Gridiron Stats

1 GENERAL RULES

1.1 FORMATS Gridiron Stats has two formats, a regular NFL format, and newly launched in Spring 2020, an NFL "Retro" format. This rulebook covers both formats. It has previously also had a format based on the World League of American Football.

1.2 THE LEAGUE There are sixteen teams in each NFL Format league, divided into four divisions (named Shula, Halas, Landry and Lombardi) of four teams each. In the Gridstats Retro format, there are eight teams per league, divided into two divisions (named Rozelle and Hunt).

Team names may be any EXCEPT the names of real teams, subject to the approval of the GM (who may object to names on the grounds of decency, taste or suitability). There are three setup turns before the start of the first season, and one restart turn at the beginning of each subsequent season.

1.3 THE GM The "GM" (jargon for Games Master, by obscure tradition) is the person responsible for the operation of the league. In more normal terminology the GM would be called a moderator, or an umpire. The game is actually processed by computer, but is supervised by the GM.

1.4 PRE-SEASON In the NFL Format there are normally three pre-season turns prior to the start of the season, using a set of random stats (the main purpose of such games is to begin shuffling rosters before the real action starts, following the NFL Draft and free agency).

1.5 REGULAR SEASON The regular season in NFL Gridiron Stats is one week longer than the NFL regular season, with NFL wild card week being the last week of the Gridiron Stats Regular Season. In the NFL Retro format, the regular season is ten weeks long.

1.6 PLAYOFFS For playoff purposes each NFL League is divided into two conferences, the Shula and Halas divisions forming one, the Landry and Lombardi divisions forming the second. The top team in each division qualifies for the playoffs, along with the two teams in the conference with the next best records (wild cards). The divisional winner with the best record meets the second wild card team in the first round of the playoffs. The remaining teams go into the Consolation Bowl.

In the NFL Retro format, there are two rounds of playoffs. The top two teams in each division qualify for the playoffs, with the runners up in each division playing the winner of the other division. The remaining four teams participate in the Consolation Bowl playoffs.

1.7 DEADLINES The GM sets a deadline each turn. Your orders must be submitted online by the deadline (using www.softsim.co.uk). For NFL leagues, the deadline is normally after the Thursday night game has been played (so players will know those results when submitting orders), usually just before the first Sunday game kicks off. For Gridstats Retro it will normally be Saturday morning.

1.8 SUBMITTING TURNSHEETS Please do not submit more than one turnsheet per turn. If you do so, you may be charged for the extra turnsheet, or may have one of the sets of orders disregarded.

1.9 TEAM REPORTS Each team has an individual report to show the results of orders from last turn. This includes a current roster listing, along with the individual player statistics accumulated, contracts values, wage costs, team coaching levels, management levels and losing points.

1.10 GAME REPORTS The game results, scorers and strategies are listed along with the current league standings, player movements, news of available players, league news, messages and so forth.

1.11 GAMES THAT COUNT All NFL games count in the NFL Format, including the Thursday Night games (the deadlines are normally after these games have been played). Games will be run as soon as practical after the final game of the week (usually a Monday Night Game) has been played.

In Gridstats Retro, one week will be chosen at random for each week of the season (including playoffs) so that twelve of the sixteen real-life weeks will be used each season (this ensures uncertainty about which players will produce stats for any given week).

1.12 THE PLAYER LIST The player list is all the real life players "signed" or waiting to be signed by the teams in the game. The list is NOT exclusive, and new players can be added on demand. The player list is in alphabetical order of name and shows the player number, real life team and position of each player, and whether he is already signed to a team in the league. The player list isn't a regular part of the game report (it's too expensive) but extra updates can be obtained during the game if necessary.

1.13 ELIGIBLE PLAYERS You're not restricted to signing players who are already on the player list, and you may acquire any player you choose, including players who can't contribute because they do not play in real life. From time to time unsuitable players will be deleted from the player list. If you have such players signed to your team at the time they are deleted then they will simply disappear.

1.14 TRIMMING THE PLAYER LIST It is necessary to keep the player list to a sensible size, and from time to time "duff" players are removed from the list. In general these players will be free agents, but occasionally they will be players signed to teams. In the latter case they are treated as having been "waived" (see paragraph 3.7).

1.15 PLAYER NUMBERS Each player is allocated a "player number" which is his unique identification. In your instructions all players should always be identified by their player numbers (identifying players by name is liable to spelling and typing errors). Note that there is no connection between player numbers in the game and shirt numbers in real life.

1.16 FREE AGENTS Players who are on the player list but not signed by any team in the game are "free agents". Players who qualify for inclusion in the game but aren't included on the player list are also free agents and will be added to the player list as soon as a request is made. If a real life player moves between teams then his status in the game is not affected.

1.17 PLAYER TYPES Each player is classified by the GM as one of six types: quarterback (QB), running back (RB), tight end (TE), wide receiver (WR), kicker (KK) or unknown (UN). This will normally correspond to that player's real life playing position, but in the event of disputes the GM's decision is final. The GM may change the classification of a player between seasons, but not normally during play. A player rated as an "unknown" may be reclassified by the GM at any time, and may not play until classified (so be prepared to provide extra information about any such players you sign). These classifications determine the positions in which a player may be selected. Other playing positions (linemen, defence etc) are not included in Gridiron Stats.

1.18 DRAFTED PLAYERS In the NFL Format, you cannot add a player (and therefore cannot sign them) before they are drafted (i.e. you cannot add college players to the player list). This restriction does not apply to Gridstats Retro (so you can "look ahead" in that format).

