

12/19/2019

Keepers Fantasy Football XVI

Super Bowl Week

(1) Bossman vs. (2) Rapids Plungers

Super Bowl XVI is about to get underway and what a Super Bowl I expect it to be. It is not often that you see the top two seeds from the regular season advance on and play each other in the playoffs. In fact this has happened only two other times in league history (2004 & 2007) and both times the #1 seed went on to win the championship. It is also interesting to note

that the #1 seed has won the Super Bowl a whopping 7 times and the #2 seed only once. The odds would seem to be in favor of Bossman but I am not ready to hand over the trophy just yet. These are two of the most prolific franchises we have in the league. Bossman sits at or near the top in many of the major historical categories with the most important ones being win

% and the same could be said for Rapids Plungers as since they joined this league they are always looked at as a team that people expect to be battling for the playoffs and championships. This is one of the better Super Bowl matchups I can remember. The top 2 teams will battle it out in the Super Bowl to see who walks away a champion!

Bossman looking for #3!

This has been one of the more impressive seasons Bossman has put together since joining the league back in 2005. They got the unlucky draw of getting their named picked first in the lottery draft which means they got the last pick (#14). Not only has the team with the last pick never won a championship they also have historically struggled throughout the year. Bossman destroyed that narrative and proved that you can win from any draft position with a little luck and the proper draft strategy. They also faced another set of adversity

when Tyreek Hill went down in the first quarter of game 1 and was lost for a few games! This was a tremendous job by Bossman coach Steve Boss of putting together a roster each week that could win games and they found a way for an improbable 11 win season. That 11 wins ties them for their most regular season wins in a season, they did it one other time in their 2008 championship year. That is why I started this by saying it has been one of the more impressive seasons Bossman has ever put together and if

they can cap it off with a Super Bowl win I think it is safe to say that it was their most impressive season! They do however have work left to do as I know that their coach isn't going to be satisfied with the you had a great season "but" you didn't quite finish the job. For this coach and this team it is about championships and a win here in Super Bowl XVI will put them into an elite group of teams that have three or more championships! I expect them to come out and play well. Do they have won more win in them?

Rapids Plungers looking for playoff success!



Rapids Plungers finished off another solid regular season with 9 wins and the #2 seed! Their coach Tony Devivo has set a high standard for their team and in this league as it is almost now expected that they are going to be one of the 6 teams in the playoffs. Since they joined the league back in the 2008 season they have made it to now 8 playoff appearances and have the second highest regular season winning percentage in league

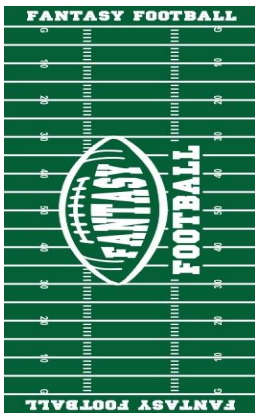
history. Not to mention they just set the record this year with a crazy 15 game regular season winning streak dating back to last year. Until they loss in week 9 of this season it had been approximately 385 days since their last regular season loss! That is the kind of team Tony is putting on the field and the level of success they have had. There is one thing missing to solidify them as one of the best franchises and that is a Super Bowl win. For all of their

tremendous regular season success they can't seem to carry that over into the Post Season. This year however already started different as they were able to narrowly defeat Big Papa in last week's game and that might be the exact turning point this team needs to get their confidence up and go out and prove to the league that they have what it takes to become a Super Bowl Champ! Is this the year that they get it done?

Exclusive Coach Interviews

The official start of the Super Bowl will be Saturday at 12:00PM CST and during media day we were able to catch up with both coaches, Steve Boss and Tony Devivo. Check out the unedited versions of their interviews below:

Interview with Bossman coach Steve Boss



Reporter: I would like to welcome to the interview room Steve Boss the coach of Bossman. Welcome and congratulations Steve on making another trip to the Super Bowl! How does it feel to be back in the BIG game?

Steve: Better than ever! This has been my favorite season yet!

Reporter: This is now your 4th trip to the Super Bowl to go along with two championships. What would you say has been the biggest factor in your success over the years?

Steve: I work hard at putting my best team on the field every single week. My favorite write-up from this year was the week I played against Pack Attack and the unveiling of all the strategy that went into it.

Reporter: Clearly, you are building a legacy and with a win here you would become one of only three teams to ever win three championships. To put that into perspective, nine of the fourteen teams playing have yet to win their first championship. These records and historical stats are nice, but do they carry any significant meaning to you as you go for #3?

Steve: Of course, I care about that stuff! You & I talked about it last weekend at Keepers Christmas. The fewer teams that win championships, the more prestigious it remains for the few already in the "club".

