



BY PAUL DOMOWITZ

EAGLES VS. COWBOYS

Recent history: The Eagles lost to the Cowboys, 17-3, on Oct. 20, when Nick Foles was knocked out of the game with a concussion and Matt Barkley threw three picks as his replacement. LeSean McCoy (55 yards rushing) and Riley Cooper (88 yards receiving) were the Eagles' top yardage gainers.



THE RUNNING GAME

WHEN THE EAGLES RUN THE BALL

The Cowboys held LeSean McCoy to 55 yards on 18 carries in the first game. McCoy had only one run longer than 6 yards in that game. But injuries at linebacker, particularly the loss of MLB Sean Lee, have severely weakened the Cowboys' ability to defend the run. They're 30th in the NFL in yards allowed per carry (4.8) and have been gashed five times in the last seven games for individual 100-yard rushing performances. The Eagles' ground game, meanwhile, has never looked better. They have rushed for 280-plus yards in two of the last three games. McCoy, whose 1,476 rushing yards lead the league, has averaged 7.1 yards a carry in the last three games and 5.1 for the season. McCoy is averaging 4.3 yards per carry in the first quarter, 4.5 in the second, 5.3 in the third and 6.4 in the fourth.

EDGE: Eagles

WHEN THE COWBOYS RUN THE BALL

DeMarco Murray is averaging 5.4 yards per carry, second among backs with 100 or more carries. He's big and fast, but has been underused in the Cowboys' pass-oriented offense. He's averaging only 15.4 carries and has had more than 18 carries only three times all year, only once since Week 3 — last week against the Redskins (22 carries, 96 yards). Whether Tony Romo plays or not, it stands to reason that the Cowboys will lean more on Murray, who has rushed for 376 yards and is averaging 6.5 yards per carry in the last three games. But the Eagles, led by their front three of Fletcher Cox, Cedric Thornton and Bennie Logan, are third in the league in yards allowed per carry (3.8). In their last three games, they have held opponents to 2.9 yards per carry and have given up only seven double-digit runs in 109 carries, none longer than 12 yards.

EDGE: Eagles

THE PASSING GAME

WHEN THE EAGLES PASS THE BALL

Nick Foles had the worst performance of his career in the first Dallas game, completing only 11 of 29 passes before leaving with a concussion in the fourth quarter. Since then, he's played at a Pro Bowl-caliber level — a 126.6 passer rating, a 66.7 completion percentage, 10.0 yards per attempt, 19 touchdowns and only two interceptions in his last 201 attempts. Foles has been outstanding on third down and in the red zone. He has a 121.1 rating inside the 20 and 112.5 on third down. The Eagles didn't use multiple-tight end sets much in the first game against the Cowboys. Employed a formation with more than one tight end only twice in 75 plays. With MLB Sean Lee out, the Cowboys really have no one who can match up with rookie tight end Zach Ertz.

EDGE: Eagles

WHEN THE COWBOYS PASS THE BALL

With Tony Romo at quarterback, the Cowboys clearly are a pass-oriented team. Their 35.6 run percentage is the fifth lowest in the league. But if Romo's back injury prevents him from playing and Kyle Orton starts, the Cowboys likely will go with a more conservative offensive game plan and try to rely more on RB DeMarco Murray. With 69 career starts, Orton is one of the more experienced backups. But he has thrown only 15 passes the last two seasons and hasn't started since 2011 with the Chiefs. Led by Dez Bryant (85 catches, 1,134 yards, 12 TDs) and tight end Jason Witten (61 catches, eight TDs), the Cowboys have one of the top receiving corps. Witten will be a tough matchup for LB Mychal Kendricks. The Eagles have 17 sacks in the last five games.

