

WinPicks

Build your own system. We hold the data, do the arithmetic, and tell you the truth about the result.

Reference Manual · 2.0 Edition

Pro Football Analyst

NFL — complete boxscores from 1985

College Football Analyst

NCAA football — scores and lines from 1985

Pro Basketball Analyst

NBA — scores and lines from 1990

College Basketball Analyst

NCAA basketball — scores and lines from 2000

Pro Hockey Analyst **NEW**

NHL — lines, totals and money line prices

by MicroBrothers Software

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WinPicks Reference Manual

WinPicks 2.0 Edition

This manual is a complete reference guide for all five WinPicks packages - *Pro Football Analyst*, *College Football Analyst*, *Pro Basketball Analyst*, *College Basketball Analyst* and *Pro Hockey Analyst*.

It is a revision of the WinPicks Reference Manual of 2018, brought forward to the WinPicks 2.0 platform.

Where a screen is unchanged, so is the text that describes it: WinPicks 2.0 reproduces the original program's dialogs deliberately and closely, so a description that was accurate then is accurate now.

Sections describing something the platform genuinely changed have been rewritten, and sections covering features that did not exist in 2018 have been added. The first chapter tours everything that is new.

What's New in WinPicks 2.0

WinPicks Reference Manual What's New in WinPicks 2.0

If you have used WinPicks before, this chapter is for you. It lists what is new in WinPicks 2.0, one item at a time, with a pointer to the section that covers it fully. Everything else is where you left it: the menus, the dialogs and the reports are the original ones, and the parts of this manual that describe them are unchanged wherever the screens are unchanged.

- **It runs in your browser.** Nothing to install, no discs, no serial numbers, no weekly downloads. Point a browser at app.winpicks.net, sign in, and your formulas and settings follow you to any machine. *Section 2.*
- **The database updates itself.** Scores arrive within minutes of a game going final; schedules and postseason brackets appear when the leagues publish them; lines and totals track the market through the day. The screens that used to key data in now show it. *Sections 5 and 6.*
- **Prices, not just lines.** Every line carries the actual money odds beside it, per bookmaker. A Price Basis setting says whose prices you are shown and graded at - the market consensus, the best available number, or one named book - and it applies to every screen, including Analyze and the Tuner. *The Price Basis, in section 6; Prices on the Predict Screens, in section 8.*
- **Odds Compare.** One screen showing every bookmaker quoting a game - typically forty or more - with the best number of each market marked, how each line moved since it opened, and where the public's bets and the public's money are. *Odds Compare, in section 6.*
- **Predict Straight Up.** A third Predict grid beside Sides and Totals: the formula's outright winner for every game, priced at the money line. The original program could not offer this screen, because it had no real prices to grade a moneyline pick against. *Predicting Straight Up, in section 8.*
- **The Home page.** A front door that opens on today's games and three starting points - ask history a question, get the day's picks, build your own formula. Press Ctrl+K anywhere to jump to any screen by

name. *The Home Page, in section 3.*

- **Trend Finder.** The trend engine turned around: instead of sweeping for every trend, you ask one question - Denver after two losses as a home dog - and get its record, with the honesty columns beside it. It takes plain English or a compact command language, and a Copy for LLM button hands the whole exchange to any assistant you use. *Trend Finder, in section 9; a cookbook of worked commands is Appendix C.*
- **My Systems.** Save a Trend Finder query and it is graded, from that day forward, only on games played after you saved it - an out-of-sample record that cannot be contaminated, and the closest thing this program has to a verdict. *My Systems, in section 9.*
- **Honest tuning.** The Formula Tuner gains objectives and safeguards: Best SU Units graded at real money lines, Closing Line Value as an objective, a held-out period tracked beside the fit, and a Luck Line showing what the same search would reach on pure noise. *Section 8.5 and the two sections after it.*
- **Forge.** A formula designer that starts from a question - which market, over what period, judged on what - and writes an ordinary formula you can tune and edit like any other. It supersedes the SureLock Formula Wizard. *Forge, in section 8.*
- **Weather, measured.** Pro Football Analyst adds a Weather Board - the conditions at kickoff for every game on the date - and a Weather Lab that tests every wind, cold and rain cut-off against the betting line, then re-tests the winners on games they never saw. The Trend Finder gains weather filters on the same data. *The Weather Board and the Weather Lab, in section 7.*
- **A fifth package: Pro Hockey Analyst.** NHL scores, lines, totals and money line prices, with hockey-specific handicapping advice - and, by default, a newer engine that models goal scoring directly and makes the money line its native market. *Pro Hockey Handicapping, in Appendix A.*
- **Your account.** Formulas, saved trends, systems, tuner settings and your price basis live with your account, not with a machine. Subscriptions are per package and take effect immediately. *Section 12.*

Retired, and explained where they stood: keying in scores and lines, weekly downloads, the Formula Warehouse, and the SureLock wizard - each of their sections says what replaced it and why. Gone without needing a chapter: the built-in web browser (you are in a better one), the screen-font setting (use your browser's zoom), and the local data directory (the menu item now opens Data Sources - see section 10).

Introduction to WinPicks

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 1. Introduction to WinPicks

MicroBrothers Software has been writing and publishing sports handicapping software for more than three decades. WinPicks began in the early 1990s as a Windows desktop program, sold by the season - first on disc, later by download - and covering pro and college football and basketball. Its owners downloaded the week's stat files, built prediction formulas, tuned them, and hunted trends, and a Reference Manual explained every screen. The last of those manuals was published in 2018. This manual is its direct successor.

WinPicks 2.0 is the same program brought to the browser. The screens are the original screens - the same dialogs, the same menus, the same reports - because thirty years of customers know exactly where everything is, and because the engines behind those screens still work. What has changed is everything around them: the program now runs on our servers, and the database, the schedules, the scores, the lines and the per-bookmaker prices are maintained centrally. Nothing is installed, nothing is downloaded, and nothing needs keying in.

The WinPicks family consists of five statistical database and handicapping packages: *Pro Football Analyst*, *College Football Analyst*, *Pro Basketball Analyst*, *College Basketball Analyst*, and *Pro Hockey Analyst*, which is new in WinPicks 2.0. All five share a common user interface, so if you know how to use one package, you know how to use them all. This manual is a comprehensive reference for all five. It explains how each feature works, and discusses the differences between the packages where they exist.

The foundation is what it has always been:

- **A deep record of past games.** The football packages reach back to 1985, pro basketball to 1990 and college basketball to 2000, with complete boxscores in *Pro Football Analyst* tracking each team's performance in twenty statistical categories.
- **Predictions in a variety of formats.** WinPicks picks the straight-up winner, recommends certain picks against the point spread, and predicts the point total of every game (the over/under).
- **Your own prediction formulas.** WinPicks does not limit you to built-in formulas. You create your own, analyze their performance straight-up, against the spread and against the total, and tune them for best results.
- **The best trend analysis engine in the business.** You can see how any team has performed straight-up, against the spread, or against the total in any situation you can define - as a favorite or underdog, at home or on the road, after a win or a loss, in head-to-head matchups with any opponent - and combine trends to get as specific as you wish.

What WinPicks 2.0 adds to that foundation - the prices, the new screens, and the honest way of judging a result - is the subject of the previous chapter, What's New in WinPicks 2.0.

WinPicks 2.0 runs in your web browser, on any machine you own. Section 2 explains how to sign in and choose a sport.

Installing and Starting WinPicks

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 2. Starting WinPicks

WinPicks 2.0 runs in your web browser. There is nothing to install, no disc, no serial number to key in and no separate download for each new season. Point your browser at **app.winpicks.net** and sign in.

Minimum requirements.

Browser	Chrome, Edge, Firefox or Safari, in a version released within the last two years. WinPicks 2.0 uses current web standards and will not run in Internet Explorer.
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Operating system	Any. Windows, macOS, Linux, ChromeOS, iPadOS and Android all work, because none of the program runs on your machine.
Screen	1024 x 768 or larger is comfortable. The dialogs are drawn at the sizes the original program used, so a narrower window scrolls sideways rather than reflowing.
Connection	Any broadband or mobile connection. The program sends small requests and receives text, not video; it is usable on a phone tethered in a press box.
Disk space	None.
Installation	None.

