win.

PATRIOTS DEFENSE LEADS LEAGUE WITH SIX RED ZONE TAKEAWAYS

The Patriots defense leads the NFL with six takeaways in the red zone after DB Duron Harmon's pick in the end zone to seal the victory. Baltimore is second with four takeaways in the red zone.

PATRIOTS DEFENSEIVE TAKEAWAYS IN THE RED ZONE

1. DL Trey Flowers forced a fumble that was recovered by LB Elandon Roberts vs. Carolina (10/1) when the Panthers reached the New England 13-yard line.
2. CB Malcom Butler forced a fumble at the 1-yard line that resulted in touchback at the New York Jets (10/15).
3. LB Marquis Flowers forced a fumble that was recovered by DB Patrick Chung at Oakland (11/19) after the Raiders reached the New England 15-yard line.
4. CB Stephon Gilmore intercepted a pass in the end zone vs. Miami (11/26) after the Dolphins reached the New England 15-yard line.
5. LB Eric Lee intercepted a pass at the 1-yard line at Buffalo (12/3) after the Bills reached the New England 6-yard line.
6. DB Duron Harmon intercepted a pass in the end one after Pittsburgh reached the New England 7-yard line.

In addition, Harmon intercepted a pass in the end zone vs. Houston (9/24) on a pass from Houston 46-yard line, and DB Jonathan Jones intercepted a pass vs. the LA Chargers at the New England 1-yard line on a pass from the 23-yard line.

INDIVIDUAL NOTES

BELICHICK EXTENDS NFL RECORD TO NINE STRAIGHT DIVISION TITLES

Bill Belichick extended his NFL record to nine straight division titles. Paul Brown (1950-55), Tom Landry (1966-71), Bud Grant (1973-78) and Chuck Noll (1974-79) are next on the list after leading their teams to six straight titles.

NFL COACHES WITH THE MOST CONSECUTIVE DIVISION TITLES

<u>Head Coach</u>	<u>Teams</u>	<u>Consecutive Division Titles</u>
Bill Belichick	Patriots	9 (2009-2017)
Paul Brown	Cleveland	6 (1950-1955)
Tom Landry	Dallas	6 (1966-1971)
Bud Grant	Minnesota	6 (1973-1978)
Chuck Noll	Pittsburgh	6 (1974-1979)

BELICHICK EXTENDS HIS NFL RECORD TO 15 DIVISION TITLES

Bill Belichick guided the Patriots to the AFC East title in 2017. It is his 15th division title as a head coach, the most by a head coach since the 1970 merger. Don Shula is second with 11 division titles since the merger. Overall, Belichick's 15 division titles are the most in NFL history among NFL head coaches. Shula and Tom Landry are second with 13 titles.

BELICHICK HAS 16TH POSTSEASON BERTH AS A HEAD COACH

Bill Belichick has led his teams to 16 postseason berths, which is third all-time among NFL head coaches. He has led his team to 15 berths with New England and one with Cleveland.

NFL HEAD COACHES WITH THE MOST POSTSEASON SEASONS

<u>Coach</u>	<u>Playoff Berths</u>
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Don Shula	19
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Tom Landry	18
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Bill Belichick	16
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BELICHICK WILL SET MARK FOR MOST POSTSEASON GAMES

With the Patriots securing a postseason berth in 2017, Belichick is guaranteed to coach in his 37th career postseason game and break a tie with Tom Landry and Don Shula for the most postseason games coached.

MOST POSTSEASON GAMES AS A HEAD COACH

<u>Head Coach</u>	<u>GAMES</u>
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Bill Belichick (Cleveland/New England)	36
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Tom Landry (Dallas)	36
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Don Shula (Baltimore/Miami)	36
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Chuck Noll (Pittsburgh)	24
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Mike Holmgren (Green Bay/Seattle)	24
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Joe Gibbs (Washington)	24
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BELICHICK HAS 15TH 11-WIN SEASON

Bill Belichick now has fifteen 11-win seasons as a head coach to extend his record for most 11-win seasons. Belichick has fourteen 11-win seasons with New England and one with Cleveland.