Reporter: Along those same lines, you picked #14 in this years draft. No one who had the last pick has ever won a championship. Does that add any extra motivation to get it done this week and be the first team to ever accomplish that?

Steve: Yeah, not just this year but 2 years back-to-back with the last pick! Honestly that's why this has been my favorite year. It motivated me more than other years to put luck into my own hands & see if I could somehow overcome it as a test of my skill. It feels really good knowing that the with the shortest stick in the draw, I turned that into either a 1st or 2nd place finish!

Reporter: Speaking of the draft, that is of course an extremely important part of any team's success. You took Ezekial Elliott at #14 which was risky given his playing status was in the air. Can you walk me through your thought process at that time and the reason for the pick?

Steve: I knew that in order to have a chance, I needed to swing big. Obviously it would've been a much tougher road if that wouldn't have worked out & I would've been forced to play Sony Michel in that slot. But again, it feels good that every other coach had an opportunity to take that chance & they passed on it!

Reporter: Probably your best pick was in round 7 with Austin Ekeler turning in a top 5 season at the RB position. Tell me what your hope or expectation was with this pick at draft time?

Steve: It was another choice with a high potential to outperform. Melvin Gordon's status was up in the air. I was of course hoping he would've been traded. Thankfully Ekeler's receiving skills kept him relevant in the time share from week 5 on.

Reporter: This is a team game and it takes a great team to get this far but if I made you pick one player (which I am), who has been your MVP so far this season?

Steve: I'd have to say my QB play. I wasn't happy with my options during the draft finally picking up Winston in Round 9. Having been burnt by Winston in prior seasons when he was benched for Fitzpatrick, I knew I had to make up for lack of talent with volume & for a lot of the season I had 3 QBs on my roster to try & anticipate upcoming matchup opportunities. Needless to say, that strategy played out better for me than I could've imagined.

Reporter: You started the season out slow with a 2-2 record, however since then you haven't lost another game. What changed to put you on this 10 game (including playoffs) winning streak?

Steve: I got rid of the #1 waiver wire curse. I held onto it most of last year because I could never justify using it worth it's value. Finally I was kicking myself this year for not using my waiver claim on DJ Chark, the #3 WR that I badly needed. So I finally got the monkey off my back the following week by using it on J. Richard, so I could get a better chance of getting players who could help my team each week.

Reporter: Your opponent this week, Rapids Plungers stole the headlines for most of the year but you quietly hung in there and in the end it was you and your team that stole the show. There is no more "quietly" with your team as you have become the favorite. Which role do you prefer? Favorite or Underdog?

Steve: I'm not sure if "quietly" is the right word to describe my team. I've been more vocal than most on Facebook this year & have been trying to get other teams engaged in weekly banter back & forth. I think that's what makes the league more fun! Although with the general lack of response from the other coaches (particularly those who don't know me as well), I'm not certain if they are understanding my intent correctly. Being the Favorite & talking "trash talk" is not really what I want to be known for. I'd much rather be seen as the funny Scrappy-Doo from Scooby-Doo!

Reporter: With that said, Rapids Plungers has yet to win a Super Bowl and has historically not played well in the playoffs. Do you think this adds more pressure to you and your team to win this week or to Rapids Plungers as they try to get the monkey off their back?

Steve: I have nothing but respect for the Rapids Plungers team this year. It's no coincidence that every single weekly writeup they were your favorite & all of the rest of us where in your "well . . . I don't know, I'll have to see more" category. They were my top choice to go up against in this championship matchup!



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- Steve Boss



“J. Winston has another great matchup this week. I would love another 450+ yard with 3 INT game out of him!”

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Reporter: In big games you need a player or players to step up and lead their team to victory. Who are you counting on most to have a big game for you this week?

Steve: J. Winston has another great matchup this week. I would love another 450+ yard with 3 INT game out of him!

Reporter: Let's take a bit closer look at your opponent. Rapids Plungers has some major playmakers on their team who are capable of a HUGE game at any moment. Who on their team are you most worried about leading up to the Super Bowl?

Steve: Fitzpatrick hurt me last year when he took over for a benched Winston. I am terrified of him getting the best of Winston again with a great matchup against Cincinnati!

Reporter: Staying on the subject of your opponent and as you are preparing for this matchup what have you seen that you would identify as a weakness for the Rapids Plungers squad?

Steve: I tried to pull a fast one on waivers & pickup Mike Boone with the intent to just store him on my bench, but Rapids saw that coming and put a waiver claim on him. I guess you could say TE is his weakness, but my guy hasn't been the same coming back from injury either.