1.19 YOUR ROSTER Each team has a squad of up to twenty players "signed". These are the players available for selection each game, and are signed in three setup turns at the start of the game - or by subsequent bids during the season. You cannot sign players above the limit, so it is wise to keep an eye on the size of your roster.

1.20 LOSING POINTS There are no rules for money or finance in Gridiron Stats. The "currency" for transactions in the game (primarily signing players) is losing points, usually abbreviated to LPs.

1.21 PLAYER VALUES When a player is signed by a team then the amount bid is recorded and becomes the "value" of that player. This determines the cost each turn of retaining that player, and also the number of losing points that are recovered if he is waived. The value of a player is increased by one LP for every field goal or passing touchdown he scores (actually whichever is higher of his real-life and game scores, and for this purpose a passing touchdown is credited to both the receiver and the quarterback), and by two LPs for each rushing touchdown he scores.

1.22 INCOME After each game both teams receive a number of losing points according to the result. The winning team receives 40 LPs, and the losing team receives 60 LPs (hence the name, since you get more if you lose). In a tied game both teams receive 50 LPs. Additional income may be gained from marketing, merchandising, stadium facilities (development) and debenture (bond) schemes.

Notes: the reason for these rules is to balance the game as evenly as possible, so that losing teams get the resources to help catch up, while winning teams are forced to fight harder and harder to retain their positions. A successful team with a lot of high value players will have fewer LPs available with which to bid for new players (but a successful team should have plenty of LPs available for rebuilding once a few veterans are released).

1.23 INCOME AND WAGES For each player each turn your team pays out losing points equal to one tenth of his current value (with a minimum of one LP). This represents his salary. There is no income, nor expenditure on player wages during pre-season rounds or playoff rounds.

1.24 MARKETING Each team receives extra losing points each week according to the number of losing points previously spent on marketing (this number is recorded and listed in the team report). The number of extra losing points income each turn is the square root of the total of losing points spent previously to that turn fractions are rounded down - so stay with square numbers). Half the losing points spent on marketing are carried over into subsequent seasons (i.e. at the start of each season after the first your accumulated total of losing points spent on marketing is halved). You cannot have more than 100 LPs invested in marketing.

1.25 MERCHANDISING Each team when it wins a game may receive extra losing points according to the number of losing points previously spent on merchandising (this number is recorded and listed in the team report). Each time a team wins the merchandising total is reduced by 10% but double this amount is received as income (the merchandising total represents stock in hand and available: this stock is reduced whenever sales are made, but the sale price is double the cost price). You cannot have more than 100 LPs invested in merchandising.

Example: A team has 40 LPs invested in merchanding. When it wins the merchandising total is reduced by 4 LPs, but the team gains 8 LPs income.

1.26 FACILITIES Facilities in the form of stadium development, services and executive boxes allow you to invest losing points to increase your income. The cost of developing stadium facilities is the square of the level of income to be produced, less the square of the level of income already produced from facilities. The additional income (in losing points) received in any week is the number of games your team has won in the current season, or the level of facilities, whichever is least. The level of facilities is reduced by one at the start of each season.

1.27 DEBENTURES Debentures are a type of borrowing in the form of a bond, raising money against future income. The income raised from each bond issue is 50 LP less twice the number of bonds already issued less twice the current week number. The number of bonds issued is deducted from your losing point income each turn. The number of bonds issued is halved at the start of each season (rounding down).

Debentures are not included in Gridstats Retro.

1.28 INCOME Each turn the number of losing points you have available to spend each turn (excluding wages) is the amount shown on your team report. Losing points raised through trades, merchandising, debentures, etc is received afterwards. Your wages are, however, paid after you have received your income. A team may drop below 0 LPs, but then are unable to make bids, contract actions etc, and will be at the mercy of any poaching actions, so it is a bad idea.

1.29 TRADING DEADLINE At the end of a season, a Trading Deadline is imposed. In the NFL Format this is after the second week of the playoffs. In the NFL Retro format this is after the first week of the playoffs.

After the trading deadline, new free agent bids and fast-signings are not permitted. The turn after the trading deadline free agent overbids are permitted, and any successful overbids are automatically signed the same turn. Poaches are not permitted the turn of the trading deadline.

Note: Gridstats is a Trading game, so we keep trading going as long as possible.

1.28 END OF SEASON If at the end of a season (after the conclusion of the playoffs) a team has an LP balance of more than 250 LPs then half of the excess over 250 LP is lost (so 350 LPs is reduced to 300 LPs).

Note: This is to prevent teams from saving up too many LPs during one season (by not trying very hard to win) in order to give them advantage for the following season (usually a tactic which doesn't succeed, but people do try anyway).

2 SETUP RULES

2.1 NEW STARTS When a new league sets up each team begins with 500 LP and no players signed. 25 LPs are added at the end of each of the three bidding rounds. This ensures that no team can run out of LPs during the setup stage. Bidding is competitive and all bids in a round are counted before a player signs for the team with the highest bid. In the NFL Format, there are ten bids per round. In the NFL Retro format, there are eight bids per round.

2.2 RESTARTS The NFL Format game is inactive outside the football season, and is restarted by the GM at the beginning of the new season.

The NFL Retro format flows from one season direct into the next, though we may decide to only run it when the real-life NFL is inactive (so it would run from February through to August).

At the start of each season, a new league roundup, fixture list, player list, team report and turnsheet is issued to each player that has one or more turn credits. Other teams will be made available to new players as standby places. At the start of a new season each teams Marketing and Coaching levels are halved, Facilities decrease by one level and all holdouts are cancelled.

