

New York Jets

When Rex Ryan stepped up to the podium on December 20 and conceded the Jets' chances of making the playoffs, it appeared that that he and his team had been victimized by bad luck. The Jets had just lost a 10-7 heartbreaker to the Falcons, thanks to three failed field goals and three picks from rookie quarterback Mark Sanchez. It marked their fifth loss in games decided by less than a touchdown. A team with the vaunted combination required to win close, meaningful games — a great defense and strong ground game — had failed to win in exactly those sort of games. Columnists noted that the Jets' elite defense wasn't really all that great because they couldn't come through when it mattered, while Jets fans across the Internet criticized the team for pushing Sanchez into the starting lineup before their young quarterback was ready.

Well, the next morning, Rex Ryan woke up and discovered that his team had a slim shot of making the playoffs. 11.6 percent in fact, according to our Playoff Odds Report. And from then on, well, the Jets were just about the luckiest team in football. Even ignoring how many outcomes needed to go their way in Week 16 just to keep their hopes alive, the Jets were the beneficiaries of some wonderful timing during their next four games.

With nothing to play for short an undefeated sea-

son, the Colts dominated the Jets in the first half of their Week 16 encounter; the 9-3 score belied the fact that the Colts had seen wide-open receivers drop two touchdown passes. The Jets returned the second half kickoff for a touchdown, giving them a shock lead, but after the Colts equalized, the starters came out. Indy capitulated, and the Jets took advantage of Curtis Painter to earn the win.

A week later, the Jets and Bengals went into their flexed Sunday night matchup knowing that a Jets win would ensure a rematch between the two teams a week later. The Bengals had nothing to play for, and sat several defensive starters. To be fair, this game was no competition: The Jets stomped the Bengals. In doing so, though, they converted six consecutive third downs on the ground during the first quarter, a remarkable figure that had only been matched once all season *over the course of an entire game*.

With a playoff berth in hand, the Jets promptly went on an even more unlikely streak. Road wins against Cincinnati and San Diego weren't exactly huge upsets: The Jets had a 16.9% DVOA in the regular season, superior to both the Bengals (1.2%) and the Chargers (13.6%). What was remarkable, though, was how those upsets happened. Sanchez — the quarterback who had been too awful to bury next to Jimmy Hoffa weeks earlier — was suddenly poised, operating a

JETS SUMMARY

2009 Record: 9-7

Pythagorean Wins: 11.4 (6th)

DVOA: 16.9% (9th)

Offense: -9.0% (22nd)

Defense: -23.4% (1st)

Special Teams: 2.5% (6th)

Variance: 21.5% (27th)

2009: Fifteen weeks of bad luck followed by four weeks of good luck.

2010: The playoff contender you expect, but not in the way you expect.

2010 Mean Projection: 9.8 wins

On the Clock (0-3): 1%

Loserville (4-6): 6%

Mediocrity (7-8): 19%

Playoff Contender (9-10): 35%

Super Bowl Contender (11+): 39%

Projected Average Opponent: 4.8% (7th)

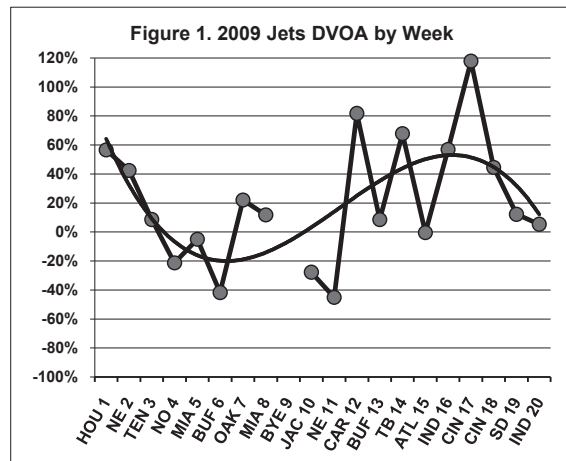
2010 Jets Schedule					
Week	Opp.	Week	Opp.	Week	Opp.
1	BAL (Mon.)	7	BYE	13	at NE (Mon.)
2	NE	8	GB	14	MIA
3	at MIA	9	at DET	15	at PIT
4	at BUF	10	at CLE	16	at CHI
5	MIN (Mon.)	11	HOU	17	BUF
6	at DEN	12	CIN (Thu.)		

simple combination of safe throws and play-action bootlegs with ease. The defense that couldn't come through in the clutch made stops.

And, naturally, the Jets got some help from Lady Luck. Opposing kickers Shayne Graham and Nate Kaeding went a combined 0-for-5 on field goals during those two games. Jets special teams coach Mike Westhoff chalked it up to intimidation in an interview with ESPN AFC East blogger Tim Graham: "...our guys really rush hard. It's an extension of our defense. We rush hard every single time. Subconsciously, you watch it and go 'Wait a minute. I don't have all day.' I think — and this is my opinion; I could be wrong — it affects sometimes a rhythm where [the kickers] are a little bit quicker than what they'd normally be."

