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Eds: Fantasy Grind is a weekly look at the incremental wins and frustrations that come with playing fantasy football. Each week, we'll highlight players and strategy and learn from experts in the fantasy world. By the end of Week 16 or 17, hopefully you'll win a title and some decent bragging rights. But honestly, who knows? You don't, we don't _ and it's all part of the fun.

Jamaal Charles didn't even need a 51-point fantasy game but it helps — the Kansas City running back is clearly fantasy football's 2013 MVP.

In leagues hosted by CBS Sports, nearly one-fourth of the teams playing for a fantasy title this weekend have Charles on their roster. Denver quarterback Peyton Manning is second on that list at 16 percent.

Charles performed in a tier by himself at running back, scoring 19.7 points per game at the most volatile position in standard leagues this year because of injury, inconsistency and bad performances from other top players.

Charles has been 4.3 points per game better than Philadelphia's LeSean McCoy, the second-highest fantasy player at the position, under ESPN standard scoring settings. Take away Charles' 5 touchdowns and 215 yards combined rushing and receiving in Week 15 against Oakland and he still averaged 17.3 points over his first 14 games, 1.9 points better than

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McCoy.

Think about how valuable Jimmy Graham is among tight ends — the main argument made by those drafting him within the first two rounds this year. They're not wrong but Charles has been even more valuable among running backs.

Only wide receivers Calvin Johnson and Josh Gordon have come close to matching Charles' dominance atop their position, even with Johnson missing one game and Gordon missing two to suspension. Because he's scored his points in one fewer game, Gordon has more points per game than Johnson this year and 4.1 points per game more than Demaryius Thomas, fantasy's third best receiver.

According to CBS, 14 percent of teams going to the fantasy finals have Gordon. Even more, 15 percent, have DeSean Jackson. Another 13 percent have the Panthers or Chiefs defenses or Eddie Lacy. And 12 percent of teams have one or more of the Seahawks defense, quarterback Nick Foles, running back DeMarco Murray, wide receivers Dez Bryant, Alshon Jeffery, Brandon Marshall or Keenan Allen or tight end Vernon Davis.

Now you know where to address those holiday thank-you cards after this week.

MATCHUP PLAYS

It's only the championships, no reason to be shy now about putting forward your best team for the week (unless you play yours in Week 17, in which case, hopefully it's a two-week final and you still obviously need to play well now).

It's a simple question — not who's done the best so far or which is the biggest name but who do you think is the most likely to perform the best this week? That's it. Here are some folks who

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may be able to help you.

QB: Andy Dalton, Cincinnati: Dalton plays against Minnesota this week, the second-worst defense in the NFL against opposing quarterbacks, allowing 22 points per game.

RB: Bobby Rainey, Tampa Bay. Rainey is owned in just over 70 percent of Yahoo leagues but only half of ESPN leagues, yet experts compiled by FantasyPros.com rank him as the 18th best running back for Week 16 in his game at St. Louis.

WR: Michael Crabtree, San Francisco. Atlanta's defense is weak and Crabtree had 45 yards and a touchdown last week against Tampa Bay, good for nearly 10 fantasy points. He's available in plenty of Yahoo and ESPN leagues.

TE: Tyler Eifert, Cincinnati. This recommendation comes from Yahoo's Brandon Funston, who says this week could be a good opportunity for the young tight end with Jermaine Gresham managing an injury. Funston also likes Philadelphia's Zach Ertz against Chicago after his six catches and a touchdown last week.

RINGER TIME: BRANDON FUNSTON

When it comes to the finals, no consideration should be off the table, says Funston, a Yahoo fantasy analyst who regularly gives advice on who to start and who to sit.

"You really have to consider every possibility," Funston said. "Nothing is too far-fetched, in my opinion."

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Funston said some questions that can seem strange are one sign of owners who are involved and willing to do what it takes to win.

"You have to kind of throw the name brands out the window and look at how the matchups are concerned," Funston said. "The people that are just going to put in their popular name brand player every week are not going to be successful."

Playing matchups has become easier in recent years for fantasy players because more specific data is available that shows how teams perform against certain positions, allowing fantasy players to consider more variables when making choices.

Funston says the goal in the title game should be the same as in Week 3 of the regular season: Try to play the players with the highest floor and the highest ceiling, who will likely score a decent amount of points on an average or bad day, with the potential to be spectacular.

"The goal is to eliminate as much risk as you can," Funston said.

FULL DISCLOSURE

I'm in five fantasy leagues and made the championship game in one. It's a league with former journalism school colleagues. And Yahoo says I'm favored 2-1 over the other guy. We'll see next week if the agony of the grind pays off.