2.3 STANDBY PLACES When a new coach is appointed to a team with fewer than 100 LPs then their balance is increased to 100 LPs.

2.4 INITIAL BIDS Bids must be in whole numbers of LPs, and the highest bid gets the player. The amount bid is paid out immediately, and losing bids are ignored. Where equal highest bids are made by different teams then the winning bid is decided at random. During the initial bidding rounds if one or more bids are made for a player then he will sign immediately for the highest bidder.

2.5 NO BIDS If a player fails to submit a set of initial bids for some round then the computer will make up random bids instead. It selects players that no-one has bid for (at random) and signs them for a modest bid. Note that you'll normally only get rubbish this way, but you may get lucky. Note that this only applies if you submit no bids at all: you may choose to submit fewer then the full number of bids in a round (common in later rounds if you were successful in early rounds and have few spaces left on your roster).

2.6 FINAL ROUND After the third round of bids has been processed the computer attempts to fill up any empty places in the team selection by making further 1 LP bids at random (this is to minimise the damage done to the team if the coach fails to submit orders for a bidding round).

2.7 FURTHER SIGNINGS Further free agents may be signed later during normal play (with a slightly different system).

2.8 CASH LIMITS If you attempt to spend more losing points than you have available then some of your bids are reduced to 1 LP (starting with the last bid made and working backwards until you can afford to sign all the players you bid for).

2.9 ROSTER LIMITS If you attempt to sign more players than will fit on your roster then the new players are signed and waived immediately. Note that it is possible for someone else to sign a player that you bid for, and then exceed their roster limit and be forced to waive him again. In this case the player concerned will still appear as a free agent on the player list, even though your bid was rejected.

3 WRITING ORDERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION Each action (other than the strategy actions) is explained in this section, with an example shown in roughly the same format as you'd enter it on your turnsheet. Where an empty box is shown (like [   ] for example) then that box should be left empty for that action.

3.2 TEAM SELECTION A team selection consists of fourteen players, which must consist of a quarterback, a running back, a running back or tight end or wide receiver (option), a tight end or wide receiver (option), two wide receivers, a kicker, and backups for each position.

If your selection doesn't arrive by the deadline then your previous selection will be used instead. Errors in your selection will normally be corrected.

No player may be played out of position according to his classification (players must match the classification appropriate for the selection and the formation). Places in a selection may be left empty if a team has insufficient players (but see 3.5, fines).

3.3 TEAM SELECTION SUMMARY

In summary, the seven "selections" are as follows:-

1. Quarterback
2. Running Back
3. Running Back, Tight End or Wide Receiver
4. Tight End or Wide Receiver
5. Wide Receiver
6. Wide Receiver
7. Kicker

3.4 BACKUPS Each team selects two players for each position each game. One is nominated as the starter and the other as the backup. In normal circumstances only the starter will play, and any stats achieved by the backup are ignored, but if the starter fails to make any scores (including bonus touchdowns) then the backup plays and his stats are used instead.

3.5 FINES Each turn you will be fined a number losing points for each position in your team selection unfilled. Each successive unfilled position is penalised more heavily (i.e. two empty places cost three times as much as one).

3.6 PLAYER MOVEMENTS All player movements occur after the games for that week have been played. A player may play in the same week as he is waived. A newly acquired player may not be selected until the turn after his arrival. There are no direct trades in Gridiron Stats, but the system of waivers and free agents allows you to make indirect trades (see waivers and bids, paragraph 3.11 and trades, paragraph 3.20). Unwanted players can be waived, and may then be signed as free agents by other teams. When a player is signed off waivers (i.e. after being waived by someone else) then his previous team receives "compensation".

3.7 WAIVERS Any player in your squad may be waived (released). Half of his current value is recovered immediately (fractions are rounded down), and the player reverts to being a free agent.
ACTION [WAIVE   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [127   ]
releases player number 127.

3.8 FREE AGENT BIDS A free agent is any player in real life who is not signed by a team in the game. Teams may bid for free agents (up to two per turn). Bids are published in the league report, and a bid is successful if it stands for a turn without a higher bid (see section 3.9) being made (this differs from the process for initial bids, where opponents get no chance to make counter bids). If you make a new bid for the same player as the previous turn your old bid is cancelled (even if it would still be the highest bid).

Note: If a player you want isn't already on the player list then he doesn't yet have a player number, but you can still bid for him by giving his full name and team. The computer will then allocate a new player number. You may bid for anyone who is not already signed, but no check is made that a given player actually exists or is eligible.

example, to bid 5 LP for player number 292:

PLR NUM [292] BID VAL [5] NAME [   ] FORENAME [   ] TEAM [   ]

example, to bid 1 LP for a player not already on the player list:

PLR NUM [   ] BID VAL [1] NAME [BLOGGS] FORENAME [JOE   ] TEAM [MD]

3.9 OVERBIDS When a team has made a bid for a free agent then that offer is published in the league report. Other teams may make higher bids for the same player the following turn, but any such "overbid" must be at least 50% (rounding up) the previous highest bid (e.g.: the minimum overbid of 20 LP is 30 LP, and 25 LP is 38 LP).

3.10 COMPENSATION When a free agent is signed then his previous team (if any) receives half the amount bid (fractions are rounded up). This includes a team re-signing a player who was previously on their roster (subject to them being the last team he was signed to).

