



## GAME NOTES

### **New England Patriots vs. Tampa Bay Buccaneers – September 22, 2013**

#### **PATRIOTS OFF TO 3-0 START FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 2007**

The New England Patriots improved to 3-0 in 2013 with a 23-3 win over Tampa Bay. The Patriots are 3-0 for the eighth time in team history, for the first time since 2007. New England is now 3-0 for the fourth time under Head Coach Bill Belichick. The Patriots also started 3-0 in 1964, 1974, 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2007. In the NFL since 1990, 75.4 percent of teams (86 of 114) that started 3-0 have made the playoffs.

#### **PATRIOTS DEFENSE ALLOWS THREE POINTS IN SOLID DEFENSIVE EFFORT**

The New England defense allowed only three Tampa Bay points, marking the third consecutive home game the Patriots defense has allowed 10 points or less and the first time since 1997 that the Patriots defense has allowed three points or less in a September game. New England closed out the 2012 regular season with a 28-0 shutout of Miami at Gillette Stadium and opened its 2012 home slate with a 13-10 win over the New York Jets on Sept. 12. The last time New England allowed three points or fewer in a September game was in a 31-3 win over Chicago at Foxboro Stadium on Sept. 21, 1997. Before today, the last time the Patriots defense held an opponent to less than 10 points in a September game was on Sept. 23, 2007, in a 38-7 win over Buffalo in Foxborough.

#### **PATRIOTS DEFENSE STARTS 2013 SEASON STRONG; TEAM ALLOWS FEWEST POINTS THROUGH THREE GAMES SINCE 1979**

The Patriots have allowed a total of 34 points through three games this season. The Patriots defense has allowed only 27 points this season (seven opponent points came on a fumble return). The 34 total points allowed by the Patriots are the fewest for the team through three games since 1979, when New England started the season by allowing 33 points in the first three games (losing 16-13 to Pittsburgh in overtime, beating the New York Jets 56-3, and then winning 20-14 at Cincinnati). The 34 points allowed are the second fewest in team history in the first three games, trailing only the 1979 team.

#### **PATRIOTS GROUND GAME TOTALS 156 RUSHING YARDS**

The Patriots gained 156 rushing yards on 33 carries (4.7 avg.) against Tampa Bay, marking the second time in three games this season that New England has broken the 150 rushing yard mark. The Patriots had 158 rushing yards in the season opener at Buffalo. Against Tampa Bay, the Patriots racked up their rushing total against a Buccaneers defense that allowed the fewest rushing yards in the NFL in 2012 (82.5 yards per game).

### **PATRIOTS FORCE A TURNOVER FOR THE 30th STRAIGHT GAME**

The Patriots have now forced a turnover in 30 straight games dating back to 2011, and including all 16 regular season games of 2012 and now the first three games of 2013 after CB Aqib Talib intercepted QB Josh Freeman in the second quarter. The NFL record for most consecutive games with a turnover since the merger in 1970 is 71 by Philadelphia from 1985-1990. The last time the Patriots did not register at least one turnover was on Oct. 9, 2011 vs. the New York Jets.

### **PATRIOTS STOP TAMPA BAY ON FOURTH DOWN FOUR TIMES**

The New England defense stopped Tampa Bay on fourth down four times in Patriots territory today, holding the Buccaneers to 0-for-4 on fourth downs. The Patriots stopped two Tampa Bay fourth-down conversion attempts in New England territory in the first half as the New England defense allowed only three first-half points. New England added two more fourth-down stops in the fourth quarter. The first-half fourth-down stops occurred at the Patriots' 34-yard line and 38-yard line. The fourth-quarter fourth-down stops happened at the Patriots' 34-yard line and 17-yard line.

### **BRADY EXTENDS HIS STREAK TO 51 GAMES WITH AT LEAST ONE TOUCHDOWN**

Tom Brady extended his streak to 51 straight games with at least one touchdown in the second quarter with his 16-yard touchdown pass to WR Kenbrell Thompkins. It is the second longest touchdown streak in NFL history, behind Drew Brees (54) and the longest active streak. Brady and Brees are the only NFL players with streaks of 50 or more consecutive games with at least one touchdown.

