



LONG ISLAND ELECTRIC FOOTBALL SEASON 2008

This year's 2008 Long Island Electric Football League season kicked off in January as the league quickly ignited the sparks with teams who were completely rebuilt with more than 250 TTC brand new player base bottoms. As a result of the rebuilding process which took countless hours by our coaches, our first Draft was a TREMENDOUS success! We parted ways with many of the speedy rookie base bottoms that were previously on lineman, tackles, and linebackers, and we put them on running backs and wide receivers, transforming and improving the standard of the entire League. And the linemen from a majority of our teams were replaced with brand-new vetted, TTC powerful player base bottoms.

The exciting 2008 season went right down to the wire where in the final seconds of LIEFL Super Bowl XI, as the Oakland Raiders sent the game into overtime against the NFC Champion New York Giants. Raiders All-Pro End Dave Casper emerged as the hero in the game with a dramatic and blazing 100-yard kick return to open and close the game in 22 seconds of overtime as the Raiders became Super Bowl XI Champions in their dramatic 27-21 victory! Casper had 349 all-purpose yards and two touchdowns in the game. The last time the Raiders appeared in a LIEFL Super Bowl was in the 1976-77, Super Bowl II, where they lost to the Chicago Bears 20-19.

For the Giants, who have a career record of (67-67), it was their first Super Bowl appearance. One of our original seven teams from the league's inauguration in 1975, the Giants two best seasons came in the LIEFL in 1978-79 when they lost in the NFC Championship Game to New Orleans 24-17, and then in 1982-83 when they lost to San Francisco 38-21 in the title game. Giants 2008 All-Pro Running Back Tiki Barber rushed for 364 yards and five rushing touchdowns during the regular season. He ranked 13th in the NFL and his 678 special teams' yards gave him a total of 1,105 yards with six touchdowns on the season.

In the playoffs, Barber quickly emerged as a big threat player with 140 rushing yards in the Wild Card Game against New Orleans where he had three touchdowns, and Divisional Championship Game against Detroit where he scored a touchdown and ran for 73 yards, and in Super Bowl XI, Barber had 130 yards and a TD. It was Ahman Bradshaw's sizzling 424 special team's yards which sunk the Lions.

In week six of the regular season this league had 21 NFL teams alive competing for the final Wild Card and Divisional slots in the hunt to make the twelve team Playoffs! The excitement of rebuilding for each team was never lacking as each expensive "67 Big Men" team made its way into the spotlight of excitement week after week to the point that the love for each team was evident in the brand new home and away realistic looking professionally painted and decaled NFL teams.

Every single team took on its own character. There was never a shortage of thrilling games. Each game seemed to have a life of its own, which made the league an enthusiastic threat from 32 teams, competing for a Championship in fierce competition.

In comparison to the old days prior to 2008 and the seven-game season format, this league had 10 to 15 solid teams, but today the mix has changed completely. At least 25 teams could have made an pure attempt to earn that trophy, that's how competitive the league is. Next season 250 more new bases will be integrated into the league so that the six weak teams which emerged can meet the demand of each division and find the best possible competition in the player bases that we know how. The three time LIEFL NFC Central Division Champion Green Bay Packers, once a force in the league, could only muster up two victories. The Packers, who have appeared in the post season six times in this league dating back to Super Bowl I where they lost to Miami 24-17 in 1974-75. With that (2-5) record, they will be a priority to rebuild through the Draft.

In 2008, with the changes in the speedy rookie player base bottoms, there were superstars galore as they emerged from previously being strong linemen to effective running backs and wide receivers, improving each team significantly! The old fast rookie bases were monitored carefully, with many running 100 yards with consistency turning every game into unpredictable excitement. Bravo! Week One saw Cleveland's All-Pro Running Back, Jim Brown, dash for 169 yards rushing. Brown was only one of five players the entire season to rush for more than 160 yards. St. Louis Rams Wendell Tyler had 171, New Orleans Saints Reggie Bush had 175, New York Jets Bruce Harper had 177, and Houston Texans Ron Dayne had the most, 193 in a single regular season game. Big changes mean big numbers!

In 2008, instead of the previous ten seasons where a 14-game regular season would be played, under the new seven-game league structure each team would now play a tight schedule with three to four home games. It was one of the best choices we collaborated on because the shortened season kept each team closer to competing for a playoff spot, and of course now that we are over 50, we don't have the time to do more than a 7 game season with playoffs and eight coaches.

The league in week six, still had at least 20 teams in the hunt for a post season spot. Organizationally, there would be changes in the data we would keep after amazing ourselves with powerful childhood mind-blowing choices we made, keeping meticulous records of our bellowed Long Island Football League as you can read in this Tudor Forum. That was great foresight by Communication Professor, William O'Connell.

When we were young we had the philosophy that, "what is a league without the fun of keeping records?" With a bin filled with all of our precious electric football season-by-season statistics and records kept and maintained in manilla envelopes filled with every season's statistics, we have preserved the integrity of a league that gives us more to play for than just a hobby.

Under our new statistical organizational data, separate yards will be kept for Rushing, Receiving, Kick Returns, and Punt Returns and All-Purpose Yards. This change made the league more realistic with new records to set and break in a seven game season.