There is deliberately no minimum processor or memory figure. The handicapping engine runs on the server, so tuning a formula over forty seasons takes the same time on a Chromebook as on a workstation. The one exception is the in-browser tuner, which does use your own machine when it is available and falls back to the server when it is not - you will not notice which.

What has replaced what. If you used the original program, the differences worth knowing before you start:

- There is no installer, no serial number and no unlock step. Your subscription is checked when you sign in.
- There is no data folder. The database lives on the server and is shared.
- There is nothing to download each week. Scores, schedules, lines and prices arrive on their own.
- Your formulas are stored with your account, so they are on every machine you sign in from rather than the one you installed on.

Signing in. Enter the email address and password you registered with. If you have forgotten the password, use the reset link on the sign-in page; the message arrives from the winpicks.net address, so check your junk folder the first time.

Choosing a sport. WinPicks 2.0 carries five packages in one program:

- Pro Football Analyst (NFL)
- College Football Analyst
- Pro Basketball Analyst (NBA)
- College Basketball Analyst
- Pro Hockey Analyst (NHL)

The Sport list at the top right of the window switches between them. You are not restarting anything when you switch - the toolbar, the menus and the current date all follow you across, and each sport keeps its own formulas and its own database.

Which packages you can open depends on your subscription. A package you have not bought is still listed, so you can see what is there; opening it explains what it costs rather than pretending it does not exist. See section 12, Your Account and Subscription.

Leaving WinPicks. Close the browser tab, or use File > Exit. Your work is saved as you go - there is no Save step before leaving, and no way to lose a formula by closing the window.

Getting Around

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 3. Getting Around

WinPicks 2.0 keeps the original program's layout: pull-down menus across the top - FILE, DATABASE, EDIT, VIEW, FORMULAS, PREDICT, CONSENSUS, TRENDS, ADD-INS (*Pro Football Analyst* only) and HELP - a toolbar beneath them, a shortcuts rail down the left edge, and the current date, database method and formula always in view. If you have used WinPicks before, nothing has moved. This section collects the small mechanics; the two subsections that follow cover the Home page and the toolbar.

The keyboard. Hold ALT and press a menu's first letter to open it (ALT-F for FILE); the arrow keys move through menus and items, and ESC closes them. Press **Ctrl+K** anywhere for the command palette, which jumps to any screen by name. In a long report, CTRL-F is your browser's own find, which highlights every match on screen. A few screens have function keys of their own:

Key	Function
F1	Help
F4	Edit Current Formula
F5	Previous View
F6	Next View
F7	Previous Date
F8	Next Date
F9	My Formulas

These are hot keys - they work without opening a menu. NEXT VIEW and PREVIOUS VIEW (on the VIEW menu) step circularly through reports of the same kind, team to team or statistic to statistic, without going back through a list.

Printing. Select PRINT from the FILE menu - or press Ctrl+P - and any screen prints through your browser's print dialog, which owns the printer, paper and margins, and will save a PDF instead if you choose a PDF destination. Every printed report carries a header naming the report, the database method and formula in use, and the date - so a report printed today from three weeks back says so.

Copying. COPY TO CLIPBOARD, on the EDIT menu, copies the report on screen so it can be pasted into any other application. For large amounts of data, use the Export features instead (section 10.5).

Text size. Use your browser's zoom - Ctrl and plus or minus, Command on a Mac. It scales the whole window together.

Leaving. Select EXIT from the FILE menu, or simply close the tab - your work is saved as you go. HOME, on the same menu, returns to the Home page without ending anything, and SIGN OUT ends your session: use

it on a shared computer, so the next person at the machine is not still signed in as you.

One thing you will not find: the original program's built-in web browser. You are already in a better one. Its old toolbar buttons remain, greyed out, with the reason on hover.

The Home Page

The first screen you see is the Home page. It is new in WinPicks 2.0 - the original program opened straight onto its main window - and it exists to put the most useful starting points in front of you before the menus do. To return to it at any time, choose File > Home. The screen is shown in Figure 3.2.

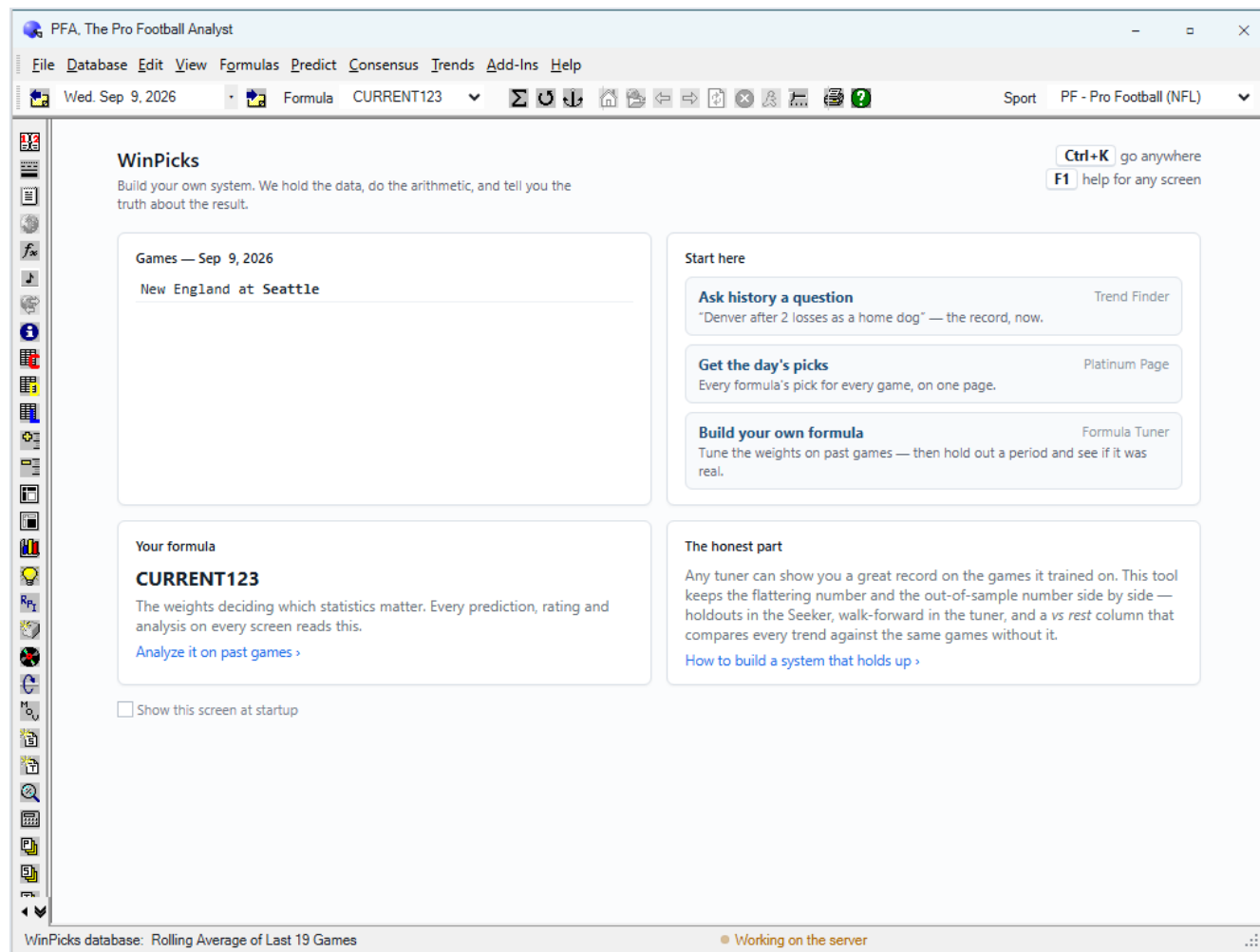


Figure 3.2 - The Home Page (PFA)

At the top left, under the WinPicks title, the page states what the program is for, in its own words: "Build your own system. We hold the data, do the arithmetic, and tell you the truth about the result." At the top right sit two shortcuts, printed here because they work everywhere: **Ctrl+K** opens a command palette that jumps to any screen by name, and **F1** opens help for any screen.