Note: it is possible to make a profit on a waiver if the player is signed by someone else at a higher value, and there is nothing to stop you placing bids to force the price up for a better profit (at the risk of getting the player back again). It is legal to waive a player and bid for him the same turn to attempt to re-sign him at a lower value (you recover half the difference) but you should be aware that other players are able to make rival bids and steal the player away.

3.11 WAIVERS & BIDS In this game you may make a free agent bid for a player the same turn as that player is waived by another team. If you want to set up a trade with another team then you can arrange it so that they make a free agent offer then same turn that you make the waiver, when no-one else will know that the player is available. You can only make such trades at sensible values, as a bid that is too low can be overbid by other players. Note that other coaches might gamble and put in a free agent bid anticipating that a waiver may be coming.

3.12 SCOUTING There are two forms of scouting, which you may choose by either indicating the player number of the player to be scouted (in the PNUM box) or by leaving the box blank. If you indicate a player number then this provides up to date information on that player (who he plays for, if anyone, and his current value). If you don't give a player number then the computer will try to find a free agent (a player who isn't signed with anyone else). The position of the player scouted will be controlled by your current scouting type. The special actions ANY, KK, QB, RB, TE and WR allow you to change the current scouting type and will also scout a player of that type. Any special actions you do not use will be treated as un-numbered SCOUT actions.

ACTION [SCOUT   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [100]
scouts player number 100.

ACTION [SCOUT   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [   ]
searches for a free agent.

ACTION [WR   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [   ]
searches for a free agent receiver.

3.13 MARKETING Teams may spend losing points on marketing to increase their LP income. The amount spent is simply added to the tally of spending (see 1.21). The most you may spend on marketing in a single turn is 99 LP and you may not have more than 100 LPs invested in marketing.

ACTION [MARK   ]   AMOUNT [25 LP]   PLR NUM [   ]
spends 25 LPs on marketing.

3.14 MERCHANDISING Teams may spend losing points on merchandising to increase their potential LP income. The amount spent is simply added to the tally of spending (see 1.22). The most you may spend on merchandising in a single turn is 99 LP and you may not have more than 100 LP invested in merchandising.

ACTION [MERC   ]   AMOUNT [20 LP]   PLR NUM [   ]
spends 20 LPs on merchandising.

3.15 DEVELOPMENT Teams may spend losing points on stadium facilities to increase their potential LP income. Give the new level required in the "amount" box. The cost is the square of the new level less the square of the existing level. The maximum level of development is nine.

ACTION [DEV] AMOUNT [2 LP] PLR NUM [ ]

increases facilities to level 2.

3.16 BONDS Teams may raise additional losing points through debenture (bond) schemes. The number of losing points raised is 50 LP less twice the number of bonds already issued less twice the current week number. Each bond issue reduces the weekly income of the team by 1 LP. Each action raises one bond. The maximum number of bond issues permitted is nine.

ACTION [BOND] AMOUNT [ ] PLR NUM [ ]

issues a new bond/debenture scheme.

Bonds are not available in the NFL Retro format.

Notes: Be careful with raising bonds. Whilst they increase your LPs in the short term, this is at the expense of long term income.

3.17 FASTSIGN It is also possible to sign free agents by using the special actions section of the turnsheet, with a FASTSIGN action. In this case it is essential to know the player number of the player to be signed (it is not possible to fast sign someone that is not already on the player list).

FASTSIGN actions compete normally with other free agent bids (i.e. the highest bid signs the player) but if successful the player is signed immediately (unlike normally free agent bids where the signing is not completed until the following turn). Any player signed this way has a contract value of 1 LP, irrespective of the amount actually bid. Players who were not free agents at the start of the turn may not be signed with FASTSIGN actions.

If you are overdrawn you may still make fastsign actions, but ONLY if your bid for a player is 1 LP. Bids higher than 1 LP are not permitted.

ACTION [FAST] AMOUNT [2 LP] PLR NUM [113]

fast signs player 113.

Notes: The restrictions on fast signing players are to prevent teams using this action to make trades without other teams having the opportunity to make counter bids, and to prevent teams reducing contract values by waiving and fast signing their own players.

3.18 POACHING It is possible to "poach" players already signed for other teams (by letting him know how much more money he'd get if he played for you). If an approach is successful then that team may be forced to make him available to other teams (it is still not possible to sign such a player without other teams having the chance to make offers). Normally this is only possible when a player is under valued, and when the team for which he is signed is seriously short of losing points. If you attempt a POACH action on one of your own players then this will be treated as a CONTRACT action (see 3.22 below).

To approach a player, use the special action "POACH", with the amount of your offer in the "amount" box and the number of the player to be poached in the "number" box. Subject to the exception in the next paragraph, the threshold for poaching a player is 50% higher than his current value (e.g. the minimum poach of a player valued at 35 LPs is 53 LPs), and you pay 20% of your offer immediately (this goes to the player's agent, and he keeps it). The player and your offer are then listed in the "holdouts and trades" section of the league report and also in the team report of his current team.

If a team's LP balance is below zero then the threshold for poaching a player on their roster is reduced— players may be poached at any value above their current value.

If a team's LP balance is below -50 LPs players may be poached at any value, even below their current value.

For such poaches to be successful the team whose player is being poached must have the required LP balance both at the start of the turn **and** when the poach is processed (which occurs after waivers, so the team has the chance to waive a player to fix their finances).

Note: Poaching is included in the game to force team owners to be sensible with their losing points. If you overspend then your players are likely to be tempted away.

ACTION [POACH   ]   AMOUNT [45 LP]   PLR NUM   [100   ]
offers 45 LPs to poach player 100 from his current team.