We can't say whether Westhoff was wrong, but he sure doesn't appear to be right. We know, historically, that no team has shown a consistent ability to prevent teams from converting field goals at a lower rate than expected; while kicks are harder in certain stadiums or weather conditions, those issues bother both teams' kickers. In fact, the Jets had been 3.3 points worse than league-average on opposing kickers' scoring plays during the season, a figure adjusted for environment and the distance of each kick. Those kickers went 19-of-23 on field goals against Gang Green during the year. If we use that figure as the likelihood of a team successfully kicking a field goal against the Jets — and it would be a conservative estimate, considering the quality of the opposing kickers and the fact that four of the five kicks were from 40 yards out or less — the odds of opposing kickers missing five consecutive field goals against the Jets were 5,292:1. It was as if the Jets had saved every power-up they had for those four games.

A week later, the luck went away. Matt Stover went 3-for-3 on field goals, his rhythm apparently unaffected. Although Sanchez had arguably his best game as a pro quarterback, breakout rookie Shonn Greene



got hurt, forcing the visibly-limited Thomas Jones to handle the load. The Jets got to Manning with two early sacks even though Ryan-led defenses had previously only sacked Manning three times in 141 career dropbacks, but they didn't sack him again the rest of the way. The team that created the opportunity for the Jets to catch so many breaks ended New York's season with a comprehensive defeat.

That opportunity has dramatically changed how management, media, and the public view the 2009 Jets. Had the Colts left Peyton Manning and company in for the duration of the second half in Week 16, chances are that the Jets would have lost. A Jets loss would've immediately stamped "disappointing" as the adjective on the 2009 campaign; a loss in the resulting meaningless Week 17 game would have even turned the season into a losing one.

Instead, the postscript to the Jets' season is that they came a few plays away from the Super Bowl; that they were a veteran here or a stop there short of a trip to Miami. The organization ran their offseason like they needed to stockpile veteran talent to turn a very good team into an elite one, sacrificing draft picks and roster spots that would normally be given to young players for veterans like Antonio Cromartie, Jason Taylor, and LaDainian Tomlinson.

The truth is that the Jets are neither the team people would have thought they were had they lost to the Colts in Week 16, nor the one that was perceived to be an elite unit after their playoff run. They were better than a standard 7-7 team heading into Week 16; the law of averages suggests that they should have won one or two of those five close games, which would have lessened their desperate exposure to

luck in order to get into the playoffs. As we've made clear, we also don't think they're as good as their playoff run suggests.

So who are the New York Jets, really? A team of almost comically exaggerated strengths and weaknesses, with a braggadocio that swings from celebratory and unifying to damaging and divisive seemingly with each win and loss. Figuring out the difference between what they were in 2009 and what's going to change in 2010 is the easiest path to handicapping their hopes.

It seems only fair to start with the defense. The Jets led the league in defensive DVOA last year by a fair margin, with the second-place Packers closer to eighth than they were to first. Both statistically and schematically, that was driven by their pass defense. A staggering figure of -34.2% meant that they stood behind only the 2004 Bills (-35.1%), the 1999 Buccaneers (-38.5%), and the ridiculous 2002 Buccaneers (-52.5%) as one of the four best pass defenses of the DVOA Era (Table 1).

Fans see an elite pass defense like last year's Jets and immediately pencil it in for another year at the top — in their minds or in comment threads on the Internet. Yet that's not usually how things shake out. Those 2004 Bills — who had a pass defense DVOA that was within one percentage point of last year's Jets — fell off to 14th a year later, putting up a pass defense DVOA of -1.0%. The pass defense leader in 2008, the Super Bowl champion Steelers, went from a DVOA of -31.0% to 4.0%, falling to 14th in the rankings. The average league-leading team in pass defense DVOA has finished eighth in the following season, and only one team has finished first in back-to-back seasons: the 2005-06 Chicago Bears.

Of course, the success of the Jets' defense became synonymous with one man's name over the course of the season. Well, actually, one man's property. Receivers went to "Revis Island" and came back posting scathing reviews on Twitter, as Darrelle Revis emerged as the league's best defensive player in his third season. The Associated Press voters gave that title to Charles Woodson; they were wrong. No one had more of an impact on his defense than Revis, and the Jets' defense was better than the Packers' defense was.

Revis had a very rare mix of both quality and quantity. He led the league in Adjusted Yards per Pass and Success Rate, which is impressive enough by itself, but what was more impressive is that he still drew the sixth-highest target rate of any defensive back in the

league. He was consistently able to convince quarterbacks to throw in his direction, and yet, effective enough to prevent those passes from being completed. That raises his value compared to a player like Nnamdi Asomugha, whose greatness simply funnels targets over to the other, weaker players on the roster.

Placing Revis' performance in context is difficult. Charting numbers are far from perfect measures of performance. More importantly, with only five years of charting data, there are no obvious reference points for a historically-great performance, such as throwing for 50 touchdowns or running for 2,000 yards. What we can do is incorporate a statistical methodology known as Z-scores — which isolates the difference between an outlying statistic and an average — and then translate that into the format of more traditional statistics.

Revis allowed an adjusted average of 3.5 yards per pass. The average for qualifying corners was 7.5, while the standard deviation was 1.37. The Z-Score represents how many standard deviations above or below the mean the statistic in question was; in this case, Revis was 2.9 standard deviations below the mean. If we apply the same analysis to his Success Rate, we find that he was 3.0 standard deviations above the mean (above, in this case, because a high Success Rate is good, while a high Average Yards per Pass is bad). Splitting the difference between the two suggests that Revis was playing at a level 2.95 standard deviations better than the average cornerback.

Now, keep in mind that Revis was also targeted on 96 passes, the fifth-most of any corner in the league.