EDGE: Even

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Cowboys' will get a big lift with the expected return of punt and kickoff returner Dwayne Harris, who missed three of the previous four games with a hamstring injury. Harris, who had a 78-yard punt return for a touchdown against the Eagles last season, is second in punt (14.0) and kickoff returns (30.5). The Cowboys' coverage units are sixth in the league in kickoff coverage and 16th in punt coverage. Kicker Dan Bailey has a 70.3 touchback percentage in domes this season, so Eagles new KR Brad Smith probably won't get many opportunities. Bailey has missed only two of 27 field-goal attempts and has made six of seven from 50-plus yards. For the second straight week, the Eagles' coverage units likely will be without two of their best players — Colt Anderson and Kurt Coleman. Eagles punter Donnie Jones has put a franchise-record 32 of his 77 punts inside the 20. Only seven of his last 40 punts have been returned.

EDGE: Cowboys

INTANGIBLES

AT&T Stadium can be an intimidating place to play. The Cowboys are 5-2 at home this season. But they have become masters of the late-season swoon. Since 2008, they are 12-15 in December. The last three seasons, they are 3-5 in Weeks 15-17. The Eagles are a young team whose future is full of opportunity. The Cowboys are an older team that can hear its biological clock ticking.

EDGE: Eagles

STATSGLANCE

A look at the factors driving Sunday's game.

WHO'S HOT, WHO'S NOT

HOT



EAGLES

OLB Trent Cole. Had three of the Eagles' five sacks vs. Bears. Has seven sacks in the last five games.



COWBOYS

RB DeMarco Murray. Has rushed for 376 yards and two TDs in the last three games, averaging 6.5 yards per carry.



EAGLES

WR/PR DeSean Jackson. His 29 receiving yards vs. Bears was second lowest of the season. Is averaging only 3.9 yards on punt returns.



COWBOYS

DE DeMarcus Ware. Has only two sacks in the Cowboys' last nine games.

KEY MATCHUPS

- Eagles ILB Mychal Kendricks vs. Cowboys TE Jason Witten:** With eight TDs, Witten still is one of the league's best tight ends. The athletic Kendricks has had a very good season, but still makes occasional mistakes in coverage. **Advantage: Cowboys**
- Eagles WR DeSean Jackson vs. Cowboys CB Brandon Carr:** Carr was largely responsible for holding Jackson to three catches for 21 yards in the first game. But Chip Kelly is doing a much better job of moving Jackson around and giving him space. **Advantage: Eagles**
- Eagles LT Jason Peters vs. Cowboys RDE DeMarcus Ware:** A battle of Pro Bowl titans. Ware still is one of the league's best pass-rushers, but doesn't seem as effective as a 4-3 end as he did as a 3-4 edge rusher. Peters, one of the league's best left tackles. **Advantage: Eagles**

FEAST, THEN FAMINE

Sunday's game will mark the fourth straight time that the Eagles will have faced an NFC East foe immediately after posting a 50-something up on the scoreboard. In those three games, however, the Birds did not even combine for 50 points. Here are the contests following the Eagles' seven previous 50-plus games (chronologically):

Pts.	Date	Next Game	Opponent	Result
64	Nov. 6, 1934	Nov. 11	Brooklyn Dodgers	L 7-10
56	Oct. 7, 1950	Oct. 15	@Baltimore Colts	W 24-14
56	Oct. 25, 1953	Nov. 1	@Steelers	W 35-7
52	Nov. 8, 1981	Nov. 15	Baltimore Colts	W 38-13
58	*Dec. 30, 1995	Jan. 7	@Dallas Cowboys	L 11-30
56	Sept. 23, 2007	Sept. 30	@New York Giants	L 3-16
59	Nov. 15, 2010	Nov. 21	New York Giants	W 27-17

*Wild-card playoff game, followed by divisional playoff game.

WHERE TEAMS RANK

A look at where the Eagles and Cowboys rank:

	Offense			Defense		
	Total	Rushing	Passing	Total	Rushing	Passing
Eagles	2	1	9	30	12	30
Cowboys	22	24	14	32	27	31

WEATHER REPORT

Dome

DOMOWITZ'S PREDICTION: EAGLES 38, COWBOYS 20