

# TOP 16 OVERALL DEFENSE & SPECIAL TEAMS FOR 2007

Attention to how a fantasy league scoring system is set up is very important to selecting a defense. In yardage leagues bend but don't break defenses like Buffalo's should be avoided. Also special team units can't be counted on year to year to produce points (Chiefs in 2003 & 2004) & should be viewed as a nice bonus if they do.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>1. BALTIMORE</b>	<b>8</b>			<b>8%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	12.6	264	188	76	60	12	28	5	0	0
2005	18.7	284	185	99	42	15	11	3	0	0
2004	16.8	300	195	105	39	13	21	7	2	2
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

The Baltimore defense has been a top fantasy pick among owners for many years and 2007 is no different. The Ravens finished '06 with our #1 total defense and were +17 in TO's (#1 as well). LB's Ray Lewis & Bart Scott should have better seasons now that DT Haloti Ngata has a year under his belt. Terrell Suggs will line up anywhere in the front 7 & the secondary is loaded with S's Ed Reed & Dawan Landry along with CB's Chris McAlister & Samari Rolle.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>2. NEW ENGLAND</b>	<b>10</b>			<b>7%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	14.8	294	200	94	44	13	22	0	1	0
2005	21.1	330	231	99	33	8	10	2	0	0
2004	16.3	311	213	98	45	15	20	5	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

The Patriots are an elite fantasy defense that relies on its schemes rather than individual players, but the addition of Adalius Thomas will upgrade an already solid unit. The front is a base 3-4 that features a large DL so the LB's can stuff the run. Teamed with a secondary that flies around before & after snaps while mixing things up makes OC's worry. Belichick is the brains behind a unit that just keeps plugging players in year after year.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>3. SAN DIEGO</b>	<b>7</b>			<b>6%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	18.9	302	201	101	61	12	16	0	0	0
2005	19.5	309	225	84	46	10	10	2	0	0
2004	19.6	335	253	82	29	9	23	2	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The San Diego defense suffered a lot of injuries last year, but still are a top unit among fantasy owners. Even with the loss of Wade Phillips, Donnie Edwards & Randall Godfrey the Chargers should be healthier & will keep the same 3-4 scheme in 2007. LB Shawne Merriman is the leader of a unit that lead the NFL in sacks. The secondary is the weakness as owners will not get big INT numbers, but the front 7 will hold its own & provide tons of points.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>4. MIAMI</b>	<b>9</b>			<b>5%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	17.7	289	188	101	47	19	8	2	0	0
2005	19.8	317	206	111	49	17	14	1	0	0
2004	22.1	306	162	144	36	9	15	2	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The Dolphins once again will be a Top 5 fantasy unit for owners in 2007. The defense does add LB Joey Porter who will boost an already sound unit led by DE Jason Taylor & LB Zach Thomas. The secondary is helped out by the fact that Miami does put a lot of pressure upfront, but don't expect big numbers. One area that will be a bonus for fantasy owners is the special teams with return specialist Ted Ginn Jr, who might get a TD return or two.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>5. CHICAGO</b>	<b>9</b>			<b>5%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	15.9	294	195	99	40	20	24	1	5	0
2005	12.6	282	180	102	41	10	24	5	1	0
2004	20.7	337	209	128	35	12	17	7	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

Yes, we do have the Monsters of the Midway at #5 as some fantasy owners would disagree. They are still a top unit but with the losses of 2 secondary players, DT Tank Johnson & LB Lance Briggs going through contract issues the Bears will be a notch down in '07. LB Brian Urlacher doesn't make many big plays, but is a tackling machine. Return specialist Devin Hester will provide a couple bonus TD's, but nowhere near 6 like last year.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>6. JACKSONVILLE</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>5%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	17.1	283	192	91	35	4	20	1	1	0
2005	16.8	291	184	107	47	9	19	2	1	0
2004	18.0	321	210	111	36	11	16	0	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