Below them, four cards:

- **Games** - the slate for the date you are browsing, with the date in the card's heading; in the off-season it shows the last date that was played, labelled as such. In Figure 3.2 it is one September game, New

England at Seattle.

- **Start here** - three actions. Each card leads with what you would do, names the screen that does it at its right edge, and explains itself in a line: *Ask history a question* opens the Trend Finder ("Denver after 2 losses as a home dog" - the record, now); *Get the day's picks* opens the Platinum Page (every formula's pick for every game, on one page); **Build your own formula** opens the Formula Tuner (tune the weights on past games, then hold out a period and see if it was real).
- **Your formula** - the formula currently loaded, CURRENT123 in the figure, with a reminder of what it is: the weights deciding which statistics matter, read by every prediction, rating and analysis on every screen. The link underneath - "Analyze it on past games" - runs the Analyze report on it directly.
- **The honest part** - the program's habit, stated as a promise: any tuner can show you a great record on the games it trained on, so this one keeps the flattering number and the out-of-sample number side by side. The link
- "How to build a system that holds up" - opens the help guide on exactly that.

A checkbox at the bottom - "Show this screen at startup" - controls whether Home greets you when you sign in. With it off, WinPicks opens onto the main window, the way the original program did.

The Tool Bar

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 3.2. The Tool Bar

In addition to the menus, WinPicks includes a *tool bar* that lets you select some functions without using menus. All you have to do is click on the tool bar icon. The table below describes what each icon does. The toolbar in WinPicks 2.0 is fixed - the original program let you add and remove buttons; this build ships one toolbar for everybody, so the layout described here is the layout you are looking at. Buttons whose destination no longer exists are greyed out with the reason on hover, rather than removed: a button you remember stays where you remember it, and tells you what became of it.

Tool Icon	Name	Function
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Enter Playoff Schedule

Opens the schedule, which is maintained automatically in WinPicks 2.0



Enter Lines and Totals

Opens the lines folder; lines now arrive on their own (see section 6)



Enter Games

Opens the game scores screen; results now arrive on their own (see section 5)



My Formulas

Create, modify, delete, and activate formulas



Formula Tuner

Tunes prediction formulas for best results



Formula Warehouse

Opened the Formula Warehouse, which has closed; the button is greyed out



Download Stats from Internet

Downloaded stat and line files; data now arrives on its own, and the button is greyed out



Print

Print the information on screen, through your browser's print dialog



View Team Info

View the database of the selected team



View Stats by Category

View statistics in a specific category (PFA only)



View Stats by Team

View statistics of a specific team (PFA only)



View Stat Charts

View a graphic of a selected statistic (PFA only)



View Points Scored

Rank teams according to points scored (CFA, PBA, CBA)



View Points Allowed

Rank teams according to points allowed (CFA, PBA, CBA)

View Standings by Division	
View Standings Grouped by Division	
View Standings by Conference	
View Standings Grouped by Conference	
View Standings by League	
View Standings with All Teams on One List	
Power Ratings (formulas)	
Display power ratings using current formula	
Power Ratings (RPI)	
Display power ratings using RPI	
Records	
Display records for all teams in database	
Average Margin of Victory	
Display average margin of victory for all teams	
Predict Sides	
Predict winners straight-up and against the spread	
Predict Totals	
Predict winners against the total (over/unders)	
Analyze season	
Analyze single formula for current season	
Consensus Sides	

Predict ATS winners using multiple formulas



Consensus Totals

Predict totals using multiple formulas



Consensus Straight Up

Predict straight up winners using multiple formulas



Consensus Analyze Year

Analyze multiple formulas for current season



Line Shifter

Increment lines to see how recommended picks change



Team History

Display trend history for selected team



Key Trends

Displays key trends that relate to the selected date



Situation Analysis

Displays trends that relate to the selected game



Trend Seeker

Searches through past games and compiles a list of trends



Watch List

Displays the trend list compiled by Trend Seeker



My Trends

Displays the trend list stored using My Trends



Trend Alerts

Scans upcoming games against Watch List, and reports on games that match the trends



My Trends Alerts

Scans upcoming games against My Trends List, and reports on games that match the trends



Power Rating Charts

Graphically display a team's power rating over time



Schedule Difficulty

Display schedule difficulty for all teams in database



Turnovers

Display turnover data for all teams (PFA only)



Pool Picks

Ranks picks for football pools (PFA only)



Analyze N Dates

Analyze prediction formula using a selectable number of past dates



Help

Displays the on-line help function



Rolling Average

Select a rolling average database



Season to Date

Select a season-to-date database



Fixed at Date

Select a fixed-at-date database



Next Date

Advance to the next date in the database



Previous Date

Go back to the previous date in the database



WinPicks Forum

Opened the WinPicks forum at ScoresLine.com, which is no longer running; the button is greyed out



ScoresLine.com

Opened the ScoresLine.com web site, which is no longer running; the button is greyed out



Browse Back

For the built-in web browser, which has been retired; the button is greyed out



Browse Forward

For the built-in web browser, which has been retired; the button is greyed out



Refresh Page

For the built-in web browser, which has been retired; the button is greyed out



Stop Browser

For the built-in web browser, which has been retired; the button is greyed out



Enter a Web Address

For the built-in web browser, which has been retired; the button is greyed out

Selecting a Database

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 4. Selecting a Database

All WinPicks products include a huge database of past game results, schedules, and statistics. The amount of data included with WinPicks differs from product to product, as listed below:

- *Pro Football Analyst (PFA)*

The database includes all schedules, scores, lines, and game statistics from the 1985-86 NFL season through the current season, updated as the games are played.

- *College Football Analyst (CFA)*

The database includes all schedules, scores, and lines from the 1985-86 NCAA season through the current season, updated as the games are played.

- *Pro Basketball Analyst (PBA)*

The database includes all schedules, scores, and lines from the 1990-91 NBA season through the current season, updated as the games are played.

- *College Basketball Analyst (CBA)*

The database includes all schedules, scores, and lines from the 2000-2001 NCAA season through the current season, updated as the games are played.

- *Pro Hockey Analyst (PHA)*

The database includes all schedules, scores, lines, totals and money line prices from the 2020-21 NHL season through the current season, updated as the games are played.

This section covers the following topics:

- 4.1 - The Database Method
- 4.2 - Changing the Date
- 4.3 - Adjusting the Database One Date at a Time

The Database Method

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 4.1. The Database Method

You can view the information in the database on screen, use it to generate a variety of printed reports, and of course, use it for handicapping. Before using the database, however, you must select a database method (the default method is a 6-game rolling average).

All versions of WinPicks can use three different database methods. The method you choose depends upon your application. This section discusses how each method works, and when it should be used.

The DATABASE indicator on the tool bar displays the name of the database method currently in use. When you change methods, the message "Adjusting Database" will be briefly displayed.

Season to Date

This method is used both by handicappers and fans who want to use all of the stats from the current season. One benefit of this method is that the team records in the database are from the current season only, and will agree with the official league standings.

Season to date totals work like this: If a team has played 4 games during the current season, the database will include all 4 games. After the team plays its 5th game, the database will be adjusted to include all 5 games. The database always contains all of the games from the current season.

If games from the current season are not available, the database includes all of the games from the previous season. This situation only exists until data from the current season becomes available.

WinPicks automatically adjusts the database when new data is added to the database, or when you change the current date. To use season to date totals, select SEASON TO DATE from the DATABASE menu, or:

- Select this button from the tool bar:



Rolling Average

This method is normally used by handicappers who are attempting to predict the winner or point spread of a game. Since momentum is a key factor when predicting the outcome of games, handicappers are often most interested in the results of a team's most recent games. A rolling average supplies them with this information. For example, a 3-game rolling average uses the stats from each team's 3 most recent games. When a team plays their next game, it automatically becomes part of the new 3-game rolling average. The game from Week 1 "rolls off" and is no longer included.