#### **MOST CONSECUTIVE GAMES, TOUCHDOWN PASSES**

<b>Player</b>	<b>Games</b>
Drew Brees (2009-2012)	54
<b>Tom Brady (2010-current)</b>	<b>51</b>
Johnny Unitas (1956-60)	47
Brett Favre (2002-04)	36
Dan Marino (1985-87)	30

### **BRANDON BOLDEN MAKES 2013 DEBUT AND MAKES FIRST CAREER START, TOTALS 100 SCRIMMAGE YARDS**

RB Brandon Bolden made his 2013 season debut after missing the first two games of the year and made his first NFL start against Tampa Bay. Bolden finished the game with exactly 100 yards from scrimmage (51 rushing, 49 receiving), with that total leading the team. Bolden's 100 yards from scrimmage were the second-highest such total of his career, trailing only his 148 scrimmage yards at Buffalo on Sept. 20, 2012 (137 rushing, 11 receiving).

### **BOLDEN HAS CAREER LONG RUN IN THE THIRD QUARTER**

RB Brandon Bolden had a career-long 46-yard run in the third quarter. His previous best was a 27-yard run at Buffalo on Sept. 30, 2012. It was the longest run by a Patriots player since Nov. 18, 2012 when WR Julian Edelman had a 47-yard run. It is the longest run by a Patriots running back since Sammy Morris had a 55-yard run on Dec. 27, 2009 vs. Jacksonville.

### **BOLDEN HAS CAREER-BEST RECEIVING PERFORMANCE**

Brandon Bolden set career highs with five receptions and 49 receiving yards. Coming into the game, Bolden had two career receptions for 11 yards.

### **KENBRELL THOMPKINS SCORES FIRST NFL TOUCHDOWNS**

Rookie WR Kenbrell Thompkins scored his first two NFL touchdowns today against Tampa Bay. Thompkins tallied his first career score on a 16-yard pass from QB Tom Brady in the second quarter. He added his second touchdown on a 5-yard reception from Brady with 47 seconds to play in the first half.

## **BELICHICK ONE WIN AWAY FROM TYING CHUCK NOLL FOR FIFTH PLACE ALL-TIME**

Bill Belichick won his 208th career game, bringing him within one win of Chuck Noll for fifth place on the NFL's all-time wins list.

### **MOST WINS NFL COACHES**

<b>Head Coach</b>	<b>Team(s)</b>	<b>Games to Reach 200</b>	<b>Record</b>
1. Don Shula	BAL, MIA	286	347-173-6
2. George Halas	Chicago	287	324-151-31
3. Tom Landry	Dallas	325	270-178-6
4. Curly Lambeau	GB,Cards, WAS	300	229-134-22
5. Chuck Noll	Pittsburgh	347	209-156-1
<b>6. Bill Belichick</b>	<b>CLE, NE</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>208-109-0</b>
7. M. Schottenheimer	CLE, KC, WAS, SD	339	205-139-1
8. Dan Reeves	DEN, NYG, ATL	373	201-174-2
9. Chuck Knox	LAR, BUF, SEA		193-158-1
10. Bill Parcells	NYG,NE,NYJ,DAL		183-138-1

### **STEPHEN GOSTKOWSKI TIES CAREER HIGH**

K Stephen Gostkowski tied a career-high with a 53-yard field goal at the end of the first half. He also had a 53-yard field goal vs. Arizona on Sept. 16, 2012 and at Denver on Oct. 11, 2009. Gostkowski was a perfect 3-for-3 on field goals against Tampa Bay.

### **GOSTKOWSKI TIES PATRIOTS RECORD WITH HIS EIGHTH FIELD GOAL OF 50 OR MORE YARDS**

Stephen Gostkowski's 53-yard field goal at the end of the first half was his eighth 50-yard field goal. He is now tied with Adam Vinatieri for the most field goals of 50 or more yards in team history with eight.

### **TALIB HAS THIRD INTERCEPTION OF 2013**

Aqib Talib intercepted a Josh Freeman pass at the Tampa Bay 43-yard line with 16 seconds left in the first half to set up a quick Patriots field goal that gave New England a 17-3 halftime lead. Talib's interception was his third in as many quarters, having had a pair of fourth-quarter interceptions against the Jets last week.

### **TOM BRADY IMPORVES ON HIS HOME DOMINANCE**

Tom Brady now has an 88-16 record at home. It is the best record among starting quarterbacks in home games since the 1970 merger. In all games, Brady is now 35-9 all-time against the NFC as a starter in the regular season.