Table 1. Top 12 Pass Defenses by DVOA, 1993-2009

Team	Year	Pass Def DVOA	Pass Def DVOA Next Year
TB	2002	-52.5%	-25.5%
TB	1999	-38.4%	-23.5%
BUF	2004	-35.1%	-1.0%
NYJ	2009	-34.2%	—
BAL	2003	-32.1%	-24.4%
MIA	2000	-31.6%	-12.6%
GB	1996	-31.1%	-23.9%
PIT	2008	-31.0%	4.0%
NE	2003	-30.5%	-11.2%
MIA	1998	-30.1%	-10.7%
CLE	2001	-29.0%	-6.1%
DAL	1996	-27.3%	0.3%

If we look at the fifth-most frequently used players at quarterback, running back and wide receiver, and adjust their statistical lines on a per-play basis to be 2.95 standard deviations above the average performance by a qualifying player at their position, the results are staggering (Table 2). A player playing at Revis' level while getting a comparable usage rate at a different position in 2009 would have set the NFL passing record by nearly 500 yards, beat out Jerry Rice for the single-season receiving record, or run for 2,000 yards while averaging a record-tying 6.4 yards per carry.

Players don't set those records year-after-year, which is why it wouldn't be a surprise if Revis Island was a

Table 2: Revis-izing Skill Position Players

Player	Actual Line	Revis-ized Line
Peyton Manning	4,640 passing yards	5,532 passing yards
Maurice Jones-Drew	1,391 rushing yards	2,000 rushing yards
Brandon Marshall	1,127 receiving yards	1,922 receiving yards

little friendlier to visitors in 2010. One way to mitigate a drop in Revis' play would be an improvement in the quality of the Jets' pass rush. Although Ryan's defense certainly had a reputation for causing opposing quarterbacks to curl up in the fetal position, the Jets only finished 14th in the league with a 6.9 percent Adjusted Sack Rate.

One reason to believe the Jets might force more sacks in 2010 is that they finished third in the league in hurries. The difference between their hurry rank and their sack rank was 11. There were 11 teams in 2007 and 2008 that had a difference between their sack rank and their hurry rank of ten spots or more; in the following season, nine of those teams improved their ranking in sack rate, with the average such team improving by nearly nine spots. Considering that the team's only move for a pass rusher in the offseason was for 36-year-old Jason Taylor, it's hard to see them putting up an elite pass rush, but even improving to tenth or so could help cover for any slipping Revis endures in 2010.

The question of sustainability also rears its head on the other side of the ball, where the Jets' starting offensive linemen managed to stay healthy for all 80 starts in 2009. That's the third consecutive year they've managed to go 80-for-80, an unprecedented feat going back through the beginning of our injury data in 1996. Even the reserves have stayed healthy. The Jets rode that wave of consistency and continuity with a highly effective run game, just like the Giants

did during their run of health in 2007 and 2008.

2010, however, should bring a decline in the performance of Ground Greene. There is absolutely no year-to-year correlation for offensive line injuries, so there's no reason to believe the Jets' outstanding health up front should continue. The line is also where the Jets made one of their few concessions to youth, releasing left guard Alan Faneca while planning to replace him with second-round pick Vladimir Ducasse out of UMass. Faneca was a detriment as a pass blocker, but he remained a very effective blocker as a pulling guard. Ducasse is a project with great size, but he's going to have a development curve and let the occasional blitz run free into the backfield.

That could create problems for the Sanchez. Another benefit of a healthy line was that it kept Mark Sanchez relatively clean, and while Ducasse should be an upgrade on Faneca in the long-term, the Jets will be rotating him in alongside an inexperienced primary pass blocker in the backfield (Greene, replacing Thomas Jones). Sanchez will already have concerns of his own, naturally, with improving on a 2009 season that would be charitably described as uneven. We got in a lot of trouble with Jets fans last year when we pointed out that Sanchez's rookie numbers were extremely similar to the numbers JaMarcus Russell put up in his first season as a full-time starter (Table 3). However, similar seasons do not mean similar circumstances or a similar work ethic. In general, highly-drafted quarterbacks like Sanchez will improve significantly with experience, not stagnate like Russell did. Sanchez's numbers also come out similar to early seasons from Troy Aikman, Neil Lomax, and Jim Everett.

What sticks out most from Sanchez's 2009 numbers is the ugly interception rate — 5.1 percent, the fourth-highest of the DVOA Era. (Tampa Bay's Josh Freeman is the new record-holder for quarterbacks with 300 attempts or more, after a rookie season that placed him at 5.4 percent.) The good news is that Sanchez will probably skate and not die; other quarterbacks with similar interception rates early on in their careers included Kerry Collins, Peyton Manning, and Jake Plummer. (This is not to say that all these quarterbacks improved, but unlike Ryan Leaf and Craig Whelihan, Sanchez is not playing with the eternally damned turn-of-the-century Chargers.)

Sanchez will get a new weapon in wide receiver Santonio Holmes, who the Jets acquired for a song when the Steelers decided to make an example of his poor behavior off the field. And not a particularly long

song, either. Holmes is on a one-year deal, so there's little exposure to the Jets; on the other hand, it's hard to see where he fits into the Jets' offensive scheme as an impact player. Braylon Edwards is a similar player to Holmes, a downfield threat who doesn't have the sort of hands and concentration you need out of an intermediate receiver. They're good at the same sort of routes, which makes it hard for them to complement one another. Jerricho Cotchery is a good foil for either of them, as he can work underneath and create space for their deeper patterns. Holmes is likely going to end up as a slot receiver after he serves his four-game suspension at the beginning of the 2010 season, and he can be a valuable player there, but Jets fans expecting the guy who tore apart the Cardinals in Super Bowl XLIII may very well be disappointed.