NFL HEAD COACHES WITH THE MOST 11-WIN SEASONS

Bill Belichick	15
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Don Shula	13
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Tom Landry	10
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BRADY EXTENDS RECORD TO NINE STRAIGHT DIVISION TITLES;

WINS 15TH DIVISION TITLE OVERALL

Tom Brady extended his NFL record by leading the Patriots to their ninth straight division title in 2017.

NFL RECORD FOR MOST CONSECUTIVE DIVISION TITLES BY A STARTING QB

<u>Player</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Consecutive Division Titles</u>
Tom Brady	Patriots	9 (2009-2017)
Terry Bradshaw	Steelers	6 (1974-1979)
Fran Tarkenton	Vikings	6 (1973-1978)

NFL RECORD FOR MOST DIVISION TITLES

<u>Player</u>	<u>Career Division Titles</u>
Tom Brady	15
Peyton Manning	12
Joe Montana	9
Brett Favre	8
Terry Bradshaw	7
John Elway	7

BRADY IS CLOSING IN ON THE MOST WINS BY A 40-YEAR OLD QB

Brady's 11 wins in 2017 are the most in a single season by a 40-year old quarterback and are tied with Warren Moon (11) for second all-time, behind the 13 wins overall by Brett Favre at the age of 40.

MOST WINS OVERALL BY A QB AT AGE 40

<u>Player</u>	<u>Wins</u>
Brett Favre	13
Tom Brady	11
Warren Moon	11
Vinny Testaverde	8

BRADY REACHES 4,000 PASSING YARDS FOR THE NINTH TIME IN HIS CAREER

Tom Brady (4,163) reached 4,000 yards passing for the ninth time in his career. He entered the Pittsburgh game with 3,865 and needed 135 yards to reach the milestone. He reached it on a 7-yard pass to WR Brandin Cooks in the third quarter.

ALL-TIME 4,000 YARD PASSING SEASONS

14	Peyton Manning
11	Drew Brees
9	Tom Brady
7	Philip Rivers
6	Dan Marino
6	Brett Favre
6	Matt Ryan
6	Aaron Rodgers
6	Carson Palmer, Eli Manning and Matthew Stafford

PATRIOTS TOP PASSING YARDS/SEASON

<u>Yards</u>	<u>Player</u>	<u>Year</u>
5,235	Tom Brady	2011
4,827	Tom Brady	2012
4,806	Tom Brady	2007
4,770	Tom Brady	2015
4,555	Drew Bledsoe	1994
4,398	Tom Brady	2009
4,343	Tom Brady	2013
4,163	Tom Brady	2017
4,110	Tom Brady	2005
4,109	Tom Brady	2014
4,086	Drew Bledsoe	1996

BRADY NEARING THE TOP FOR MOST WINS AMONG ALL NFL PLAYERS.

Tom Brady has the most wins by an NFL quarterback with 219 overall career wins. His 219 wins are the second-most wins all-time by an NFL player, behind the 224 wins by Adam Vinatieri.

MOST WINS BY AN NFL PLAYER (INCLUDING POSTSEASON GAMES)

<u>Player</u>	<u>Wins</u>
Adam Vinatieri	224
Tom Brady	219
George Blanda	218
Jerry Rice	211
Gary Anderson	210
Peyton Manning	201
Brett Favre	201

BRADY NOW HAS 53 COMEBACKS

Brady led the Patriots back from a 24-16 fourth quarter deficit. It is the 53rd time that he has led his team to a victory from a fourth quarter deficit and the second time he has done so in 2017. He led the Patriots to a 36-33 win vs. Houston on Sept. 24 after leading the Patriots back from a 33-28 fourth quarter deficit.

HARMON SECURES THE WIN

DB Duron Harmon intercepted Pittsburgh QB Ben Roethlisberger in the end zone with nine seconds to play to secure the 27-24 win. It is the fourth time that he has picked off a pass in the end zone to secure a win and the second in 2017. He picked off Houston QB Deshaun Watson in the end zone as time expired to secure the win on Sept. 24, 2017. He secured a win with an end zone pick vs. Miami on Sept. 18, 2016 and secured a Divisional Playoff win vs. Baltimore with an end zone pick vs. Baltimore on Jan. 10, 2015.