3.19 HOLDOUTS When a player is listed as a holdout or trade then his current team may waive him, pay up (by making a CONTRACT action - paying the difference between the holdout value and the current value of the player) or do nothing. If he does nothing and someone (anyone) subsequently makes a free agent bid equal to or greater than the value for which the player his holding out then the player is waived and the free agent bid is processed in the normal way. The team responsible for the initial approach has no special status: to sign a player you've poached you must compete with any other team that's interested, as normal (including the team that waived him).

Players who are listed as "holding out" will still play if selected (unlike holdouts in real life), but they disappear the moment the money is offered for real, unless you take action to keep them (unlike in real life - although the effect is much the same).

If a player remains on the holdout list for more than four turns then his holdout is automatically cancelled. The league report indicates when a player's holdout is about to be cancelled for this reason.

3.20 TRADES It is also possible to place your own players in the "holdouts and trades" section of the game report, by using the TRADE action. This works the same as a poaching action except that it may only be applied to players who are signed for your own team, and does not cost anything (unlike poaching, which costs 20% of the offer value).

The purpose of this action is to make the player available to any other team that will pay the asking price (without being available to teams that offer less). The player is treated the same as a player who is holding out as a result of poaching. There are only three possible results: the player is signed by someone else, he is waived, or the team makes a contract action to end the holdout.

Poaching takes priority over trades. If someone makes a legal poaching offer for less than the holdout value of a player then the holdout value will be reduced to the new poaching offer value (so you cannot use the trade action to hide a player from poaching).

ACTION [TRADE   ]   AMOUNT [40 LP]   PLR NUM   [28   ]
offers player 28 for a trade.

3.21 CONTRACT & REMOVE You may increase the losing point value of one of your own players with a CONTRACT action, in order to protect him against poaching. Enter the number of the player in the number box and his NEW VALUE in the amount box. You pay the difference between his current value and his new value. If you attempt a CONTRACT action on a player who isn't signed to your team then it is treated as a POACH action. You cannot order a CONTRACT action if your LP balance is below 0 LPs, even if there is no cost for the contract.

The special action "REMOVE" may be used instead of a CONTRACT action to remove players from the holdout list. The player is automatically contracted to his current holdout value (funds permitting), in exactly the same way as a CONTRACT action, but you do not need to specify the contract value.
ACTION [CONTRACT   ]   AMOUNT [25 LP] PLR NUM   [122   ]

3.22 PAYALL The PAYALL action sets the "Pay All" option. In this case any time one of your players holds out then a contract action is made automatically. The NOPAYALL action clears the pay all option if it has previously been set. The pay all option is clear at the start of the game.
ACTION [PAYALL   ]   AMOUNT [LP] PLR NUM   [   ]
sets the "pay all" option.

3.23 COACHING There are five actions that allow you to spend losing points to coach your team in the five different coaching categories. Your level in each coaching category determines the effectiveness of various game strategies used by your team or your opponent. The maximum coaching level is nine in each case. The cost of each action in losing points is the square of the new coaching level, less the square of the old coaching level (with the following exceptions: to calculate the cost of

PROTECT actions add two to each coaching level, and for RUNBLOCK actions add one to each coaching level). Examples of the costs of coaching are given on the back page.

ACTION [PROTECT]   AMOUNT [2 LP]   PLR NUM [ ]
increase pass protection by two.

ACTION [RUNBLOCK]   AMOUNT [3 LP]   PLR NUM [ ]
increase run blocking by three.

ACTION [PASSRUSH]   AMOUNT [1 LP]   PLR NUM [ ]
increase pass rush by one.

ACTION [PASSDEF]   AMOUNT [4 LP]   PLR NUM [ ]
increase pass defence by four.

ACTION [RUNDEF]   AMOUNT [6 LP]   PLR NUM [ ]
increase run defence by six.

3.24 EXTRA LISTINGS   There are three special actions to produce extra listings: SCHEDULE, ROUNDUP and PLAYERS. These actions produce up to date copies of the schedule, league roundup and player list respectively. The cost is one turn credit, but the extra report is sent to every team.

Note: you don't need extra listings very often, if at all, but it's important to send the same listings to everyone, rather than allowing someone to gain an advantage from having more up to date listings. You probably won't need to use any of these actions, but they're available if you do.

ACTION [PLAYERS]   AMOUNT [ ]   PLR NUM [ ]

3.25 MESSAGES   The turnsheet also includes a section for player messages, which are published in the league report. All messages are identified by the computer according to who sent them, and our normal restrictions apply (i.e. keep it clean and fair).

3.26 ORDER OF SPECIAL ACTIONS   Coaching actions are all processed BEFORE games are played. All other special actions are processed after games. The order in which these actions are processed are as follows: increase of player values (due to scoring), payment of wages, income from results, merchandising, marketing and stadium development, raise new bonds, waivers, contract actions, fast-signings and free agent bids, trade and poach actions, expenditure on marketing, merchandising and stadium development.

At all times your LP balance must be sufficient to cover any action ordered.

Fast-signings and free-agent bids are processed at the same time, so you may make more than one bid with the "same" LPs. e.g.: a team has 60 LPs but can make two bids for 50 LPs. With free agent bids a team's LP balance is only checked when the bid is MADE, not when it is completed, so a free agent bid will be completed even if it takes the team overdrawn.

Note that income from waived holdouts is not available for free agent bids and fastsigns ordered in the same turn, unlike income from ordered waivers (which may be used for free agent bids or fastsigns).