Of course, Jets fans may very well be disappointed by more than Holmes in 2010. The early preseason hype from *The Sporting News* has the Jets beating the Cowboys in Super Bowl XLV, and they won't be the only ones pointing the Jets towards Dallas. The reality is that the Jets — both in 2009 and in 2010 — are a good football team that's subject to more variance than

other teams. Their success is dependent upon an excellent running game and the play of an absurdly elite cornerback, and neither is guaranteed (or even likely) to perform at the same level this upcoming season. The good news is that Sanchez's maturity should help the passing offense look more like last year's post-season and less like last year's regular season. That would help counteract a decline in the pass defense or running game, and the resulting package should add up to another year as a playoff contender.

As frustrating as it might be for Rex Ryan and company, it may come down to luck again. The Jets are stuck in a difficult division with two other playoff contenders and a Bills team that, despite its many problems, is going to be a lot healthier this year. It's highly unlikely that one team is going to run away with the AFC East; it may come down to a close game or two in the division to decide who gets a guaranteed playoff spot. The Jets have the talent and the coaching to go far; they just need to get the breaks to go their way once more in 2010.

Bill Barnwell

Table 3. Most Similar Quarterbacks to Mark Sanchez, 1978-2008

Player	Team	Year	G	Comp	Att	PaYd	TD	INT	RuYd	C%	Yd/At	Age	Exp
Mark Sanchez	NYJ	2009	15	196	364	2444	12	20	106	53.8%	6.71	23	1
JaMarcus Russell	OAK	2008	15	198	368	2423	13	8	127	53.8%	6.58	23	2
Neil Lomax*	STL	1982	16	194	364	2430	9	11	212	53.2%	6.67	23	2
David Woodley	MIA	1981	15	191	366	2470	12	13	272	52.2%	6.75	23	2
Tony Banks	STL	1996	14	192	368	2544	15	15	212	52.2%	6.91	23	1
Trent Dilfer	TB	1995	16	224	415	2774	4	18	115	54.0%	6.68	23	2
Jim Everett*	LARM	1987	15	221	412	2815	14	18	113	53.6%	6.83	24	2
Kerry Collins	CAR	1996	13	204	364	2454	14	9	38	56.0%	6.74	24	2
Troy Aikman	DAL	1990	15	226	399	2579	11	18	172	56.6%	6.46	24	2
Matt Leinart	ARI	2006	12	214	377	2547	11	12	49	56.8%	6.76	23	1
John Elway	DEN	1984	15	214	380	2598	18	15	237	56.3%	6.84	24	2

*pro-rated due to strike

2009 Jets Stats by Week

Wk	vs.	W-L	PF	PA	YDF	YDA	TO	Total	Off	Def	ST
1	@HOU	W	24	7	462	183	1	57%	4%	-46%	6%
2	NE	W	16	9	254	299	0	42%	-9%	-35%	16%
3	TEN	W	24	17	229	286	2	9%	-27%	-25%	11%
4	@NO	L	10	24	244	343	-3	-21%	-48%	-26%	1%
5	@MIA	L	27	31	309	413	0	-5%	29%	40%	6%
6	BUF	L	13	16	414	296	-4	-42%	-39%	-9%	-12%
7	@OAK	W	38	0	447	263	4	22%	9%	-16%	-3%
8	MIN	L	25	30	378	104	0	12%	4%	-37%	-30%
9	BYE										
10	JAC	L	22	24	322	347	-2	-28%	-5%	34%	11%
11	@NE	L	14	31	226	410	-4	-45%	-59%	-3%	11%
12	CAR	W	17	6	283	179	1	82%	6%	-76%	0%
13	@BUF	W	19	13	331	194	2	8%	-12%	-10%	10%
14	@TB	W	26	3	310	124	2	68%	-2%	-73%	-3%
15	ATL	L	7	10	314	238	-3	0%	-25%	-29%	-4%
16	@IND	W	29	15	293	286	2	57%	0%	-29%	27%
17	CIN	W	37	0	320	72	3	118%	9%	-113%	-5%
18	@CIN	W	24	14	353	281	2	45%	40%	-9%	-4%
19	@SD	W	17	14	262	344	1	12%	-17%	-18%	11%
20	@IND	L	17	30	388	461	0	5%	18%	10%	-2%

Trends and Splits

	Offense	Rank	Defense	Rank
Total DVOA	-9.0%	22	-23.4%	1
Unadjusted VOA	-5.2%	23	-22.7%	1
Weighted Trend	-8.7%	24	-27.1%	1
Variance	5.6%	10	14.7%	32
Average Opponent	5.7%	8	3.3%	20
Passing	-17.3%	28	-34.2%	1
Rushing	5.0%	11	-12.0%	8
First Down	-4.0%	21	-28.1%	1
Second Down	-16.1%	26	-15.0%	5
Third Down	-7.6%	22	-27.2%	1
First Half	-9.0%	22	-24.7%	1
Second Half	-9.0%	23	-22.1%	2
Red Zone	-9.6%	22	-21.3%	9
Late and Close	-12.4%	27	-8.6%	8

