**Co-ed Divisional Playoff Preview**

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**CO-ED DIVISION**

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The final week of the season is in the books and the playoff picture is set. It’s time to forget about what happened during the season and focus on the playoffs ahead. This season I had the pleasure of following these 11 teams and I was very happy to do so. But the time for talk is over, and it is now time to perform and make a name for yourselves. We have 3 games slated that are going to be fun to watch and we may see upsets, but the important part is going out on the field and giving it your all. Here is a preview of what is to come in the first round of the Co-Ed division playoffs.

**Michael Scott’s Tots vs. Flamingos**

Michael Scott’s Tots was one of the teams that almost got that first round bye. But due to the last two weeks of very tough matchups against the number 1 and number 2 seeds, they fell within 1 point in the satndings of the coveted bye. They are led by team captain Zackary Alberts-Gill, who had himself a great season considering he missed one week and was still able to finish in the top 3 for yardage and touchdowns. This makes me wonder if he was there for that one game he missed, how much of a difference it would have made on the stats leaders on the season?

Although Zackary is the offensive juggernaut I believe that defense wins championships and the key to their defense is Kenny Boutilier. While Kenny is the work horse on that defense, he also helps direct his teammates to the proper positions, allowing them to be at the right place at the right time. I am curious to see whether or not he can continue his solid defensive play in this first round match up.

People believe that this game is uneven, and that may be the thoughts on paper, but this is a whole new season. The flamingos are still unlikely to have their captain Cam Chaput in the lineup. He will be present and will be doing the thing only a great captain does and that is encouraging his team to perform at their best. Also, flamingos might have found an offensive system that works and I am curious to see if that shows up in this playoff matchup.

In my opinion I believe that Michael Scott’s Tots will come out victorious because they have already beaten the flamingos in the season. Although I said it’s a new season that does not change the fact that they are a healthy team with a full squad and their counterparts are missing a big piece of their team.

**ATH Squad vs. Straight off the Couch**

ATH Squad is coming off a very impressive showing against the number 1 seed and although they did not come out victorious they were able to flip a switch in the second half of that game to take it within 1 point. Marc-Antoine Jetté was the key to that comeback because he struggled in the first half. That being said, he came back strong in the second half and showed resilience. If he manages to play this entire game like he did in the second half of the season finale he will indeed help his team achieve victory and move on.

Olivier Laberge is the guy that runs the defense for this team and he does a very good job at it. In the final game of the season he was able to gather up his defense and allow zero points in the second half of the game. Allowing no points against a team of that magnitude is really impressive. If he is able to compete at that level then I believe it would help Marc-Antoine close the deal.

Straight off the Couch has had this unfortunate habit of not closing out games as strong as they started. Now if Ryan Dobbs-Garnett were to turn some of that anger into motivation to play better; then this team could very well be a surprise for the division. I know he can put up some staggering offensive numbers but the problem is that he has to control his emotions. Especially on a stage like this if he allows himself to get lost in the emotions then his team is already at a disadvantage.

On defense Kevin St. Pierre is the guy in charge and he showcased it throughout the season. He was the glue that kept the defense together and tried his best to make all the difference in the games. Kevin needs to find a way to get his team to cooperate and communicate because that is the key to success. I am sure if it were possible to do everything himself he would be up for it but football is a team sport. In order to work as a team sometimes it takes one person to take charge and motivate people to do their best.

I expect this game to be closer than their previous showdown, but I feel like it will be the same outcome and that ATH Squad will come out victorious. I would not mind admitting I am wrong because if I am then the playoffs get a whole lot more interesting.

**It’s A Match vs. Flagiuuu**

This game is the closest match up in the 1st round, as the only thing that separated the two teams was 1 win. During the season It’s A Match was the one that came up victorious in a game that Alexis Labonté came to play. Now in order to have the same success he has to be on top of his game in this playoff match up. To be honest if he was not present for that first match up it would have definitely been a different outcome. He has been performing at an unstoppable pace throughout the season. I hope for his sake and the team’s sake that he does not run out of gas in this crucial matchup.