4 GAME SCORES

4.1 INTRODUCTION   Each week your team scores touchdowns, extra points and field goals according to the scores and yardage made in real life by the players in your team selection for that game. There are four classes of scores: touchdown runs & returns, touchdown passes, touchdown catches (receptions) and kicks & conversions. Each is treated differently.

4.2 GAMES THAT QUALIFY   All games played in the NFL during the deadline weekend count towards games that week unless your GM informs you otherwise. Playoff games are run slightly differently, and are detailed in section 4.10. Note that bye weeks in the NFL mean there are often inactive teams, and it is necessary to have sufficient depth in your roster and will often be necessary to modify your starting lineup from week to week.

4.3 BONUS TOUCHDOWNS   Each player may score in each category according to either the number of actual touchdowns scored, or the number of "bonus touchdowns" allocated according to individual yardage as below. Players only score whichever is the higher of actual and bonus scores, and not both together. Note that individual return yardage is not included.

 Rushing: one TD for every 80 yards rushing.

 Receiving: one TD for every 80 yards receiving, or one TD for every 5 catches.

 Passing: one TD for every 100 yards passing.

Notes: Bonus touchdowns are included to even out the statistical performance of players who earn a lot of scores (by racking up lots of yards) but fail to score the actual touchdowns (eg. running backs who are removed from the formation on the goal line, and quarterbacks and receivers with teams that run the ball on the goal line).

Note: There are no bonus touchdowns in the NFL Retro format.

4.4 RUNS & RETURNS   Each touchdown run, touchdown punt return or touchdown kick return (including bonus touchdowns for running yardage) is scored the same (six points) in the game as in real life, with no modifications.

4.5 PASSES & RECEPTIONS   The number of "passing" touchdowns scored in the game is the **lesser** of the number of touchdown passes (including bonus touchdowns for passing yardage) and touchdown receptions (including bonus touchdowns for pass receptions or receiving yardage). To score a touchdown it is necessary to throw a touchdown pass **and** catch it (there's no use throwing the ball into the endzone if there's no-one to catch it, or a receiver getting open if the quarterback can't find him). Passes that have no corresponding reception, and receptions that have no corresponding pass are referred to as "spare touchdowns".

Note that a player can throw and catch the same touchdown pass in Gridiron Stats (it's possible in real-life, and quite common in Gridiron Stats).

4.6 FIELD GOALS   Each kicker scores the same number of field goals (three points each) in the game as he did in real life, with no modifications.

4.7 EXTRA POINTS & CONVERSIONS   Each kicker scores the same number of extra points in the game as he did in real life, subject to the limit that he may not score more extra points than there were touchdowns scored by the rest of the team. Extra points that have no touchdown to convert are referred to as "spare extra points".

Non-kickers may score conversions (kickers cannot score conversions in Gridstats). Each conversion run counts for a full conversion for the player concerned, while each conversion pass/catch counts for half a conversion each for the players who threw and caught the conversion.

Each touchdown scored by a team allows the team to add one conversion run, two conversion passes/ catches (may be two conversion passes, two conversion catches or one of each) or one kicked extra point. If a team has more conversions/extra points combined than touchdowns scored then conversions count before extra points.

All conversions are considered as being worth two extra points as far as the team totals and bonus playoff scores are concerned (so each conversion scored increases your season extra point total by

two). Conversions that have no touchdown to convert are worth two "spare extra points" for tiebreak purposes (see 4.12). In game reports conversions are listed in terms of the points scored, so a player with conv 2 scored 2 points by conversion.

In the NFL Retro format, Conversions are not possible for seasons prior to 1994 (which was when the real-life NFL introduced conversions).

4.8 ODD SCORES Note that it is possible for players to make scores in other than the expected categories. Quarterbacks and receivers can make running touchdowns, unexpected players may throw for touchdowns. It is not unknown for quarterbacks to catch touchdowns passes (and there is no exclusion to prevent a QB in Gridiron Stats from passing and receiving on the same touchdown).

4.9 OVERTIME If the game is tied (the scores are level) when all the touchdowns, field goals and extra points are added up then the team that achieved the higher number of spare touchdowns is awarded an overtime touchdown to win the game. If the number of spare touchdowns on each side is equal then the team with the higher number of spare extra points and/or conversions is awarded an overtime field goal to win the game. Otherwise the game is tied.

4.10 PLAYOFF RULES The rules for "playoff" scores apply in all games when the NFL playoffs are in progress. There are two sets of playoffs: one set for the Grid Bowl, and the second set for the Consolation Bowl.

4.11 PLAYOFF SCORES Any players that score in the playoffs count as normal, and scores may be lost or gained according to strategies in the normal way. Extra scores are also assigned to each team according to their scoring record during the season (including playoff games already played). The number of extra scores assigned is the total number of each type of score made by each team divided by a number which is the same for both teams in each game, but may be different from game to game.

Example: The Canton Bulldogs have season stats of: Run 16, Pass 24, FG 17, EP 12.

With a divisor of 17 the Bulldogs get one pass and catch, and one field goal.

With a divisor of 16 they get one run, one pass and catch, and one field goal.

With a divisor of 12 they get a run, two pass & catches, a field goal and an extra point.

These extra scores are allocated to individual players in your team selection (before strategies are processed). Scores may be allocated to backups only when the backup has a real life score and the starter does not (i.e. the extra scores are allocated to whichever player is actually active).

4.12 TIE BREAKER In the event of tied games during the playoffs, there are additional tie breakers after the normal overtime rules, in order: most total points scored during the season, least total points conceded, and finally the flip of a coin.