The Jaguars are a solid fantasy unit that gets better every year for owners & last year they proved even injuries couldn't slow them down. They have a huge DL led by the best DT duo in the NFL in Marcus Stroud & John Henderson & DE Reggie Hayward should be 100% (ACL). The LB corp is strong a little, but CB's Rashean Mathis & Brian Williams hold their own.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>7. PHILADELPHIA</b>	<b>5</b>			<b>5%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	20.5	328	192	136	40	10	19	4	0	0
2005	15.4	307	197	110	46	13	18	4	0	0
2004	21.9	370	243	127	45	14	19	5	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The Eagles are still a top fantasy unit for owners even though the run defense was not up to par last year. DE Jevon Kearse should be OK after a knee injury, but they do bring in DT Monte Reagar & upgrad the LB corp with Takeo Spikes so the ypg will drop. The secondary is always a strength led by S Brian Dawkins & CB's Lito Sheppard & Sheldon Brown.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>8. DENVER</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>4%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	19.1	326	213	113	35	13	17	2	0	0
2005	16.1	313	228	85	28	16	20	3	0	0
2004	19.0	279	184	95	38	8	12	2	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Denver went through another offseason change prior to '07. New DC Jim Bates will bring more pressure with new DE Jarvis Moss, but will feel the loss of LB Al Wilson. CB's Dre' Bly & Champ Bailey aggressive style could reward fantasy owners with several TD returns.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>9. CAROLINA</b>	<b>7</b>			<b>4%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	19.1	297	188	109	41	8	14	2	1	0
2005	16.2	283	191	92	45	19	23	3	0	0
2004	21.2	336	217	119	34	11	26	3	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Fantasy owners should see a better Panther defensive unit in 2007. DE Julius Peppers will man a solid DL & the return of LB Dan Morgan will be a huge upgrade. New DB's coach Tim Lewis will also demand more physical play especially from CB Chris Gamble.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>10. PITTSBURGH</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>4%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	19.7	300	212	88	39	9	20	2	0	0
2005	16.1	284	198	86	47	15	15	1	2	0
2004	15.7	258	177	81	39	11	19	5	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

For many years the Steelers' defense was the 1st one drafted by fantasy owners. New HC Mike Tomlin will continue with an aggressive style. They lost LB Joey Porter, but James Farrior & Larry Foote form a solid tandem. S Troy Polamalu again will lead the secondary.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>11. NY JETS</b>	<b>10</b>			<b>4%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	18.4	331	201	130	35	9	16	0	2	0
2005	22.2	309	172	137	30	7	21	3	1	0
2004	16.3	305	207	98	37	11	19	4	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

This defense should provide better numbers in 2007 for fantasy owners that don't go after the marquee units. They will be better vs the run led by L Jonathan Vilma. The Jets always blitz well & eliminate the deep pass, but no real veteran leadership & lack of personnel.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>12. MINNESOTA</b>	<b>5</b>			<b>4%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	20.4	301	239	62	30	15	21	3	1	0
2005	21.5	323	208	115	34	11	24	3	2	0
2004	24.7	369	244	125	39	11	11	3	1	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

The Vikings should be a top notch unit for owners in 2007. New DC Leslie Frazier will blitz more out of the Cover 2 & the LB's, led by EJ Henderson & their S's are disciplined. The DL is a run stuff unit & will be even better if DE's Kenechi Udezue & Erasmus James can be on the field at the same time. The CB's are suspect, but a great bargain for owners in any league.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>13. SEATTLE</b>	<b>8</b>			<b>3%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	21.3	331	204	127	41	14	12	1	1	0
2005	16.9	316	222	94	50	11	16	3	0	0
2004	23.3	351	224	127	36	12	23	3	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Fantasy owners big concern last year was that Seattle just wore down. DE Patrick Kerney & FS Deon Grant are upgrades & the offense should be able to control the clock more in '07 giving the D more rest so the unit built on undersized & fast players doesn't wear down.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>14. DALLAS</b>	<b>8</b>			<b>2%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	21.9	323	219	104	34	13	18	3	1	0
2005	19.3	301	193	108	37	11	15	2	0	0
2004	25.3	330	220	110	33	7	13	0	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

New HC Wade Phillips will make fantasy owners a lot happier in '07 as he is a defensive guru and "his" 3-4 will be led by LB DeMarcus Ware. The addition of FS Ken Hamlin & LB Greg Ellis coming back from injury will be an upgrade. Dallas always fields solid CB's as the only question mark will be if the defense adapts to Phillips more aggressive style of play?

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>15. NY GIANTS</b>	<b>9</b>			<b>2%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	22.6	342	228	114	32	11	17	2	0	0
2005	19.6	328	224	104	41	20	17	2	2	0
2004	21.7	324	189	135	39	14	14	4	0	0
<b>L3Y AVG</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Fantasy owners know that DE's Michael Strahan & Osi Umenyiora will get their numbers, but the question will be new DC Steve Spagnuolo & the surrounding cast. He will bring a more aggressive approach, blitzing & use the CB's in more man-two-man coverage.

TEAM	BYE			AV						
<b>16. GREEN BAY</b>	<b>7</b>			<b>2%</b>						
	PPG	YPG	PASS	RUSH	SKS	FMBL	INT	DEF TD	SP	TD
2006	22.9	321	207	114	46	10	23	4	0	0
2005	21.5	294	168	126	35	11	10	2	1	0
2004	23.8									