Five-Year Performance

Year	W-L	Pyth	Est W	PF	PA	TO	Total	Rk	Off	Rk	Def	Rk	ST	Rk	Off AGL	Rk	Def AGL	Rk
2005	4-12	4.5	5.2	240	355	-6	-21.1%	26	-21.5%	31	-0.4%	18	0.0%	18	57.7	32	16.9	19
2006	10-6	8.7	7.7	316	295	0	-1.2%	17	6.2%	12	10.6%	27	3.2%	5	7.6	7	4.2	2
2007	4-12	5.4	5.0	268	355	-4	-16.7%	24	-9.0%	23	9.1%	26	1.4%	10	19.6	13	18.5	14
2008	9-7	9.2	9.0	405	356	-1	5.4%	17	5.1%	18	2.5%	14	2.8%	8	7.3	2	10.5	5
2009	9-7	11.4	9.4	342	236	+1	16.9%	9	-9.0%	22	-23.4%	1	2.5%	6	4.1	1	16.1	7

Strategic Tendencies

Run/Pass	Rank	Offense	Rank	Defense	Rank	Other	Rank				
Runs, all plays	56%	1	3+ WR	38%	29	Rush 3	5.9%	15	2+ RB, Pct Runs	65%	6
Runs, first half	54%	1	4+ WR	5%	22	Rush 4	49.6%	30	1 RB/2 TE, Pct Runs	67%	2
Runs, first down	73%	1	2+ TE	30%	14	Rush 5	31.1%	5	1 RB/3+WR, Pct Runs	39%	1
Runs, second-long	47%	2	Single back	48%	27	Rush 6+	13.4%	4	CB1 on WR1	68%	1
Runs, power sit.	75%	2	Play action	25%	4	Zone Blitz	14.7%	1	Go for it on 4th	0.87	24
Runs, behind 2H	45%	1	Max protect	8%	17	Sacks by LB	54.7%	10	Offensive Pace	30.2	10
Pass, ahead 2H	33%	29	Outside pocket	20%	1	Sacks by DB	20.3%	1	Defensive Pace	30.9	22

Desperate to gain yards against the Jets' defense? Try a screen pass. The Jets allowed a league-high 10.6 yards per pass on screens. Overall, the Jets actually allowed more yards per pass on passes behind the line of scrimmage (6.1) than on passes beyond the line of scrimmage (5.7). 🏈 The Jets forced opponents to go three-and-out on a league-high 34.4 percent of drives. Minnesota was the only other defense to force three-and-out more than 30 percent of the time. 🏈 Even though Mark Sanchez was tied for second in the league with 20 interceptions, he was the only starting quarterback in the league who didn't throw a single interception to the middle of the field. 🏈 The Jets dramatically increased their usage of play-action, going from 14 percent of pass plays in 2008 to 25 percent in 2009. They averaged more yards with play-action but had a lower DVOA, primarily because of the timing of Mark Sanchez's interceptions. 🏈 The Jets had the worst DVOA in the NFL from shotgun formation, but ranked 21st on offense when the quarterback was under center. Perhaps that's why the Jets used

shotgun on an AFC-low 17 percent of plays (not counting the “Seminole” formation or Brad Smith option plays). ☹️ The Jets handed the ball off 34 percent of the time when they had three or more wide receivers in the game, first in the league by a huge margin. (The Colts were second at 27 percent.) ☹️ Perhaps due to the injury to Leon Washington, the Jets threw fewer screen passes to running backs than any other offense (10) and averaged just 2.6 yards per pass.

Passing

Player	DYAR	DVOA	Plays	NtYds	Avg	YAC	C%	TD	Int
Mark Sanchez	-265	-21.8%	392	2313	5.9	5.0	54.6%	13	20
Kellen Clemens	-38	-33.6%	29	105	3.6	2.9	52.0%	0	0

Receiving

Player	DYAR	DVOA	Plays	Ctch	Yds	Y/C	YAC	TD	C%
Jericho Cotchery	185	11.7%	97	58	827	14.3	5.3	4	60%
Braylon Edwards	61	-2.2%	74	35	590	15.5	4.6	4	49%
Chansi Stuckey*	-65	-42.9%	26	11	120	10.9	5.5	1	42%
David Clowney	-10	-18.5%	22	14	191	13.6	3.4	1	64%
Brad Smith	-32	-46.8%	12	7	63	9.0	4.1	0	58%
<i>Santonio Holmes</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>12.7%</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>1291</i>	<i>15.8</i>	<i>6.0</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>57%</i>
Dustin Keller	16	-4.2%	82	45	537	11.6	3.9	2	56%
Leon Washington*	5	-9.4%	26	15	131	8.7	7.3	0	58%
Thomas Jones*	-24	-36.7%	18	10	58	5.8	7.5	0	56%
Danny Woodhead	19	12.5%	14	8	87	10.9	5.8	0	57%
Tony Richardson	-10	-50.5%	5	3	10	3.3	3.7	0	60%
Shonn Greene	-23	-107.2%	5	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0%
<i>LaDainian Tomlinson</i>	<i>-28</i>	<i>-31.2%</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>8.9</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>67%</i>

