

AFC Championship Preview: Jacksonville Jaguars vs. New England Patriots

Saul Rosen January 15, 2018



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([Newswire.net](#) -- January 15, 2018) -- **Pats do what pats do** - One thing is for sure, you can't give the New England Patriots any second chances and expect to win; they are just too loaded with talent and too well coached for that. After a strong start by the Tennessee Titans, a couple of questionable call that gave the Pats second opportunities really flipped the momentum and Brady went on to look like a 337-yard, 3-TD superhero.

Who would have thought that the Patriots would be back in the AFC Championship game? ... Ok ... all of us. Except maybe for a hot second when New England took a couple of unexpected losses against mediocre teams. But 'Lost' Vegas never 'Las' faith in the Patriots, keeping them as the odds-on favorites to win the Super Bowl even through the hiccups. So far, they are looking right on. The team is healthy and on their way back to play for the AFC Title.

Jags forge win over Steelers

Wait a second ... What just happened? Suddenly the Jacksonville Jaguars can move the ball? They come out and blast two touchdowns in the first quarter and one early in the second in the hostile environment of Heinz Field. Then They steal the ball while strip-sacking Big Ben and run it in for a touchdown just on the longer side of the two-minute warning! I just don't get how all season long the Jags have had a brittle-boned, old lady with osteoporosis offense unit with a broken hip ... and suddenly in the Divisional Round, not only are they pounding the ball on the ground (and actually moving the rock) but Bortles is playing like he's got a pair, delivering the ball downfield into the hands of his receivers instead of into the hands of the defensive backs!

Jaguars Head to Foxboro

Roethlisberger has been unlucky against the Jags, losing on October 30-9, with Blake Bortles like offensive production! I feel like the Patriots in some ways just won the playoffs lottery. The matchup of the Jacksonville Jaguars, though their defense is stout, really favors the Patriots. There is a lot more offensive potential and a lot more rivalry than a showdown with the Jags. Vegas seems to agree as they just opened with the Patriots as 9-point favorites. While some other books are handicapping New England to just 8.5, you can check [Intertops will offer competitive odds](#), and in this situation, they have the Patriots all the way up at 9.5 to open, so if you think Jacksonville can keep it even remotely close, that is the book you'll want to keep an eye on.

Before the Division Round played out, the New England Patriots were sitting at a 41.6% probability of winning the Super Bowl and Jacksonville was only at 4.6% those numbers are going to jump fairly drastically after this weekend's offensive showing by the Jags. But can Mr. Inconsistent (Blake Bortles) have back-to-back flawless showings? He better! The defensive point-differential between these two teams is just .78 points in this situation, but the Patriots score an average of 30 points per game at home, while the Jags put up 26.33 on the road.

Though when we look at the last 10 times these teams have played, the Pats have walked away winners nine times with an average margin of victory of 27.5 to 14.8. More recently in their last three meetings, that margin increases with Patriots winning all three by an average score of 36.33 to 13.33.

I just saw a headline that read, "The Jaguars are the last team the Patriots wanted to play". The article went on to say that the path to a Jacksonville victory is clear. I wholly disagree. The Pats will get a fairly easy win and go on to play in the Super Bowl.

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