To use a rolling average, select ROLLING AVERAGE from the DATABASE menu, or:

- Select this button from the tool bar:



The rolling average menu appears as shown in Figure 4.10. You may select a rolling average using from 1 to 30 games. A 6-game rolling average is used as a default value. There is no hard and fast rule as to which rolling average is the most effective. However, football handicappers often use a rolling average of 3 to 8 games, whereas basketball handicappers may use a rolling average of 10 games or more (for more information, see Appendix A).

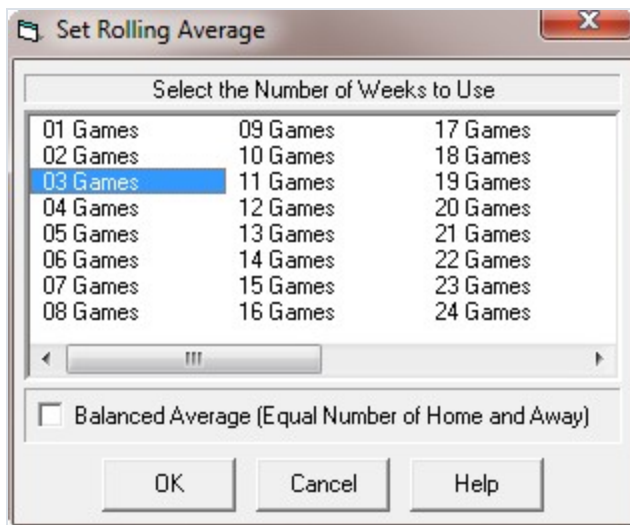


Figure 4.10 - The Rolling Average Menu

If you check the box labeled "Balanced Average", the database will include an equal number of home and away games. For example, if you use a 6-game rolling average, the database won't necessarily include the 6 most recent games a team has played. Instead, it will include each team's 3 most recent home games, and 3 most recent road games. Using a balanced average is probably more useful for handicapping the NBA (where teams have extended road trips and homestands), than it is for handicapping football.

The selected rolling average is automatically adjusted whenever new data is added to the database, or when you change the current date.

Fixed at Date

The fixed at date method is used by those who want the database to include all available information from a certain date forward (the date can be from either the current season or a past season). You can use this method to use all of the data included with WinPicks. To do so, you would specify the oldest data in your database as your starting point. Whenever new information is added, it automatically becomes part of the database.

FIXED AT DATE has many interesting uses. For example, you can use it to see which team has the highest power rating or winning percentage over periods longer than one season. You can go back as far as you want, whereas a rolling average is limited to 30 games. The database is automatically adjusted when new data is added, or when you change the current date.

To use fixed totals, select FIXED TO DATE from the DATABASE menu, or:

- Select this button from the tool bar:



The FIXED AT DATE window includes a list of available dates and a calendar. The calendar is for the month of the currently selected date. The shaded areas on the calendar represent dates when games were played, or future dates when games are scheduled to be played. You must select a past date (if you select a future date you will receive an error message) to use as a starting date for your database. You may select a starting date from the list of available dates, or by clicking on one of the shaded dates on the calendar.

After you select a starting date, the database is adjusted to include the stats from the starting point on. For example, if you specify November 26, 2013 as your starting point, the database will include all available information from that date through the current date.

Changing the Date

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 4.2. Changing the Date

WinPicks displays the current date in the box on the left side of the tool bar. Before the season begins, the current date is set to the first day of the season. Once the season is in progress, WinPicks determines the current date using a two-step process. The first step is to read the system date from the computer's clock. For this reason, please make sure that your computer's clock is set to the correct date. The second step is to find the first date greater than or equal to the system date where games are scheduled to be played, but where the game data has yet to be entered.

For example, the system date might be Sunday, November 30th. The next date (after the system date) where games are scheduled to be played is Monday, December 1st. In this instance, the tool bar will indicate that December 1st is the current date.

The information included in the database depends upon the current date. For example, if your database method is a 4-game rolling average, the database will include the 4 most recent games played by each team *prior* to the current date. If you use a season to date database, the database will include every game played during the current season *prior* to the current date.

There are many reasons that you might want to change the current date. For example, you might want to look at the standings from three weeks ago, or a year ago. You might want to select a past season and view or print reports from that season. Or, you might want to test a prediction formula to see how well it would have performed in past seasons. Changing the date allows you to look at how things were at a given point in time, just as if you were looking at an old magazine or newspaper.

There are two ways to change the current date. The first way is to select a new date using the *Current Date* dialogue box on the left side of the tool bar. The second way is to select SET CURRENT DATE from the DATABASE menu and then to select the date that you want from the calendar.

Adjusting the Database One Date at a Time

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 4.3. Adjusting the Database One Date at a Time

You can also step through the database one date at a time. There are three ways to do this:

- Click on the right and left arrows located alongside the *Current Date* box. The right arrow advances the database to the next date when games are scheduled to be played. The left arrow moves the date back to the first previous date when games were scheduled to be played.
- Select GO TO NEXT DATE or GO TO PREVIOUS DATE from the DATABASE menu.
- Select GO TO NEXT DATE by pressing F8, or GO TO PREVIOUS DATE by pressing F7.
- Stepping through the database one date at a time is a useful feature. It shows you how a team's performance changes over the course of a season. For example, when you are viewing power ratings you can step through the database and see how a team's rating changes from game to game.

Updating Game Results

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 5. Updating Game Results

While the season is in progress, the database keeps itself updated: new game results arrive on their own, usually within a few minutes of a game going final. This section describes the screens that once did that work by hand, and what each of them shows now.

This section covers the following topics:

- 5.1 - Keying in Data
- 5.2 - Adding Postseason Games

- 5.3 - Downloading Files from the Internet

Keying in Data

In WinPicks 2.0 you no longer key in results. Scores arrive automatically, usually within a few minutes of a game going final, and the database every customer sees is the same one. This section describes what you can still do, which is look at any of it.

Why it changed. The original program kept its database on your own machine, so if a score was wrong you fixed it yourself. WinPicks 2.0 keeps one database on the server for everybody. An edit made by one customer would change the numbers every other customer sees, so score entry is not offered. The screens that used to enter data now show it.

Viewing a game's box score. Choose File > Game Scores, pick a date on the calendar and select a game. Pro Football Analyst shows the full box score - first downs, rushing and passing yards, turnovers, penalties, time of possession and the rest of the twenty categories. The other four packages show the score, the line and the total; their leagues' box scores are not part of the WinPicks database.

The fields are shown for reading. Nothing on this screen writes to the database.

If you find a mistake. Report it rather than working around it. A wrong score is a bug in the data feed and will be wrong for every customer until it is corrected centrally - and it will then be corrected for everyone at once. Choose Help > My Account and follow the Contact link on your account page.

How good is the data? Every NFL box score from 2000 onward has been checked field by field against an independent source, and the differences corrected - 5,547 of them across 26 seasons. Scores, lines and totals for all five sports are checked continuously against the same feeds that supply them.

Adding Postseason Games

Postseason games are added automatically. When a league announces its bracket, the fixtures appear in the database with their round already set - Wild Card, Divisional, Conference Championship and Super Bowl in Pro Football Analyst; the equivalent rounds in the other four packages.

This matters more than it sounds, because the round is what several screens filter on. A trend restricted to playoff games, or a formula analysed over the regular season only, depends on every postseason game carrying the right code. Those codes are set centrally and are checked: for example, exactly one Super Bowl per season, played at a neutral site, and a playoff field whose size matches the era.

The schedule window itself remains, for browsing: choose File > Schedule, or the toolbar button that used to enter the playoff schedule. The window is shown in Figure 5.20. The calendar on the left picks a date; the list on the right - headed "Games Scheduled (view only)" - shows that date's fixtures with their game types. The ADD, MODIFY, DELETE and SAVE buttons are shown disabled, with the reason on hover: the schedule is season data, the same for every account, so it is shown here but not editable.

