

# Fantasy football essay



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This paper explores the popular world of fantasy football along with the technology used to sustain a successful league. What is fantasy football, you ask? Fantasy football is a competition amongst fantasy football owners with specific set of rules and scoring systems. It allows anyone to establish and manage their own dream team of current players in the National Football League, NFL and play against other dream teams within the fantasy football league. There are two types of fantasy football leagues, public and private.

A public league is a virtual league that is open to the public which allows a fantasy football team to compete against other fantasy teams around the world. A private fantasy football league will allow a fantasy team to compete amongst teams owned by family and friends. Within a private league the teams will have the flexibility to create specific set of rules, roster sizes and scoring system. In most leagues, each team will play another team weekly. Each owner must provide a weekly starting line-up of players for each game. The team who scores the highest points wins the game.

Each league may have various scoring rules; however, all scoring systems are derived from the actual statistics from the weekly games played in the NFL. The fantasy football owners watch NFL games throughout the week to determine the statistics as this is what generates points for or against their fantasy team. Just like the NFL each league will conduct a fantasy football league draft, free-agent moves and play-offs. Individual Research Paper: An Overview of Fantasy Football Bill Winkenbach is credited with developing the first fantasy sport in the 1950's with fantasy golf.

Bill's concept of fantasy golf was used as a foundation to form the first-ever fantasy football league, which was called the GOPPL (The Greater Oakland Professional Pigskin Prognosticators League). The GOPPL originated back in 1962 in a Manhattan hotel with Bill Winkenbach, Scott Stirling and Bill Tunnell. The GOPPL continued to be a hobby for the eight owners. Fantasy football in general didn't explode into the market until the increased number of users on the Internet and when statistical software was created which minimized the effort needed to participate in a fantasy football league.

Today fantasy football is one of many popular fantasy sports recognized throughout the world. Fantasy sports are recognized as a multi-million dollar business. In 2010, the Fantasy Sports Trade Association reported representing more than 100 member companies and researched their market size to be estimated at twenty-seven million active adult participants. The September 2011 cover of The Hollywood Reporter reported the business of fantasy football industries being worth approximately one billion dollars a year which analysts believe will double in the near future.

So, what is fantasy football? The NFL's official website defines fantasy football as the following: " A game in which one decides what type of league they want to participate in, acquires a roster of players (either through a draft or through auto pick assignment), then sets their lineup each week during the season and watches as important statistics generate fantasy points for or against your team. Whether one wins or loses all depends on how well you maximize the talent on your roster each week. " The Internet is used to host the majority of fantasy football leagues.

Some of the most popular public and private leagues can be found at ESPN, NFL, CBS Sports, Yahoo, RTS (Real Time Sports) and Fox Sports. Once a league is established or joined within one of these sites the team owner's information will be added along with the standard set of rules for each league. After the scoring rules are established the website hosting the league will populate rankings, scores, etc. (The image below was provided by NFL.com which identifies the today's top players and top fantasy football teams. )

The various websites hosting the fantasy league populates all the statistical data for each NFL player and converts these statistics to award points to each fantasy football team. The Internet offers a variety of ways to gather the statistical data to determining scoring. STATS is the global leader in sports information, technology and content. The company provides “streaming XML (Extensible Markup Language)” to their clients to ensure the most current and up to date information is received. This data is transmitted through an extranet connecting the client to STATS.

The data is transmitted on a real-time basis which allows the users to analyze the data to make accurate decision-making for their teams. STATS also houses historical data regarding players, team statistics and other key factors to provide their clients with background information. STATS collaborated with PRMtime to create a fantasy football mobile application. The major websites hosting the fantasy leagues now have availability to download an application for most mobile devices. The mobile device applications allow the fantasy owners to get up to date information on their team without having to be tied down to a computer.

One of the newest applications offered from PRMtime Fantasy App allows an owner of multiple teams on multiple fantasy sites to check up on all their teams from one application. PRMtime has direct links with the major game providers enabling them access to transfer the scoring rules and roster data for each of the owner's teams in the various leagues. The PRMtime Fantasy Football 2011 application allows up to 7 simultaneous leagues/teams to be tracked. " PRMtime collaborated with STATS to ensure the best user experience and provide the best in real time data feeds from the NFL."

The Fantasy Football 2011 application allows the owner to set the starting lineup, invite others to their league, set/modify scoring and view live scoring all from a mobile device. Just like in the actual NFL the draft is vital to the success of every fantasy football team. The draft is when the fantasy team owners fill their fantasy roster with real-life NFL players. There are various ways to conduct a draft within the fantasy football leagues. To help simplify this process there are multiple software applications available for fantasy owners and leagues.

The only award winning pc-based draft software program is the Draft Analyzer which is integrated into and sold by ESPN and CBS. SportsLine.com. This software provides data on players, projections and contains Player Rankings from experts. The Draft Analyzer runs a Decision Support System (DSS) through an engine which will recommend players for your fantasy team based on the business intelligence to include your selected expert projections, scoring rules, roster needs, previously drafted players and other factors.

The expert player projections are derived from Accuscore, CBSSports. com, ESPN, FantasyGuru and RotoWire. This software allows customization of league scoring rules, roster settings, owner names and draft orders. If the fantasy league is hosted on ESPN then with one click the user can import league settings. Setting may be entered manually for leagues hosted on Yahoo, CBSSports. com, RTSports or any other fantasy commissioner service. After purchasing the software it can be accessed two ways.

One option the software can be accessed is by downloading the application to a personal computer during which Internet access would not be required. The second option is a web-based version which does not require a download; however, Internet access would be required to access this version. Other draft software available is Fantasy Draft Rankings, Big Time Fantasy Sports, Fan Draft, PCDrafter and PrimeTime Draft.

Fantasy football was a large market I knew or cared nothing about prior to this research paper. Now knowing how many active users are practically addicted to fantasy football amazes me. I feel like I know much more about this pastime which I would not have known prior to this research paper. I can see why so many Americans who love football are in love with their fantasy football teams. The fantasy football experiences gives the user the true feeling of owning their own team along with a coaching aspect as the decision-maker during the selection process in the draft and weekly starting line-ups.

The fantasy football leagues changes the way a fan of a team watches a football game. Of course a die-hard Cowboys fan wants the Cowboys to win

but when the team is playing with one of their fantasy players on the opposing team it changes the game. They are cheering for Dallas the entire game except when their fantasy running back on the opposing team scores a 95 yard touchdown which leads their fantasy team to victory. This has now created a bittersweet moment for the Dallas Cowboy fan and fantasy football owner as this may bring the owner closer to the championship prize.