On defense they have to depend on their defensive captain Henry Dam and the reason I say that is because he is the guy that seems to have this sixth sense of where the ball is going to be. Henry has a way of ensuring his team is in the right position and I admire that. If a teammate were to make a mistake he just lets them know how they can improve. He is also a very enthusiastic player and he handles his emotions very well. It is tough to get under his skin and that means that he is always focused. He is always focused on what is best for his team and that is why I believe that he will get the defense working like a well-oiled machine.

For flagiuuu it really comes down to what kind of play Joel Richard brings to the table. Throughout the season Joel has demonstrated very good quarterback potential for stretches. The problem is that sometimes his decision making could have been better but as the season prolonged he was able to step up his game. There is no questioning his ability, his arm is a rocket, he can get open with his legs as well. He is indeed a threat at the quarterback position. I will love to see what kind of Joel we will see in this playoff match up. Will we see the Joel that throws daggers to his teammates for touchdowns or will we see the Joel that forces plays when his back is against the wall? That will be answered in this playoff match up.

Flagiuuu does not have an individual that sticks out on their defense but I can assure you that their best tackler is Florence Belanger-Morin. Now Florence has the ability to keep the play in front of her at all times. She rarely gets beat deep and the only time that happens is if she gets paired with someone who can match her foot speed.  She is very quick, which is why it seems like as soon as the ball is caught she is there to make sure the play does not go further than it needed to. Maxime Marsan and Martin Gelinas are the defensive players that I believe are well rounded. They do not thrive in any particular category; they are equally dominant in each aspect that comes with the defensive game.

I believe this game will be an even match up, that all depends on who comes out to play. It also means that it will come down to the team that has the most resilience and is able to maintain a high level of confidence from start to finish. In my opinion, It’s A Match has the slight edge in this matchup because their offense is very hard to maintain. In the end it should be a very entertaining game to watch and I hope both teams bring their all.

Co-Ed Award Winners

Considering that it is the end of the season and it is the beginning of the playoffs I would like to take a little bit of time to congratulate the 4 award winners in this division. Each player deserves this award and I believe that the whole division is in agreement with the winners of each category.

**Quarterback of the Year:**Big TDs own Saadia Ashraf, now I believe that I said she would be the winner of this award in an earlier article of mine. I’ll admit she struggled a couple of games but that did not matter as her performance from the beginning has been stellar. 2nd in passing yards, 1st in touchdown passes but the most outstanding statistic is that she threw just 3 interceptions. Just 3 all season compared to her 37 touchdowns, that is indeed an incredible fact.

**Receiver of the Year:**I knew his numbers were tremendous but it is not until this list came out that I realized just how tremendous they are. He has found the end zone in all but 1 game this season for It’s A Match. If you look at the statistics he led in all three major categories amongst receivers. He was 1st in reception, 1st in touchdown receptions, and 1st in receiving yards. The Triple Crown. Truly, an outstanding year for him, as he was just short of 40 receptions. He was 180 yards ahead of the 2nd place guy, he had over 600 yards receiving. Lastly he had 16 touchdown receptions that is averaging 2 per game. Truly an amazing accomplishment.

**Defensive Player of the Year:**That was none other than the person who told me back in week 5 that he will win this awards and he did. Ladies and gentlemen I present to you Kenny. Leading the division in interceptions with 7 and not only that but he ran back 2 of them for scores of his own. The impressive stat is the fact that he has 12 Pass Defenses. That means that he has been a nightmare for opposing quarterbacks just trying to get their receivers the ball for score. I do not even know how many points he prevented with these pass defenses, it’s simply spectacular.

**Two-Way Player of the Year:**Big TDs Myles Browne, Myles take a bow, you showcased that it is possible to be an impact player on both sides of the ball. To be tied for 4th in receiving touchdowns is already impressive, but doing so while being a top 10 defender as well is an incredible accomplishment. Just simply a season for the memories for Myles as he hopes his two-way ability is enough to secure the top spot in this division.

Thank you all for the incredible season I was able to bring articles on. Now let’s get ready for the real battle as its playoff season. Looking forward to many memories and wish all of you the best of luck. . If you want to reach me, send me an email at (s.berardi@outlook.com) or send me a facebook message. Search my name if we have mutual friends which may very well be the case send me a message.