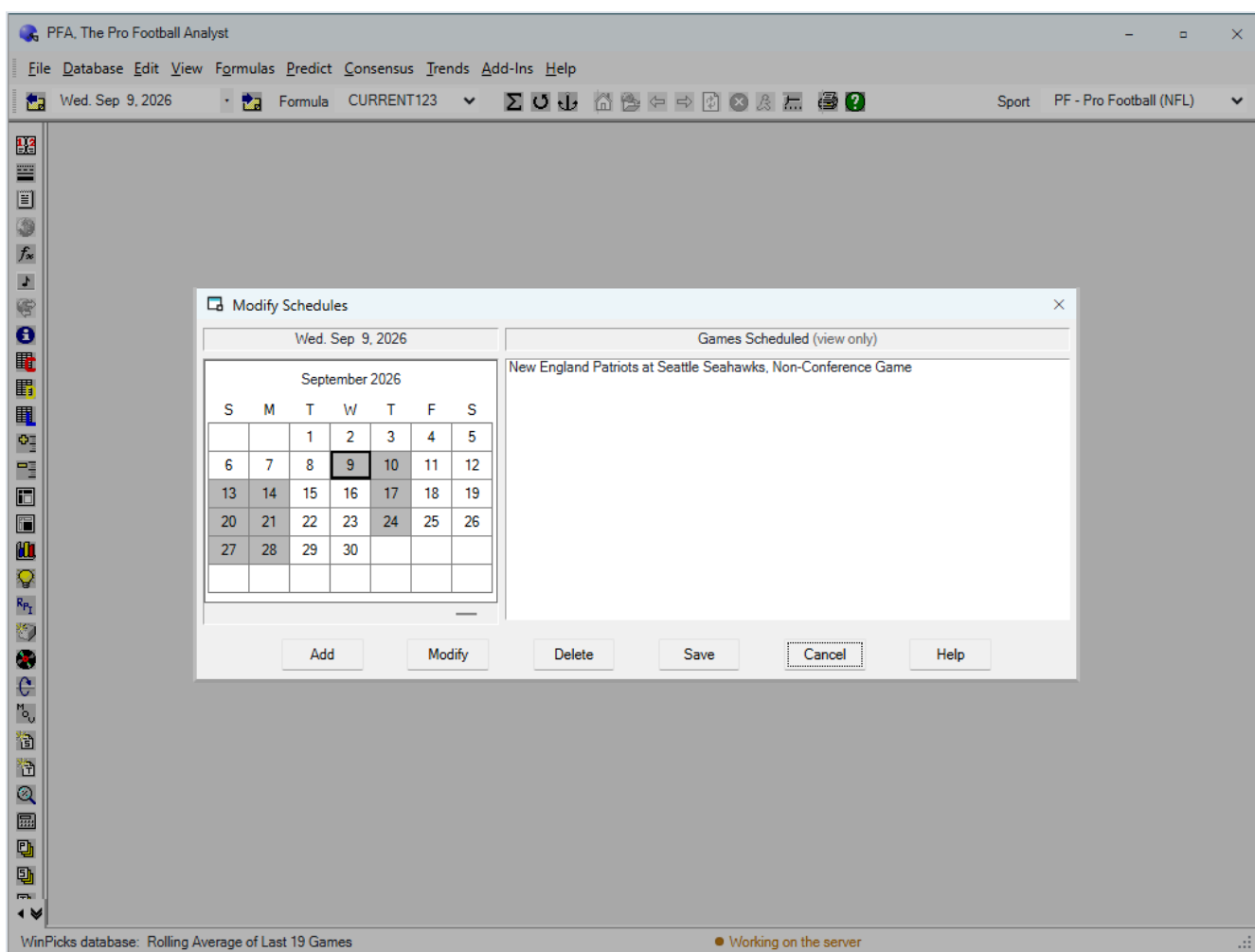


Figure 5.20 - The Schedule Window (PFA)

You do not need to do anything when the postseason starts.

Downloading Files from the Internet

There is nothing to download. The original program fetched stat files from the MicroBrothers site each week and merged them into your local database. WinPicks 2.0 keeps the database on the server, and it is updated continuously:

- **Scores** are collected as games finish.
- **Lines and totals** are collected from the odds feed through the day, so an unplayed game shows the current number rather than the one that was there when you last downloaded.
- **Schedules** are loaded when a league publishes them, including postseason fixtures as they are announced.
- **Prices** - the actual money odds beside each line - are collected per bookmaker. See section 6, Updating Lines and Totals.

The File > Download Stats from Internet menu item is shown greyed out, with the reason on hover. It has not been removed, because it was in the program for twenty years and its absence would be more

confusing than its explanation.

How current is it? The status bar at the bottom of the window shows when the data was last refreshed. If a game finished an hour ago and its score is not showing, that is worth reporting; everything else on the screen updates without any action from you.

Updating Lines and Totals

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 6. Updating Lines and Totals

All members of the WinPicks family store the line (point spread and totals line) for every game in the database. In WinPicks 2.0 this information arrives from the odds feed on its own, and every line carries the actual money odds beside it, per bookmaker. This section describes what is shown, and what became of the line files the original program had you maintain.

This section covers the following topics:

- 6.1 - Entering Lines
- 6.2 - Copying Lines from a Folder
- 6.3 - Activating a Lines File
- The Price Basis
- Odds Compare

Entering Lines

In WinPicks 2.0 you no longer enter lines. They arrive from the odds feed, for every sport, and they arrive with the actual prices attached. This section describes what is now shown and where.

Why it changed. The same reason scores are no longer keyed in: one database serves every customer, so one customer's edit would move everybody's numbers. It is also no longer necessary. The original program had you type a line off a newspaper or a screen once a week; WinPicks 2.0 reads a feed that carries the current number for every unplayed game, and for a played game it carries what the number actually was.

The line and the total. These appear wherever they did before - on the Predict screens, on the Platinum Page, in Team History and in the Analyze results. The line is quoted from the home team's point of view, so a negative number means the home team is favoured, exactly as it always was.

The price. This is new. A line of -3 does not tell you what the bet paid; -3 at -105 and -3 at -120 are different bets. WinPicks 2.0 shows the price beside the line on the Predict grids and on the Platinum Page, in the form `-110 / -110` - the favourite's price first, then the underdog's.

A dash in a Price column means no book posted that market on that game. It does not mean the price was even money. The program will not invent a number it does not have.

An asterisk beside a price means the figure did not come from your chosen price basis, but from the consensus of the other books quoting the game. A footnote under the grid says so. See The Price Basis, later in this section.

Seeing every book. Click the green + at the left of any Predict row, or "+ all books" on the Platinum Page, to open every bookmaker pricing that game, one row per book and one column per market. The same information in a fuller layout is on the Odds Compare screen, described later in this section.

The Line Shifter still works as described in section 8.17. It shifts a line for the purpose of asking "what would this formula have done at a different number", and it changes nothing in the database.

Copying Lines from a Folder

This feature has been retired. It existed so that a lines file emailed to you, or downloaded from a bulletin board, could be copied into the program's data folder and picked up. WinPicks 2.0 has no data folder on your machine and reads its lines from the odds feed automatically.

Nothing is lost by its absence: the lines it used to import are the lines the program now collects on its own, for every sport, several times a day.

Activating a Lines File

The original program let you keep several lines files and choose which one was active - one from an early-week number, one from a closing number, one typed from a particular sportsbook.

WinPicks 2.0 replaces this with the **Price Basis**, which is both simpler and considerably more precise: instead of choosing a file, you choose whose prices you want to be shown and graded at - the consensus of the market, the best available number, or one named bookmaker. It is set once, it applies to every screen, and it is saved to your account rather than the machine you are sitting at.

See The Price Basis, the next section.

The Price Basis

Every price in WinPicks 2.0 comes from somewhere, and this setting is where you say from where. The DATABASE menu carries it as one item whose label always names the basis currently in force - PRICES: BEST AVAILABLE, PRICES: CONSENSUS, or the name of your chosen book. Choose the item and the Prices dialog opens. Figure 6.15 shows it over the Platinum Page, the kind of screen its choice governs.