Rushing

Player	DYAR	DVOA	Plays	Yds	Avg	TD	Fum	Suc
Thomas Jones*	103	-1.2%	331	1402	4.2	14	2	44%
Shonn Greene	61	5.6%	108	542	5.0	2	3	48%
Leon Washington*	-15	-14.8%	72	331	4.6	0	1	35%
Mark Snchez	41	13.4%	27	119	4.4	3	1	-
Brad Smith	127	115.3%	18	207	11.5	1	0	-
Danny Woodhead	2	-4.9%	15	64	4.3	0	0	60%
Tony Richardson	11	22.8%	7	48	6.9	0	0	57%
Kellen Clemens	-2	-26.0%	4	8	2.0	0	0	-
David Clowney	-5	-71.2%	3	1	0.3	0	0	-
<i>Santonio Holmes</i>	<i>-6</i>	<i>-69.6%</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>LaDainian Tomlinson</i>	<i>-15</i>	<i>-10.1%</i>	<i>223</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>3.3</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>43%</i>

Offensive Line

Year	Yards	ALY	Rank	Power	Rank	Stuff	Rank	2nd Lev	Rank	Open Field	Rank
2007	3.88	3.94	23	50%	31	18%	11	1.02	25	0.39	26
2008	4.81	4.72	2	61%	25	14%	4	1.26	6	0.98	9
2009	4.48	4.28	8	70%	6	15%	4	1.11	20	0.87	12

Year	LE	Rank	LT	Rank	Mid	Rank	RT	Rank	RE	Rank	Sacks	ASR	Rank	F-Start	Cont.
2007	3.42	25	3.02	32	4.08	14	4.13	18	3.92	19	53	9.3%	30	11	44
2008	5.16	3	2.83	32	4.75	3	4.96	1	5.30	1	30	6.5%	19	20	48
2009	3.05	29	4.06	17	4.21	12	5.06	1	3.75	23	30	7.7%	23	21	48

After four years, it’s pretty clear that the Jets’ decision to devote their two first-round picks in the 2006 NFL Draft to offensive linemen was a mighty fine one. Both those players — left tackle D’Brickashaw Ferguson and center Nick Mangold — were deserving Pro Bowl selections this year, with Mangold adding a spot on the All-Pro team and the prestigious honor of being chosen by Football Outsiders readers as their Offensive Lineman of the Year. (He also became the first FO Award winner to give an acceptance speech, thanking the readers on his Twitter account.) Ferguson isn’t a transcendent left tackle or a future Hall of Famer, but he’s effective enough to merit Pro Bowl consideration in a down year for left tackles, as he did a year ago. Mangold, meanwhile, is four years into a Hall of Fame career. The issue now is paying them: Mangold’s a restricted free agent after this season, while Ferguson is signed for 2010 before an ugly 2011 team option for \$10 million. It would be a surprise if either player were without a new deal by the end of the 2010 season.

What about the rest of the line? Right guard Brandon Moore, an excellent run-blocker, was signed to a long-term deal before the 2009 season, but the other two positions are about to undergo some turnover. Left guard Alan Faneca is already gone, cut after two seasons despite making the Pro Bowl in each. Faneca was criticized for pass-blocking issues, something borne out by our game charters; his six blown blocks that led to sacks were tied for the league lead amongst guards. On the other hand, Faneca remained an excellent run blocker, highlighted by the Jets' league-leading rank on runs to right tackle. Many of those runs were plays with Faneca pulling from the left side of the line. Replacing Faneca will be second-round pick Vladimir Ducasse, a left tackle at UMass who should be able to make up for his lack of experience with raw size (6-foot-5, 330 pounds). Right tackle Damien Woody is 32 and already slipping in pass protection; if Ducasse struggles to adapt to the pro game, the Jets could move Woody, a former interior lineman, inside and place sixth offensive lineman Wayne Hunter at right tackle. Of course, if injuries do strike the offensive line, they might not have that liberty.

Defensive Front Seven

Defensive Line	Age	Pos	Plays	TmPct	Overall							Pass Rush			vs. Run		vs. Pass				
					Rk	Stop	Dfts	BTKl	St%	Rk	AvYd	Rk	Sack	Hit	Hur	Runs	St%	Yds	Pass	St%	Yds
Marques Douglas*	33	DE	64	8.5%	3	50	11	1	78%	36	2.0	46	1.5	1	3	59	78%	2.2	5	80%	-0.2
Shaun Ellis	33	DE	54	11.5%	1	48	17	0	89%	6	1.2	16	6.5	2	9	42	88%	2.0	12	92%	-1.8
Sione Pouha	31	DT	44	5.9%	13	36	6	2	82%	20	1.7	66	0	2	3	44	82%	1.7	0	0%	0.0
Mike Devito	26	DE	28	4.0%	66	24	4	0	86%	10	2.2	1	0	1	4	27	85%	2.2	1	100%	2.0
Howard Green*	31	DT	23	4.1%	49	15	1	1	65%	63	3.0	66	0	0	1	23	65%	3.0	0	0%	0.0