<b>Player</b>	<b>Team(s)</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Pct.</b>
<b>Tom Brady</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>.846</b>
Terry Bradshaw	PIT	75	14	0	.843
John Elway	DEN	104	25	0	.806

### **PATRIOTS ARE SHARP AT GILLETTE**

The Patriots now own an overall record of 74-15 (.831) at Gillette Stadium in regular season games. New England has won 32 of its past 35 games at home.

### **The teams with the highest winning percentage at a stadium since 1970 (minimum 25 games):**

<b>Team</b>	<b>Stadium</b>	<b>W-L-T</b>	<b>PCT.</b>
<b>New England</b>	<b>Gillette Stadium</b>	<b>74-15</b>	<b>.831</b>
Miami	Orange Bowl	101-22-1	.819
Pittsburgh	Heinz Field	70-25-1	.734
Minnesota	Metropolitan Stadium	64-23-1	.733
LA Rams	Memorial Coliseum	53-20-2	.726

### EDLEMAN SURPASES 2012 RECEIVING TOTALS

Julian Edelman has 27 receptions through three games in 2013, already surpassing his 2012 season total (21). Edelman's career high for receptions is 37 catches, achieved as a rookie in 2009.

### EDELMAN HAS THE HIGHEST PUNT RETURN AVERAGE IN NFL HISTORY

Edelman returned two punts for 29 yards against Tampa Bay and now has returned 83 punts for 1,076 yards during his Patriots' career and has the highest punt return average in NFL history with a 13.0-yard average.

#### HIGHEST PUNT RETURN AVERAGE IN THE NFL (Minimum 75 Returns)

Player	Punt Ret. Avg.	Year
<b>Julian Edelman</b>	<b>13.0 (83-1,076)</b>	<b>(2009-present)</b>
George McAfee (Chicago)	12.8 (112-1,431)	(1940-41, 1945-150)
Jack Christiansen (Detroit)	12.7 (85-1,084)	(1951-58)
Claude Gibson (SD, OAK)	12.5 (110-1,381)	(1961-65)
Bill Dudley (PITT, DEN, WAS)	12.2 (124-1,515)	(1942-53)
Devin Hester (Chicago)	12.1 (246-2,985)	(2006-present)
Rick Upchurch (DEN)	12.1 (248-3,008)	(1975-83)

#### HIGHEST PUNT RETURN AVERAGE, PATRIOTS CAREER (Minimum 20 Returns)

Player	Punt Ret. Avg.	Year
<b>Julian Edelman</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>2009-13 (83-1,076)</b>
Mack Herron	12.0	1973-75 (74-888)
Carl Garrett	11.3	1969-72 (43-487)
Wes Welker	10.4	2007-12 (114-1,185)

### DEFENSE QUICK HITS

- **Devin McCourty** reached in to break up a Josh Freeman pass intended for Mike Williams in the end zone in the first quarter.
- **Alfonzo Dennard** broke up a Josh Freeman pass intended for Kevin Ogletree on third down in the fourth quarter, setting up a fourth down that the Buccaneers did not convert. On Tampa Bay's next drive, Dennard broke up a Freeman pass intended for Eric Page on second down, setting up a third-and-nine that the Buccaneers did not convert.
- **Rob Ninkovich** and **Chandler Jones** combined to sack Josh Freeman for a 2-yard loss in the first quarter, while Jones and **Tommy Kelly** combined to sack Freeman for a 7-yard loss in the third quarter. The sacks raised Jones's team-leading total to 3.0 sacks and raised Kelly's total to 1.5 sacks, while Ninkovich registered in the sack column for the first time in 2013.
- **Jerod Mayo** sacked Josh Freeman for a 1-yard loss on first down on the final play of the first quarter.
- **Dont'a Hightower** provided tight coverage on Doug Martin, forcing an incomplection on a second-quarter sideline pass attempt deep in Patriots territory.
- **Tommy Kelly** brought pressure on Josh Freeman on third down in the second quarter, forcing a Tampa Bay incomplection and a fourth down that the Buccaneers did not convert.
- **Brandon Spikes** and **Alfonzo Dennard** teamed up to stop Doug Martin for no gain on fourth-and-one in the second quarter, as the Patriots stopped a Tampa Bay fourth-down conversion attempt for the second time in the first half.