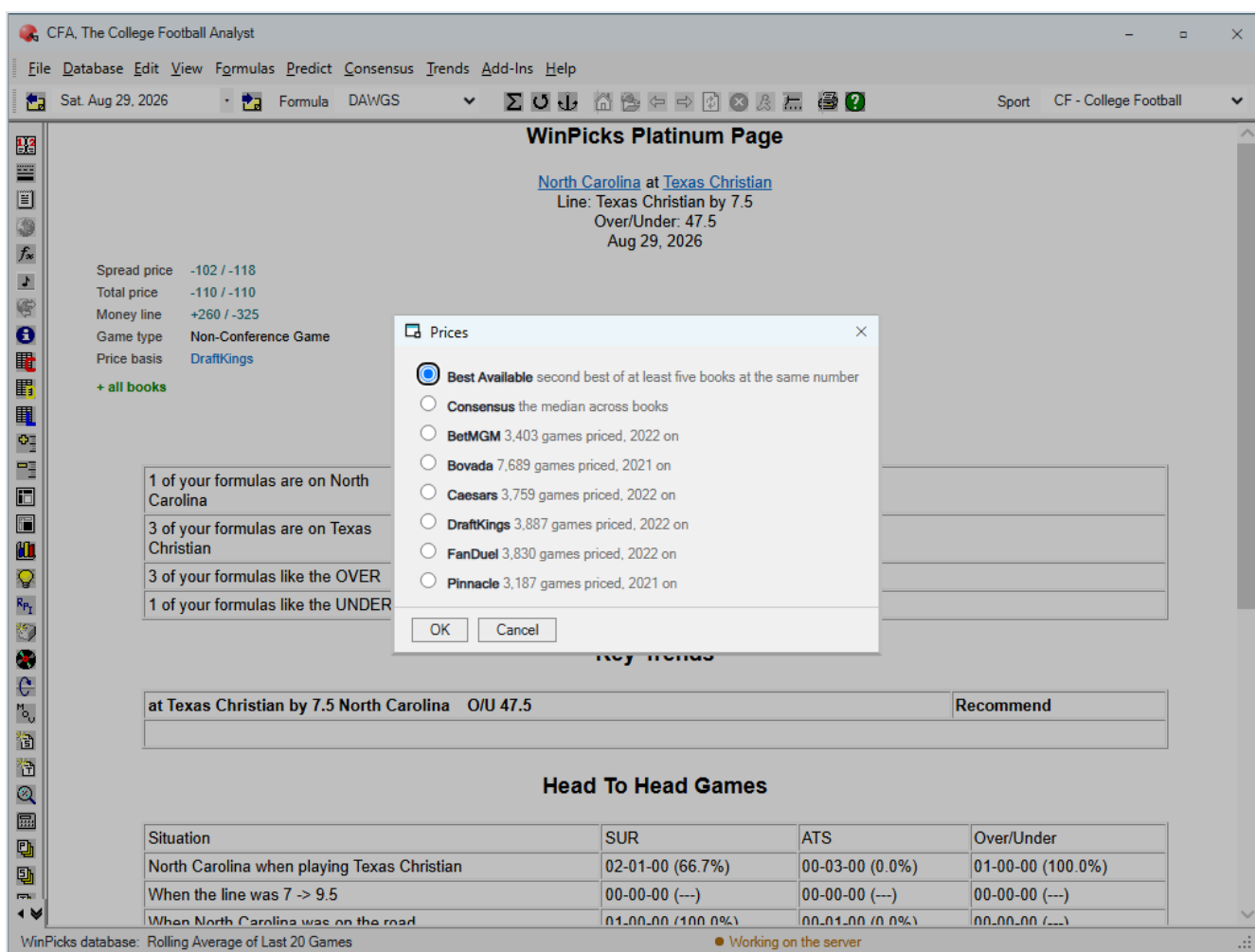


Figure 6.15 - The Prices Dialog, over the Platinum Page (CFA)

Reading the dialog. It is one radio list. The first two rows are the market-wide bases, each with its definition printed beside it in the dialog's own words:

- **Best Available** - "second best of at least five books at the same number". What line shopping is realistically worth: never the single best price, because the single best is often one stale or unbettable book.
- **Consensus** - "the median across books". The conservative reading, and the number nobody can call flattering.

Below them, **every bookmaker whose price archive covers the sport you are in**, each with the size of its archive: the number of games it has priced and the season its records begin. The list is per sport - in Figure 6.15, College Football offers BetMGM (3,403 games priced, 2022 on), Bovada (7,689 games, 2021 on), Caesars, DraftKings, FanDuel, and Pinnacle. Those counts are not decoration; they are the answer to "is this book's archive deep enough to grade against?" A book with two seasons of prices can grade two seasons of picks and no more - the count and the starting season tell you exactly what you would be standing on.

Pick a row and press **OK** - or **Cancel** to leave the basis as it was. The change is confirmed in words that say precisely what just happened; the message ends the same way whichever basis you chose, and it is worth

memorising: *the picks do not change; only what they paid does*. The basis never alters what the formula recommends - it alters the prices those recommendations are graded at.

Choosing a named book turns every Net Units figure into what an account at that book would actually have paid. Where that book did not price a game, the figure falls back to the consensus of the books that did, and every report says how many games that was - see Coverage, below. The Platinum Page's Price basis line (visible behind the dialog in Figure 6.15) always names the basis in force, so a page graded at DraftKings says so.

Best Available is the default, and the argument for it is worth stating. Grading at the consensus shows you a record worse than the one you would have got, because anyone betting seriously holds more than one account and takes the better number. On college football that gap is larger than the entire per-bet edge of a starter formula. Understating a record is no more honest than overstating it. But if in practice you bet one book without shopping, choose that book here, and let the records tell you the truth about the habit.

Underneath, prices are kept per bookmaker - one archive per book per sport - and the screens read them wherever an individual quote matters: the green + on the Predict grids, "+ all books" on the Platinum Page, and the whole Odds Compare screen. The Prices dialog is where one of those archives is promoted to the grading standard.

It applies everywhere, and it applies to Analyze. This is the important part. The basis does not just change what is displayed - it changes the price the engine grades at, so the record a formula posts is the record it would have posted at those prices. There is one resolver for the whole program, which is what stops the tuner and the Analyze screen ever disagreeing about the same bet.

It is yours. The basis is saved to your account, not to the machine, so it follows you between computers and is not affected by what anyone else chooses.

Coverage. No basis prices every game. Where the basis in force has no price for a game, the figure shown is the consensus of the books that did quote it, marked with an asterisk and explained in a footnote beneath the grid. It is never silently passed off as the basis's own price.

Odds Compare

Odds Compare answers one question: who is pricing this game, and at what? Choose Add-Ins > Odds Compare. The screen is shown in Figure 6.20.