Reporter: What would you identify as the key to you and your team winning the championship this week?

Steve: T. Hill & J. Edelman both are playing against tough defenses this week. I can't afford sub-10 point games from them.

Reporter: Lastly, if you could send one message to your opponent what would it be?

Steve: You still have my vote for the best team logo!

Interview with Rapids Plungers coach Tony Devivo!

Reporter: I would like to welcome to the interview room Tony Devivo the coach of Rapids Plungers. Welcome and Congratulations Tony on a great season! You made it!! How does it feel to be back in the Super Bowl, your first since the 2013 season?

Tony: Stressful. With the consistent success but the fear putting up a goose egg when it matters the most makes this time of year very stressful for me.

Reporter: Getting here wasn't easy, and I need to look back briefly at last week's crazy game against Big Papa. Down by 10.47 points going into Monday night with Kamara yet to play. How confident were you that you would be in this spot playing for the championship this week?

Tony: I actually felt very confident only being down by 10 points and having what was considered a top four draft pick still to go in a good matchup. I know Kamara had not been having the best year but all things being said and done I felt pretty confident.

Reporter: With a .08 point win any small stat correction could change the outcome of the game. So let's be honest now... was the Yahoo app the first thing you opened on Wednesday morning to confirm you still won?

Tony: As the game was going on I was almost positive they're going to pull the starters leaving me with a one-point loss. To see Kamara get that 8 yard rush before being pulled out of the game made my night. Now that being said yes I was waiting for that stat correction to come through and I have to admit I did open up the app and check it this morning.

Reporter: Despite the close call last week your team is deserving to be here as you dominated for the majority of the regular season. I say majority because the last 5 weeks of the regular season was tough as your team went 1-4 to finish the season. What do you think is causing the less than stellar play the last few weeks and how do you get your team to play up to their potential this week?

Tony: A couple of the weeks I had some bad scores but otherwise my team actually put up some good numbers and I just ran into some other teams that scored pretty well. I think we all knew that my receivers could not continue to put up numbers at the rate they were putting up numbers so there was some regression that was going to come and as a team we just had our best to fight through it.

Reporter: Ok, I always like to take a look back at the draft to see how championship caliber teams take shape. You took four WR's in the first four rounds which isn't common. That clearly was a great move as you landed D. Hopkins, K. Allen, C. Godwin & C. Kupp with those picks but what I want to know is that the strategy all along or was that just how the draft played out?

Tony: It's more or less the way the draft played out. I had a number of running backs that I would have taken in those spots if they would have fallen to me but they didn't so I took the best receiver on my board for each of those picks.

Reporter: Outside of the four players I just mentioned, who has been the player that has had the biggest impact on your success this season

Tony: Carlos Hyde - free agent pickup. This allowed me to trade for Kamara to provide me with a more balanced team.

Reporter: There is this narrative around your team that you are one of the best in the regular season and one of the worst in the post season. Why do you think your team has historically struggled so much in the playoffs?

Tony: Well fine sir...The only reason this narrative exists is because some stat geek on the back end dug up some numbers about playoff performances. Outside of that we would not be talking about this so I will move on.

Reporter: A win here would certainly help to change that narrative and would also be your first ever championship. How important is it for you to win this game and get the proverbial monkey off your back?

Tony: My teams from previous years have no effect on this team. I refuse to talk about this subject. also Arian Foster and Josh Gordon have requested that you stop calling them for interviews on this subject.



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"I just got done being in a 15 game winning streak so 10 game win streaks don't impress me much"

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"I'm going to look at my horses and I'm going to need a game out of DeAndre Hopkins"

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"Earlier this year I traded for Alvin Kamara and even though he's not been a bust I also haven't seen a blow-up performance from him so now would be a good time."

- Tony Devivo

Reporter: Alright let's move on to the game at hand. You are going against a team in Bossman that is on a 10 game winning streak (including playoffs) and after last week's performance aren't showing any signs of letting up. You will be the Underdog this week which is a rarity for your team. Do you think that helps or adds even more pressure?

Tony: I just got done being in a 15 game winning streak so 10 game win streaks don't impress me much. Now that being said looking at the talent on the field you are right I will come into the game as an underdog which is rare. But I guess that is why we play the game.

Reporter: The likelihood of winning this game while scoring 112 points like you did last week is slim which means you are going to have to have a good scoring game. Who will you be counting on to have a big game for you this week?

Tony: I think we're going to have a pretty good idea of where this game is going by the time the 12:00 game on Saturday ends. So that being said I'm going to look at my horses and I'm going to need a game out of DeAndre Hopkins. I took him first overall and he's been consistent this year but I really haven't seen the blow up game out of him. Playing against a horrible Tampa Bay pass defense he has a real chance of setting the tone for the week.