4.13 ELIMINATION If a team is eliminated from either of the two main playoff competitions it has further playoff consolation games scheduled. This means you will be charged a credit for each playoff turn, even if you are eliminated from the main playoffs.

Notes: This allows teams to continue trading (see 1.27) and also enables us to run the tipsters competition during the playoffs.

5 STRATEGIES

5.1 INTRODUCTION For each game you may select up to five strategies for the game, one from each of the following categories: offensive gameplan, defensive gameplan, offensive playcall, defensive adjustment and offensive adjustment. These modify the stats of your team and your opponent. The effectiveness of these strategies depend on the stats achieved, the coaching levels of the teams and the other strategies selected.

5.2 COACHING LEVELS Each team has five coaching levels, which are determined by the number of losing points spent on coaching (see paragraph 3.23 and quick reference table 1 for details of the coaching actions and their costs). The coaching levels on defence are run defence, pass defence and pass rush, and those on offence are pass protection and run blocking. The relative values of the coaching levels of your own team and your opponent determine the effectiveness of the various strategies. The effects of the coaching values are explained in the following sections.

5.3 GAME STRATEGIES There are thirteen different game strategies, divided into five separate groups, described in the sections that follow. Strategies are selected by entering codes in the special action boxes. Most strategies (all except the defensive gameplan strategies) require that you specify a player as well (by entering a player number in the appropriate box). You may use more than one strategy in a game, but you may not use the same strategy more than once, or more than one strategy from the same group.

If you call a strategy to a player who is not on the field (for example a starter who does not produce stats, but his backup does, so the starter is benched for the game concerned), then the strategy will be cancelled, and will not appear in league reports.

Notes: Strategies are optional. They provide ways of gambling on the stats achieved by your team, and provide a form of defence against opponents with unbalanced offences. All the strategies are provided with counter strategies (that is, if you can guess what strategies an opponent will call then you can call a strategy to exploit it).

5.4 OFFENCE GAMEPLANS There are three offensive gameplans available, which reflect your teams overall offensive strategy for the game. PASS installs a pass offence, RUN installs a run offence and SHOOT installs a run and shoot style of offence.

PASS Pass offence specifies a passing based game plan featuring a chosen wide receiver, whose player number must be given.

One touchdown run is subtracted from each running back, and if your pass protection is greater than the pass defence of your opponent then one TD pass is added to the QB and one TD catch is added to the chosen WR.

RUN Run offence specifies a running based game plan featuring a particular running back, whose player number must be given.

One TD pass is subtracted from the QB, and if your run blocking is greater than the run defence of your opponent then one TD run is added to the chosen RB.

SHOOT Shoot offence specifies a run-and-shoot based game plan featuring a particular wide receiver, whose player number must be given.

One TD run and one TD catch is subtracted from each RB, one TD catch for each TE, and if your pass protection is greater than the pass rush of your opponent then one TD pass is added to the QB and one TD catch is added to the WR chosen.

ACTION [PASS   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [122]

5.5 DEFENCE GAMEPLANS There are three defensive gameplans available, which reflect the defensive strategy of your team for the game. COVERAGE defends against a passing team by covering the receivers, STUFF defends against a running team and BLITZ defends against a passing team by pressuring the quarterback.

COVERAGE Coverage defends against the wide receivers. If your pass defence is greater than the pass protection of your opponent then one TD catch is subtracted from each opposing wide receiver.

STUFF Stuff defends against the opposing running backs. If your run defence is greater than the run blocking of your opponent then one TD run is subtracted from each opposing running back.

BLITZ Blitz pressures the opposing quarterback. If your pass rush is greater than the pass protection of your opponent then one TD pass is subtracted from the opposing QB.

ACTION [COVERAGE   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [   ]

5.6 OFFENCE PLAYCALLS There are three offensive playcalls, which enable your offence to counter the defensive gameplans that may be used by your opponent. DRAW counters a pass defence (coverage), PLAYACT counters a run defence (stuff) and SCREEN counters an aggressive defence (blitz).

DRAW DRAW adds one TD run to the chosen running back if the defence called COVERAGE, or subtracts one TD run from this running back if the defence called STUFF.

PLAYACT PLAYACT adds one TD pass to the quarterback and one TD catch to a chosen wide receiver if the defence called STUFF, or subtracts on TD catch from this WR if the defence called COVERAGE.

SCREEN SCREEN adds one TD pass to the quarterback and one TD catch to the chosen running back if the defence called BLITZ, or subtracts one TD pass from the quarterback if the defence called STUFF.

ACTION [DRAW   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [23   ]

5.7 DEFENCE ADJUSTMENTS There are two defensive adjustments available, which allow your defence to concentrate on one particular player in the opposing offence. DOUBLE calls for double coverage on a chosen wide receiver, and risks other wide receivers getting open, while KEY gears the run defence to stop a chosen running back, and risks other running backs breaking free.

DOUBLE DOUBLE subtracts one TD catch from the chosen wide receiver, but adds one TD catch to each other wide receiver with a TD catch.

KEY KEY subtracts one TD run from the chosen running back, but adds one TD run to each other running back with a TD run.

ACTION [DOUBLE   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [56   ]

5.8 OFFENCE ADJUSTMENTS There are two offensive adjustments available, which allow your offence to counter the effects of defensive adjustments by directing the ball towards a particular player. DIRECT involves the use of misdirection, faking handoffs to one running back (usually the one the defence is expected to be keying) and handing the ball off to another. DECOY involves faking passing patterns to one wide receiver (usually the one the defence expected to double team) while throwing the ball to another.