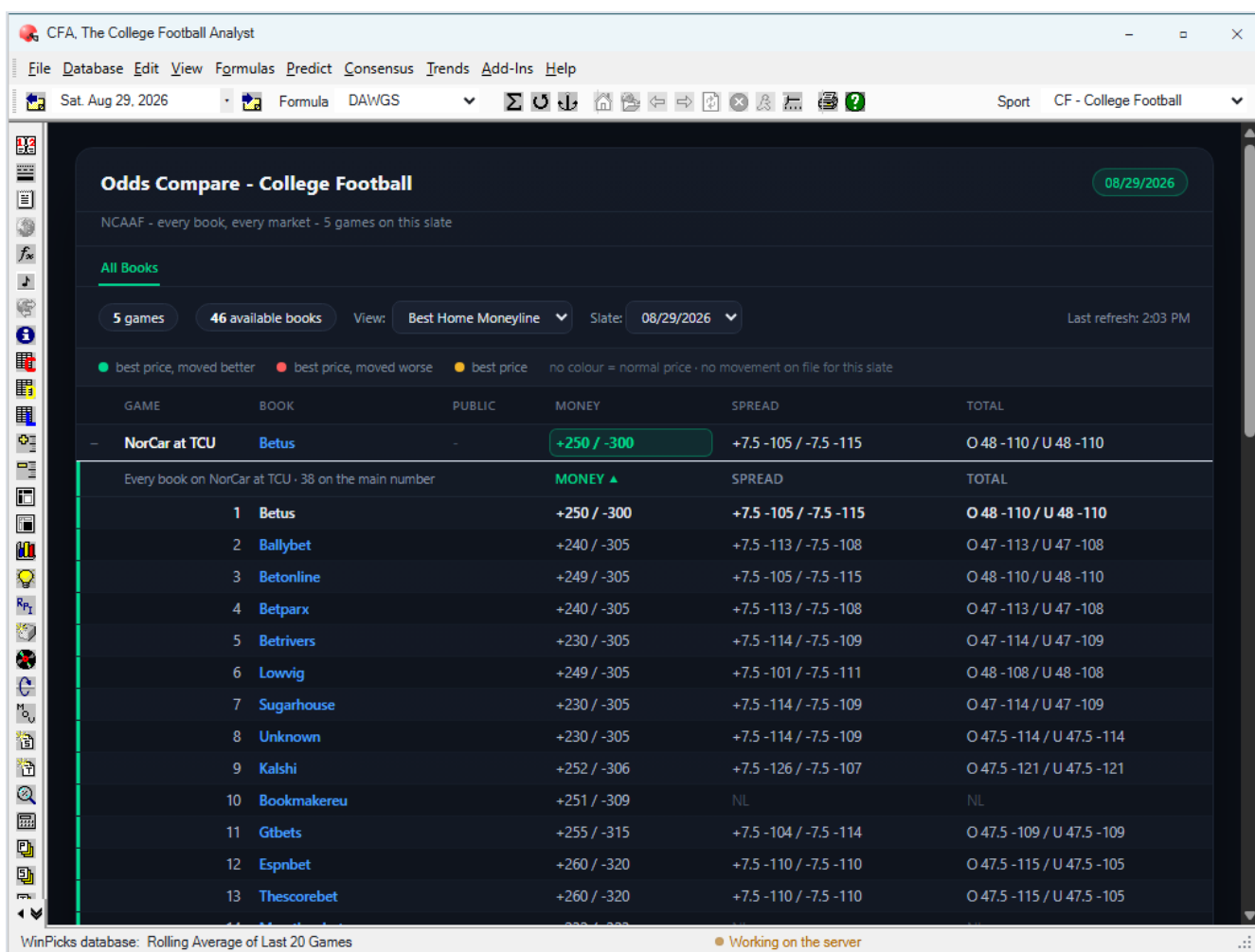


Figure 6.20 - The Odds Compare Screen (CFA)

Reading Figure 6.20 from the top:

- **The header** names the sport and carries the date on a pill at the right. Under it, one line states the scope: every book, every market, and how many games are on this slate.
- **The counters** state the size of what you are looking at - in the figure, 5 games and 46 available books.
- **The VIEW list** chooses what the board's summary rows lead with - Best Home Moneyline in the figure - and the SLATE list picks the date. LAST REFRESH, at the right, is when these numbers were last collected.
- **The legend** explains the colours, which describe *execution* - what you would actually get - not results: **best price, moved better** means the number improved since it opened; **best price, moved worse** means it is still the best on the board but was better earlier; **best price** alone means no movement is on file for this slate. No colour is an ordinary price.
- **The board** has a row per game, with columns GAME, BOOK, PUBLIC, MONEY, SPREAD and TOTAL: the best book for the chosen view, its money line (favourite / underdog), its spread with the price on each side, and the total the same way. The best number is boxed in the legend's colour.

Click a game and it opens into every bookmaker quoting it - the figure's game opens into 38 books on the main number. Each book is a row; MONEY, SPREAD and TOTAL are columns; click a column heading to re-rank by it. NL means that book has not posted the market. This is where a quarter-point of spread or fifteen cents of price - the difference between two books on the same game - stops being invisible.

What it is not. It is not a betting screen and nothing is placed from it. It is also the one screen that never shows a consensus row, because its whole purpose is to show each book's own quote; a consensus line among them would be inventing a bookmaker.

Played games. Odds Compare works on games that have finished as well as games that have not. On a played game it shows what the books actually offered, which is how you check whether a closing number moved against you.

Where the public stands. Opening a game also shows the public betting split for each market, as two bars: the share of *bets* on each side, and the share of the *money*. The two disagreeing is the signal worth reading - 59% of the tickets on one side and 40% of the money means a lot of small bets one way and the size going the other - and the screen says so in words whenever the gap reaches ten points. Below that the two measures routinely differ by a point or two on sample size alone, and the screen says that too. Where the split was not recorded for a market, the panel says why instead of showing nothing.

Reading one game properly. Take the expanded game in Figure 6.20 and read it the way the screen is meant to be read. The money line runs from +230/-305 at the tightest book to +250/-300 at the best - on a hundred-unit underdog bet, that spread of quotes is twenty units of payout for the identical opinion. The spread is 7.5 everywhere, but its *prices* run from -101 to -126 a side: the number agrees, the cost of betting it does not. And the totals disagree about the number itself - 47, 47.5 and 48 across the board. That half point is not decoration: a game landing exactly on 47 or 48 pushes at one book and loses at another. Every edge this program can find is of the same order of magnitude as what this one panel shows you lying on the table.

The three signals together. Each column answers a different question, and they compose. The *best price* answers "where do I get the most for this opinion". The *movement colour* answers "am I early or late": a green best price improved since it opened - the market moved toward you, and you are getting a better number than the openers did; a red best price is still the best available, but the market has been eating it - you are late, and the next move is likelier against you. The *public split* answers "who is on the other side": when the money disagrees with the tickets, the side with fewer, bigger bets is the side the books respect. None of these is a pick. Together they tell you whether the number in front of you is likely to be the best number you will see - which is a thing your formula cannot know, because it reads results, not the room.

Closing-line discipline. Section 8's Tuning Against Closing Line Value explains why beating the close is the most reliable short-sample sign of a real edge. Odds Compare is where that discipline is practised by hand: the screen works on played games too, so after the close you can open the game you bet and see what the number did after you took it. A better number is worth real money: in our own testing each point of line value converts to roughly three to four points of win rate. What beating the close does *not* do is grade your handicapping. We tested that too, and a formula that beats the close is not thereby a formula that makes money out of sample. Use this screen to check the number you took, not to score your judgement. A bettor who checks this screen after every bet learns more in a season than a bettor who only checks the scores.

Shopping is not grading. This screen shows every book so you can take the best number; the Price Basis (section 6) decides which prices your *records* are graded at. Keep the two jobs separate in your head: shop here, grade there. Best Available grading assumes you shop - roughly what this screen makes possible - while Consensus grading assumes you took the middle of the market. If in truth you bet one book without shopping, the Prices dialog will grade at that book's own archive; choose honestly, and let the records tell you the truth about the habit.

Viewing and Printing Data

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7. Viewing and Printing Data

All members of the WinPicks family let you view, print, or graph data in a variety of formats. You can also view or print the current standings. You'll find that WinPicks provides you with quick access to just about any kind of statistical information.

Whenever you view, print, or graph data, you'll be using the data that is currently part of the database. For example, a season to date database provides all of the data from the current season. To change the database method, please see Section 4.

This section covers the following topics:

- 7.1 - Viewing Team Information
- 7.2 - Viewing the Standings
- 7.3 - Viewing Statistics with Pro Football Analyst
- 7.5 - Viewing College Football or Pro Basketball Statistics
- 7.6 - Power Ratings
- 7.7 - Schedule Difficulty
- 7.8 - Records
- 7.9 - Inter-Conference and/or Inter-Division Records
- 7.10 - Key Factors
- 7.11 - Viewing Non Division-1 Teams (CFA and CBA only)
- 7.12 - Viewing Stadiums and Arena Information
- The Weather Board and the Weather Lab (Pro Football Analyst)

Viewing Team Information

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.1. Viewing Team Information

To get started, select TEAM INFO from the VIEW menu and select a team from the list. The TEAM INFO screen appears as shown in Figure 7.10.