In the AFC, the New York Jets must have been the greatest disappointment while the Miami Dolphins became a Wild Card Team for the first time ever. Imagine Miami (143-33 All-Time with 6 Super Bowl victories), now a Wild Card team? That truly shows the league changes with all the new more competitive player bases, which have made this league fierce. We will continue to upgrade just like the NFL for teams that win two games or less. When 90% of the teams go 3-4 or 4-3, then we know the league is great. The number of yards rushing for great players has been lowered because of equalizer in the bottoms and fierce competition. There were very few blowouts in 2016.

The New York Jets won the incredible **32-Team Throwback Classic**, a ten-day pre-season tournament which acts as pre-prep for the regular season. New York went (5-0) and beating crosstown rival New York Giants 7-0 in the finals in 2008! The Jets outscored opponents 71-17 in the tournament, including a 21-7 crushing victory over Miami which shocked the league who embraced the new and improved Jets in some fierce competition that left Miami's legacy back in a time warp continuum. The amazing Jets had all the tools to win the Eastern Division of the AFC, but instead they went a disappointing (1-6)! Surprise, surprise—could be said for countless teams. The AFC East had the Buffalo Bills competing for the worst record with the Jets, but Buffalo managed to topple Miami in week six 14-7 in a major upset. Sign number two that a new Sheriff was in town in the East. The Bills rebuilt by year's end and after the win over Miami they lost to Cleveland 10-3. Ironically, the Jets beat Cleveland the week before 14-7!

The AFC also saw New England, Pittsburgh, Oakland, and Houston crowned division titles while Baltimore and Miami were Wild Card Teams. In strike three for the Dolphins, Miami was upset by a tough Baltimore Raven team losing in the first round of the playoffs for the first time ever. This stunned the LIEFL and at that point we knew our Draft was so important to our league. The eight time AFC champion Dolphins floundered through a tenacious defense led by All-Pro Ravens Linebacker Ray Lewis who helped the Ravens upset Miami 21-17 to advance to the Divisional Game against the Oakland Raiders where they lost a close 14-7 battle.

Perhaps the biggest surprise was the New England Patriots (5-2) who clinched the division in dramatic fashion over Miami at (5-2). The two teams never faced each other during the regular season, but the Patriots came out on fire in the first round of the playoffs beating the North Division Champion Pittsburgh Steelers (4-3) in one of the greatest games in playoff history 37-31. Patriots All-Pro Running Back Laurence Maroney had a record-setting 519 all-purpose yards in the game and the Patriots then headed to Houston (5-2) to face a very tough Texan team in a shootout at Okay Coral. The Patriots stopped Texan's All-Pro Running back Ron Dayne in the first hold, but Dayne never quit as the score was tied 17-17 at the end of regulation. The Patriots won the game 23-17 in OT! Then the final step before LIEFL Super Bowl XI, was Oakland to face the (7-1) Oakland Raiders for the AFC title. The Raiders emerged as the premiere team in the AFC as their NFL leading defense and All-Pro Raider Tight end Dave Casper ended any hopes that the Patriots had to make the trip to Pasadena for the Super Bowl, as he rumbled for 297 all-purpose yards and a Raider 17-14 win! Goodnight Patriots, hello Raiders!

The league had the best competition ever because of teams like the Patriots who ended (7-3) and they built tremendous playoff experience.

This season's Draft also brought a new wave of emerging talent with a handful of team's on the verge of becoming contenders in San Diego (3-4), Indianapolis (3-4), Jacksonville (3-4), Kansas City (3-4), Cleveland (3-4), and Denver (3-4) coming close to the brink of the playoffs. All of these teams, including Cincinnati (2-5) and Tennessee (3-4) will be back strong next year. Each week felt a step closer to the competitive nature of the NFL in the sense that on any given Sunday, any team could compete and win against a team with a better record. This was evident in Miami's loss to (1-6) Buffalo 14-7. The Rushing Crown went to Miami's Mercury Morris who had over 1,700 all-purpose yards with 15 TD's.

The game of the year was clearly Detroit beating San Diego 35-28 in week seven as the Lions dismantled any hopes the Chargers had to make the playoffs. In that game there

were four 100-yard kick-returns in a row for touchdowns by legendary Detroit Lions All-Pro Back Dexter Bussy and San Diego All-Pro Back LaDanian Tomlinson who both ran for record setting team numbers in the game.

The NFC was a total battlefield with teams emerging from the trenches. The beast-of-the-East was the New York Football Giants (4-3), Carolina Panthers (6-1), St. Louis Rams (4-3), and Detroit Lions(5-2), replaced some of the old rivals like the Dallas Cowboys (3-4) , Washington Redskins (3-4), and Chicago Bears (4-3) who failed to make the playoffs. The Redskins are five games shy of their 100th win at (95-45). The New Orleans Saints surprised, making the playoffs as a Wild Card Team, and the Philadelphia Eagles remained a leading contender in the NFC. Perhaps the most noise was made by Detroit who clinched their first ever division title!

The Atlanta Falcons (3-4), Tampa Bay Buccaneers (4-3), Seattle Seahawks (3-4), Arizona Cardinals (3-4), and Green Bay Packers (2-5), will all play right into the playoff mix again next season and bring the teams getting into the playoffs right to the edge.

This year the colorful and exciting Atlanta Falcons eliminated the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the last week of the season. The Falcons superstar back Gerald Riggs collected the NFC Rushing Crown as he marched for four touchdowns against a hot Buc team 28-21! The reliable Gerald Riggs was unstoppable in 2008! He had over 1,000 special teams yards! The Falcons might be one of the most exciting teams in the NFC and could make a break for the playoffs in 2009.

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