Linebackers	Age	Pos	Plays	TmPct	Overall							Pass Rush			vs. Run		vs. Pass					
					Rk	Stop	Dfts	BTKl	AvYd	Sack	Hit	Hur	Runs	St%	Rk	Yds	Rk	Tgts	Suc%	Rk	AdjYd	Rk
David Harris	26	ILB	130	17.4%	11	75	21	5	4.7	5.5	8	9	73	60%	83	3.9	83	34	64%	9	6.6	43
Bart Scott	30	ILB	93	12.4%	44	66	16	4	3.4	1	10	18	73	71%	31	3.2	47	26	76%	4	3.8	5
Calvin Pace	30	OLB	54	9.6%	63	40	20	6	1.6	8	1	16	36	75%	19	2.1	12	6	33%	--	10.1	--
Bryan Thomas	31	OLB	54	7.2%	93	44	17	2	3.0	2	4	8	43	81%	7	3.4	59	9	67%	--	6.1	--
Jason Taylor	36	OLB	45	5.9%	106	38	17	3	0.9	7	4	5	26	88%	3	1.5	3	10	67%	--	4.3	--

Year	Yards	ALY	Rank	Power	Rank	Stuff	Rank	2nd Lev	Rank	Open Field	Rank
2007	4.32	4.85	32	78%	30	11%	32	1.14	22	0.38	5
2008	3.66	3.94	9	68%	19	16%	24	0.88	2	0.47	4
2009	3.77	3.55	2	58%	7	23%	5	1.04	4	0.62	10

Year	LE	Rank	LT	Rank	Mid	Rank	RT	Rank	RE	Rank	Sacks	ASR	Rank
2007	5.09	28	5.32	31	4.50	30	5.25	32	4.91	29	29	6.6%	15
2008	4.11	16	4.42	21	3.92	9	4.22	20	2.83	5	41	6.8%	12
2009	2.92	5	4.17	17	3.35	2	3.40	4	4.41	24	32	6.9%	14

So, does the fact that the Jets run defense didn't skip a beat without Kris Jenkins mean that the four-time Pro Bowler is overrated, that Rex Ryan can scheme around anything, or that we overestimate the impact a single nose tackle can have on a defensive scheme? It could be a combination of all three, but facts are facts. The Jets shouldn't count on Jenkins being around for the full 16, anyway, considering that Jenkins has now torn each of his ACLs. Gang Green did get great work out of 33-year-old Shaun Ellis, who made an unlikely number of plays for a 3-4 end, but opposite number Marques Douglas was not retained. That leaves a big hole up front that wasn't addressed on draft day; instead, the Jets apparently intend to move failed first-round pick Vernon Gholston from outside linebacker to defensive end, where he'll compete with utility lineman Mike DeVito for the starting gig. At 265 pounds, Gholston is brutally undersized for the job, which will require him to bulk up to 290 pounds or so just to get inside the club. Even if he does put on the weight, Gholston has no experience playing the sort of role Ryan's defense will require him to; while he played end at Ohio State, it was in a 4-3 alignment, where the ends are expected to rush the passer and control one gap. In Ryan's scheme, Gholston will

attempt to occupy linemen and control two gaps. Expect DeVito to win the job, and play like a backup lineman stretched as a starter.

Fortunately for Jets fans, New York will return a set of playmakers at linebacker that rivals any of the groups Ryan had in Baltimore. In David Harris, Ryan has his Ray Lewis — although Harris doesn't have the athleticism that Lewis had in his prime, few players in the league are better at shedding blockers, sifting through trash, and making plays in the running game. Fellow inside linebacker Bart Scott is the more versatile linebacker, often sent out to cover receivers in the slot or out of the backfield. Readers in IDP fantasy leagues should take note: The fact that his 28 quarterback hits and hurries yielded only one actual sack suggests that his sack total will rise next year. On the other hand, don't be surprised if Calvin Pace's sack total drops next year; he hit the quarterback nine times, and eight of those hits were sacks. Fellow outside linebacker Bryan Thomas didn't get to the passer anywhere near as much as Rex Ryan wanted him to, which led to the signing of Jason Taylor from Miami. Taylor will be a situational pass rusher, yielding to Thomas in run situations, but Jets fans shouldn't expect to see vintage Taylor from a few years ago. Only four players have ever recorded ten or more sacks at the age of 36, and only 13 have even gotten as many as five. Injuries to any of the linebackers could lead to more time for prospect Jamaal Westerman, a Brooklyn-born Rutgers product who made the team as an undrafted free agent a year ago.

Defensive Secondary

Secondary	Age	Pos	Overall						vs. Run					vs. Pass									
			Plays	TmPct	Rk	Stop	Dfts	BTkl	Runs	St%	Rk	Yds	Rk	Tgts	Tgt%	Rk	Dist	Suc%	Rk	APaYd	Rk	PD	Int
Darrelle Revis	25	CB	85	11.3%	6	46	22	3	20	35%	62	8.2	53	96	21.3%	6	15.3	72%	1	3.5	1	36	6
Jim Leonhard	28	SS	80	10.7%	31	36	17	9	38	47%	25	5.5	15	25	5.5%	53	9.3	84%	1	2.2	1	3	1
Kerry Rhodes*	28	FS	75	10.0%	38	29	12	3	30	30%	68	8.4	61	30	6.7%	36	10.2	64%	18	6.2	21	12	3
Lito Sheppard*	29	CB	39	7.6%	57	17	5	3	7	14%	75	7.6	44	56	18.1%	29	12.0	62%	4	6.9	34	8	1
Eric Smith	27	FS	39	5.2%	76	18	10	2	16	63%	3	4.1	5	20	4.3%	65	12.8	53%	44	7.3	40	5	1
Dwight Lowery	24	CB	32	5.3%	74	12	11	3	7	0%	80	14.1	82	48	13.2%	65	12.2	61%	7	5.4	3	7	3
Donald Strickland*	30	CB	27	6.4%	--	13	7	3	5	60%	--	3.8	--	22	8.7%	--	10.0	48%	--	6.1	--	5	0
Brodney Pool	26	FS	59	9.9%	39	26	19	6	26	46%	28	7.7	52	18	5.8%	50	19.9	62%	22	9.1	63	9	4
Antonio Cromartie	26	CB	43	5.5%	73	18	4	3	5	20%	73	9.4	66	66	14.4%	60	14.0	48%	57	6.8	29	9	3