Reporter: Let's look more closely at your opponent. You don't make it this far without having some playmakers that could put up big points at any time but who are a few players on their team that you are most worried about leading up to the Super Bowl?

Tony: Well the obvious one is Tyreek Hill. that dude can take three catches and turn it into 190 yards and three touchdowns real fast. Jameis Winston has had a great year as well. In a little bit of game strategy that's why I've added Justin Watson to my roster because I'm the chance that Winston throws 3 touchdowns hopefully he throws two of them to Watson and they kind of even each other out. If Jameis throws three touchdown passes to Perriman I am done for.

Reporter: Staying on the subject of your opponent and as you are preparing for this matchup what have you seen that you would identify as a weakness for the Bossman squad?

Tony: Well the obvious answer here is the leadership on the team. With tyreek Hill and Ezekiel Elliott both being troublemakers in the past I think that says a lot about the leadership of this team.

Reporter: What would you identify as the key to you and your team winning the championship this week?

Tony: Honestly I'll need a little bit of luck. Losing Chris Godwin last week hurts a ton because he might have been my best player all year long. Earlier this year I traded for Alvin Kamara and even though he's not been a bust I also haven't seen a blow-up performance from him so now would be a good time.

Reporter: Lastly, If you could send one message to your opponent what would it be?

Tony: I see that you have three kickers in your team right now so hopefully you make the right choice on which one to play.

Who's Going to Win?

Keepers Fantasy Football XVI



Check out the official website!

www.KeepersFantasyFootball.com

So now what you have all been waiting for, who wins Super Bowl XV? Let's break down the positions:

Quarterback: *Jameis Winston vs Ryan Fitzpatrick*

Jameis Winston is on a tear as of late and I don't see any reason to believe that he won't be a top 5 quarterback this week. Ryan Fitzpatrick is not a top 5 play but if there is anyone who can provide some magic when the odds are stacked against him it would be "Fitzmagic". I just like saying that! I am going to give the edge to **Bossman** and Jameis in this one.

Wide Receivers: *T. Hill, J. Edelman & B. Perriman vs C. Kupp, D. Hopkins & C. Kirk*

This has been a strength all year for Rapids Plungers however losing C. Godwin to injury is a major blow and of course at the worst of times. Bossman benefits nicely from that as they picked up B. Perriman to stack with J. Winston. All that said, I still think the WR's for Rapids Plungers find a way to outscore Bossman this week. I am going with **Rapids Plungers** on this one.

Running Backs: *E. Elliott & A. Ekeler vs A. Kamara & D. Washington*

Elliott has been leading the charge as of late for Bossman and Ekeler has been so consistent all year long. Kamara is a nice play for Rapids Plungers and Washington has a chance to be ok. The problem I see here for Rapids Plungers is a really low floor and I like Bossman to win this position rather easily.

Tight Ends: *A. Hooper vs K. Smith*

I mentioned this in a previous write-up but Hooper has had a really solid year at the TE position. He has had three games in the low 20's this season but his consistency is what has made him a solid play all year long. For Rapids Plungers, they are forced to start K. Smith in the championship game. You know it is bad when I had to open his full stat sheet in Yahoo to see what his first name is. **Bossman** with the edge here.

FLEX: *P. Lindsay vs M. Boone*

This is an interesting one as I could see both teams going back and forth on who to put into their flex. I will evaluate as it is today and I am going to give the edge to Lindsay against a bad Detroit team. Boone has a shot as MN loves to run the ball and it seems he is going to get all the touches right now but there is too much of a unknown there. **Bossman** wins this one.

Kicker: *R. Gould vs Y. Koo*

Not too much to talk about here as they are kickers but I like Koo vs Jax. **Rapids Plungers** wins this one.

Team Defense: *Denver vs Pittsburgh*

Not loving either of these teams but PIT has the better overall defense so I will take them and **Rapids Plungers** here.

Defensive Player: *B. Wagner vs C. Jones*

C. Jones is always intriguing because his projections are so high and you wonder.. do they know something I don't? I think I am going with B. Wagner and **Bossman** in this one.

The Verdict:

I think this is Bossman's game to lose. The matchups are setting up nicely for them and the potential is there for them to have a huge game. For Rapids Plungers to win this one they are going to need their stars to play like stars BUT they are going to need a unsung hero to emerge from somewhere.. guys like Boone and or Washington need to step up. The Saturday games have the potential to show us quite a bit about who may win this matchup. I think Bossman walks away with their third championship trophy!