DIRECT DIRECT subtracts one TD run from the chosen running back, but adds one TD run to each other running back with a TD run.

DECOY DECOY subtracts one TD catch from chosen wide receiver, but adds one TD catch to each other wide receiver with a TD catch.

ACTION [DIRECT   ]   AMOUNT [   ]   PLR NUM [67   ]

6 TIPPING COMPETITION

Gridiron Stats includes two forms of tipping competition— extra games in which players compete to score points by predicting the results of real life games and title races. Both tipping competitions run throughout the regular season and during the playoffs.

The Tipping Competitions do not apply for Gridstats Retro leagues (predicting the results of games played forty years ago would be pretty straightforward).

6.1 TIPPING AWARDS At the end of the regular season there is a bonus of 100 LPs for the team that finishes top of the tipsters table, 60 LPs for the team finishing second, 40 LPs for third, 30 LPs for fourth, 25 LPs for fifth, 15 LPs for sixth and then 10 LPs down to 1 LP for seventh to sixteenth. If two teams are tied in the tipsters table then the team which held the higher position the previous week take precedence.

6.2 TIPPING ORDERS On your turnsheet you'll find a section devoted to the tipping competition. This section shows the games to be tipped for the next week, and provides a box in which to enter your prediction for the result of that game. Your prediction will be W for WIN, D for DRAW or L for LOSS, relating to the team listed first.

6.3 TIPPING RESULTS Two points are scored for each correct prediction. Results, scores and accumulated totals are listed in the tipsters table in the league report each turn. If a game is postponed then no points are scored (nor lost).

6.4 GAMBLE The special action GAMBLE is used to alter the scoring system for your tips for a particular week. If you gamble then you score four points for each correct prediction, but lose three points for each incorrect prediction.

6.5 SEASON TIPSTERS The objective in the season tipsters competition is to predict the winners of each of the divisional titles, the two conference games and the Superbowl. However, the skill isn't in predicting the winner, but when you predict the winner.

For each of the season tips you may score a maximum of 24 tipping points (all points are awarded at the end of the season). The actual number of points you score is 25-WEEKNUM, where WEEKNUM is the week of the season when you finally settled on the **correct** winner. The minimum points you can score for divisional titles is 6 points, for conference titles 3 points and for the Superbowl 2 points (these are the points you get if you don't get the right winner until after the title has been decided - for example the computer will automatically assign the correct NFL divisional titles to you in week 18 at the end of the regular season, even if you still haven't got some of the right winners).

You may change a season tip at any time. However, whenever you change that tip the points value associated with the tip is reduced to 25-WEEKNUM, even if you previously had tipped that team to win the title, changed your mind and are now changing back.

This means that the key is not getting the right tips, but getting them as early as possible. The later you settle on the right team the fewer the points you get.

Each team's tips, and current points totals for their tips are shown on the league reports every week, so that every manager can see what the other teams have predicted.

The season tipsters is not affected by gambling, but at the end of the season the season tipster points are combined with the game tipping points to produce the tipping results.

Examples: if you tip Miami to win the AFC East in week 1, never change your tip and Miami wins the AFC East you score 24 points.

If you tip Miami to win the AFC East in week 1, change to Buffalo in week 7 and Buffalo win the AFC East you score 18 points.

If you tip Miami to win the AFC East in week 1, change to Buffalo in week 7, change back to Miami in week 12 and Miami win the AFC Central you score just 13 points.

QUICK REFERENCE TABLES

TABLE 1: COACHING COSTS

LEVEL	PRUSH/PDEF/RDEF	RUNBLOCK	PROTECT
1	1 LP	4 LP	9 LP
2	4 LP	9 LP	16 LP
3	9 LP	16 LP	25 LP
4	16 LP	25 LP	36 LP
5	25 LP	36 LP	49 LP
6	36 LP	49 LP	64 LP
7	49 LP	64 LP	81 LP
8	64 LP	81 LP	100 LP
9	81 LP	100 LP	121 LP

Notes: In each case the cost given is the total cost of coaching from level zero. If current level is above zero, then subtract the cost of the original level. For example, the cost for coaching PASSRUSH from level four to level eight is 64 - 16 = 48 LP.

TABLE 2: SPECIAL ACTIONS

Full details on the use of these actions are given in section three.

ACTION	RULE	AMOUNT	PLR NUM
ANY	3.12	not used	not used
BOND	3.16	not used	not used
CONTRACT	3.21	new value for player	player no. to be given new contract
DEV	3.15	new level required	not used
FAST	3.17	amount offered	player number to be fast-signed
KK	3.12	not used	not used
MARK	3.13	amount to be spent	not used
MERC	3.14	amount to be spent	not used
NOPAYALL	3.22	not used	not used
PASS DEF	3.23	increase in coaching level	not used
PASSRUSH	3.23	increase in coaching level	not used
PAYALL	3.22	not used	not used
PLAYERS	3.24	not used	not used
POACH	3.18	amount offered	player number to be poached
PROTECT	3.23	increase in coaching level	not used
QB	3.12	not used	not used
RB	3.12	not used	not used
ROUNDUP	3.24	not used	not used
RUNBLOCK	3.23	increase in coaching level	not used
RUNDEF	3.23	increase in coaching level	not used
SCHEDULE	3.24	not used	not used
SCOUT	3.12	not used	player number to be scouted
TE	3.12	not used	not used
TRADE	3.20	amount wanted	player number to be offered for trade
WAIVE	3.7	not used	player number to be waived
WR	3.12	not used	not used