Year	Pass D Rank	vs. #1 WR	Rk	vs. #2 WR	Rk	vs. Other WR	Rk	vs. TE	Rk	vs. RB	Rk
2007	18	20.8%	28	-8.5%	9	-12.2%	13	7.4%	17	16.6%	30
2008	16	-5.1%	11	-1.6%	13	7.9%	25	25.2%	29	8.7%	21
2009	1	-39.6%	1	-20.4%	6	-29.9%	3	-21.3%	4	-20.9%	2

It all starts with Darrelle Revis, who had a season for the ages in 2009. We covered Revis' dominance earlier in the chapter, but a season that good is worth talking about more than once. It's easy to look at the numbers and project some regression to the mean for Revis — the guy's bound to literally slip once or twice on a ball thrown in his direction — but Revis could lose 10 percent of his 2009 performance and still be the best cornerback in football. He's that good.

With Revis Island taking up one side of the field, the remaining members of the secondary were able to congregate on the other side and stifle the throwing lanes for quarterbacks; quarterbacks were often forced to throw desperation passes over the top, helping lead to Jim Leonhard's excellent game charting numbers. Leonhard is a versatile, smart safety that can play centerfield and contribute against the run, but he's someone who looks great because he plays as part of a great defense. Put him on the Browns and he'd look like just another guy. Lito Sheppard got some hype as a comeback player because of the early start, but it was clear to see on tape that he was just enjoying the benefits of having safety or linebacker help on virtually every play. Austin Collie picked Sheppard apart during the two Colts-Jets games in 2009, forcing him to the bench in the AFC Championship Game. Sheppard was let go and replaced by Chargers corner Antonio Cromartie, who should see similar press this year. First-round pick Kyle Wilson should be the starting nickelback, but rookie corners rarely ever contribute much in the way of significant performance; Jets fans shouldn't expect much from him until 2011.

Kerry Rhodes lost and then won back the starting free safety job from Eric Smith, but issues with consistency and, well, mouthiness led the Jets to deal Rhodes to Arizona. Utility defensive back Brodney Pool was signed away from the Browns to start, with Smith competing for the job in camp.

Special Teams

Year	DVOA	Rank	FG/XP	Rank	Net Kick	Rank	Kick Ret	Rank	Net Punt	Rank	Punt Ret	Rank	Hidden	Rank
2007	1.4%	10	-2.7	23	-6.7	27	17.4	3	0.5	18	-0.2	15	-0.4	15
2008	2.8%	8	-3.7	26	7.4	7	9.0	4	1.9	17	2.1	7	-6.6	21
2009	2.5%	6	2.8	12	-2.3	20	7.6	6	1.7	16	5.0	9	-0.4	15

The team's best work on special teams was done on returns; combine the value of their kick and punt returns, and the Jets ranked behind only the Browns, Buccaneers, and Bears. Much of their success on kick returns came thanks to Brad Smith, who fielded the Colts' second-half kickoff in Week 16 and took it to the house for what could very well have been a season-saving touchdown. With Leon Washington injured, punt returns were split between Jerricho Cotchery (3.2 points of value on 23 returns) and Jim Leonhard (0.6 points of value on 20 returns). Middling veteran kicker Jay Feely was replaced in the offseason by former Cowboys kicker Nick Folk, who was one of the league's worst kickoff men in 2007 and 2008; his presence on the roster virtually dictates that the Jets will need a kickoff specialist by the end of the season, which itself makes Folk not worth the roster spot in the first place. Steve Weatherford is nothing special as a punter, but he was a college decathlete who ran a 4.45 40-yard dash before choosing the NFL over the international track circuit. Add a college option quarterback as the upback (Brad Smith) and the Jets are by far the team most likely to try a fake punt. They ran four last year, all successful: two Weatherford runs, a Smith run, and a Smith pass.

Coaching Staff

Chances are you know a thing or two about Rex Ryan by now, and he's not the only big name on staff. The Jets feature former head coaches (offensive line coach Bill Callahan), coaching dynasties (offensive coordinator Brian Schottenheimer), and well-known ex-players (wide receiver coach Henry Ellard, defensive line coach Mark Carrier). However, there are also a number of interesting stories among the less-famous people on staff. Defensive coordinator Mike Pettine, who Ryan brought along from Baltimore, is the son of the legendary Pennsylvania high school coach with the same name. Mike Pettine, Sr., coached both his son and defensive quality control coach Jim O'Neil there. Meanwhile, the Jets reached out to an unlikely source for a strength and conditioning assistant this offseason: the Premier League, where Kyle Thorne was working as the head strength and conditioning coach for Everton FC. Thorne's a former AF2 player, though, so he's not likely to fill the kickoff specialist role we mentioned earlier.