GRONK GOES OVER 100 YARDS

TE Rob Gronkowski finished with nine receptions for 168 yards for his 26th 100-yard game of his career and the third of the 2017 season. He had 116 yards at New Orleans (9/17) and 147 yards at Buffalo (12/3). The only tight end with more 100-yard games than Gronkowski is Ton Gonzalez with 31.

MOST 100-YARD GAMES BY A TIGHT END IN NFL HISTORY

<u>Player</u>	<u>100-Yard Games</u>
Tony Gonzalez	31
Rob Gronkowski	26
Kellen Winslow	24
Jackie Smith	22
Antonio Gates	21
Jason Witten	21
Shannon Sharpe	19

MOST 100-YARD RECEIVING GAMES IN PATRIOTS HISTORY

Stanley Morgan	38
Wes Welker	28
Rob Gronkowski	26
Randy Moss	18

MOST 100-YARD GAMES BY A PATRIOTS TIGHT END

<u>Player</u>	<u>100-Yard Games</u>
Rob Gronkowski	26

GRONKOWSKI ON PACE FOR FOURTH 1,000-YARD SEASON

TE Rob Gronkowski added 168 yards and reached 1,000 yards for the fourth time in his career with 1,017 yards. He joins Tony Gonzalez and Jason Witten as the only NFL tight ends with four 1,000 yard seasons.

NFL TIGHT ENDS WITH AT LEAST TWO 1,000-YARD SEASONS

Rob Gronkowski	4
Tony Gonzalez	4
Jason Witten	4
Kellen Winslow, Sr.	3
Shannon Sharpe	3
Todd Christensen	3
Greg Olsen	3
Antonio Gates	2
Jimmy Graham	2
Ozzie Newsome	2

GRONK SETS CAREER-HIGH

Gronkowski set a career-high with 168 yards receiving. His previous best was 162 yards vs. Cincinnati on Oct. 16, 2016. He gained 135 yards in the second half.

GRONK COMES UP BIG IN PITTSBURGH

In six games against Pittsburgh, TE Rob Gronkowski has had at least 90 yard receiving in five games, including two 100 yard games. His other 100-yard game against the Steelers was when he finished with 142 on Nov. 3, 2013. The only time he did not reach 90 yards receiving against Pittsburgh was in his first meeting as a rookie on Nov. 14, 2010. However, he scored three touchdowns in that game.

COOKS HAS SEVENTH 40-YARD PASS RECEPTION

WR Brandin Cooks hauled in a 43-yard pass from QB Tom Brady in the first quarter to set up the Patriots first touchdown. He now has seven 40-yard pass receptions in 2017.

54-yarder vs. Kansas City (09/07/17)

42-yarder at Jets (10/15/17)

44-yarder vs. Houston (09/24/17)

42-yarder vs. Houston (09/24/17)

52-yarder at Oakland (11/19/17)

64-yard TD at Oakland (11/19/17)

43-yarder at Pittsburgh (12/17/17)

BURKHEAD SCORES IN FOURTH STRAIGHT GAME

RB Rex Burkhead scored on a 1-yard run in the first quarter and has now scored at least one rushing touchdown in four straight games. He now has five rushing touchdowns in his last four games after just three rushing touchdowns in his first 48 NFL games.

DION LEWIS STIL AVERAGING 5.0-YARDS PER CARRY

Dion Lewis is averaging over 5.2-yard per carry in 2017 after gaining 67 yards on 13 carries vs. Pittsburgh. If he keeps the pace then he will become the fifth Patriots player to finish a season with average of at least five yards per carry.

112-590

Highest Average Rushing Gain Season (100 attempts)

5.59 Don Calhoun, 1976 (129-721)

5.45 Mosi Tatupu, 1983 (106-578)

5.05 Legarrett Blount, 2013 (153-772)

5.04 Carl Garrett, 1969 (137-691)

GUY RECORDS FIRST SACK WITH THE PATRIOTS

DL Lawrence Guys sacked Pittsburgh QB ben Roethlisberger for a 3-yard sack in the second quarter for his first as a member of the Patriots.

LINEUP NOTES

- **WR Kenny Britt** played in his first game as a member of the New England Patriots.
- **DL Trey Flowers** returned to action and was in the starting lineup.