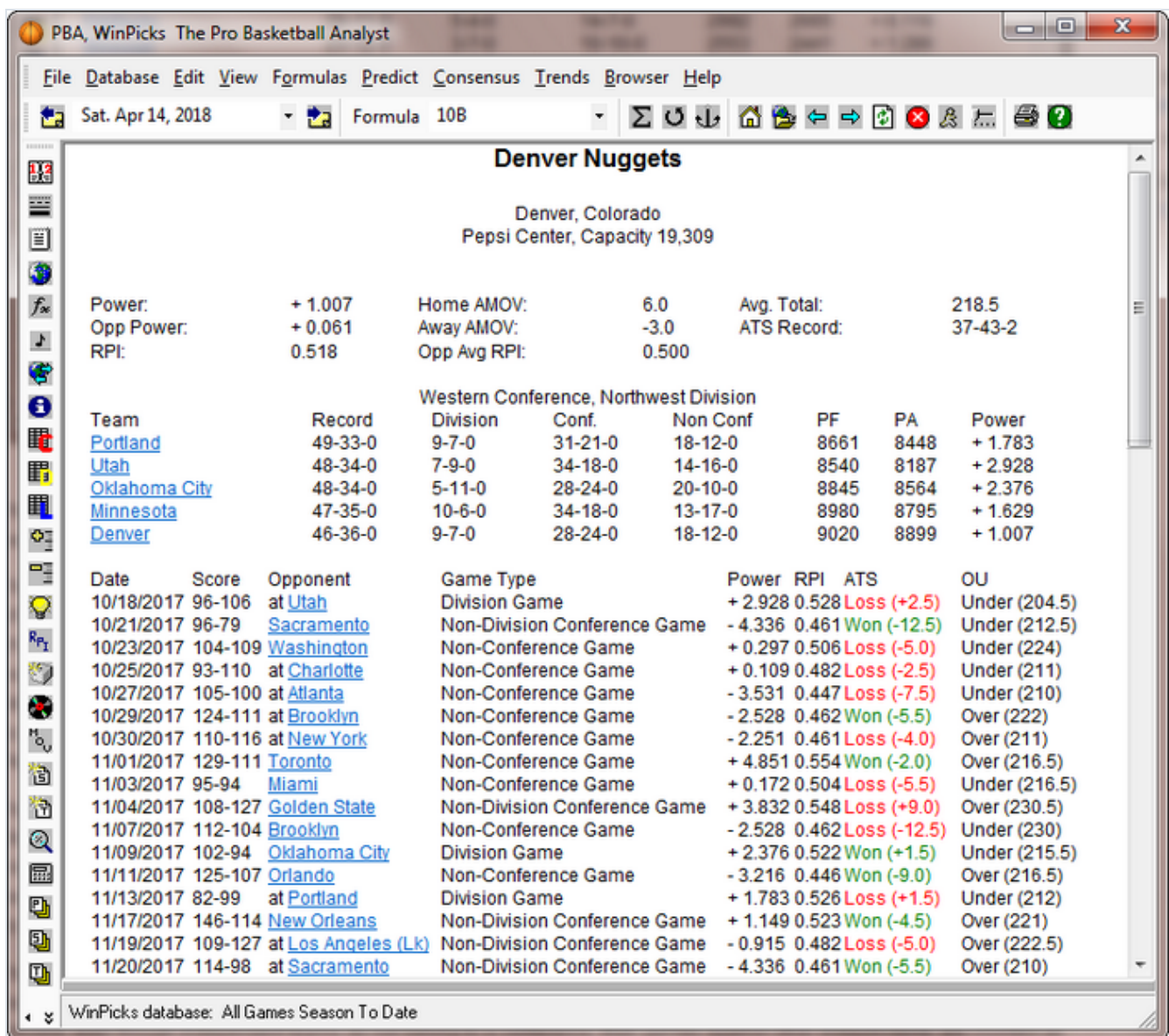


Figure 7.10 - The Team Info Screen (PBA)

The top of the team info screen shows the team name, the city and state where they play their home games, and the name and seating capacity of their stadium or arena.

The next part of the team info screen provides a two-line summary of some valuable handicapping data. This summary consists of three columns of data each containing two lines of information. The left column shows the selected team's power rating (Power) and the average power rating of their opponents (Opp Power), as well as the team's Rating Percentage Index (RPI). The middle column shows the selected team's average margin of victory in their home games (Home AMOV) and away games (Away AMOV) and the average RPI of the team's opponents (Opp Avg RPI). The right column shows the average number of points scored by both teams (Avg Total) in games involving the selected team, and the selected team's record against the point spread (ATS Record).

The two-line summary is followed by the standings for the team's division. The standings show each team's overall record (Record), their record within their division (Division), and their record within their conference

(*Conf*) and outside their conference (*Non Conf*). It also shows the total number of points scored by each team (*Pts Scored*), the number of points allowed by each team (*Pts Allowed*), and the power rating of each team (*Power*). You can display the view team report for other teams in the division by simply clicking on their name.

The information in the standings is straightforward for NFL and NBA teams, but a few things need to be noted about college football. First, division records are only listed for conferences that are divided into divisions (SEC, MAC, Big 12, and so on). Second, even though independent teams do not belong to a conference, their games against other independents are counted as conference games. Therefore, the standings list "conference" records for independents. And finally, the college standings allow for ties, even though ties are no longer possible due to overtime rules which began in 1996. This is because ties exist in seasons prior to 1996.

The bottom of the team info screen lists the games currently included in the database, and the upcoming games on the schedule. The game list includes the game date, the score, the opponent's name, the game type, the opponent's power rating, the against the spread (ATS) game result (wins are printed in green, losses in red), and whether the point total went over or under. Most of this information is self explanatory, but the game type needs some explanation. Here is a brief description:

- *Division Game* - A game against a team from your own division and conference.
- *Non-Division Conference Game* - A game against a team from your conference that is not in your division.
- *Non-Conference Game* - A game against a team that is not in your conference or your division.
- *Playoff Game* - This is used to refer to all NBA playoff games (from the first round to the finals). In the NFL, it refers to all playoff games except the Super Bowl (designated as *Super Bowl*, of course). It is not used for college football.

College football bowl games are often designated by their common names. For example, *Orange* refers to the Orange Bowl. WinPicks does not always keep track of the corporate sponsorships. Conference championships also have their own designation. For example, *MAC Title* refers to the Mid American Conference championship game.

College basketball postseason tournament games (NCAA or NIT) are designated by the tournament name.

Pro Football Analyst (PFA) allows you to view the boxscore of any game by simply clicking the game score. This allows you to view the game stats for any game in the database.

The information on the team info screen is based on the database method currently in use. The games listed at the bottom of the screen are the games currently included in the database.

Viewing the Standings

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.2. Viewing the Standings

To view the standings, select STANDINGS from the VIEW menu. A screen appears showing the records of every team in the database. Select BY DIVISION to see the standings listed with each team grouped in

divisions. Select BY CONFERENCE to see all of the teams in a conference listed as one group (Figure 7.20). Select BY LEAGUE to see every team listed in one group. Click a team's name to go directly to their TEAM INFO screen.

League Standings

All Games Season To Date

America East Conference

Team	WLT	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Divi	ATS	Power
Stony Brook	24-6-0	2264	1956	13-1-0	11-5-0	14-2-0	0-0-0	0-5-1	+ 6.191
Albany NY	23-8-0	2311	2037	13-1-0	10-7-0	13-3-0	0-0-0	2-1-0	+ 4.265
Vermont	21-13-0	2550	2397	12-3-0	9-10-0	11-5-0	0-0-0	1-4-1	+ 3.318
New Hampshire	17-12-0	2021	2050	9-3-0	8-9-0	11-5-0	0-0-0	1-1-0	- 0.744
Massachusetts Lowell	10-18-0	2117	2325	5-6-0	5-12-0	7-9-0	0-0-0	0-1-0	- 4.221
Hartford	9-23-0	2265	2545	3-12-0	6-11-0	4-12-0	0-0-0	2-0-0	- 4.354
Binghamton	8-22-0	1827	2059	5-9-0	3-13-0	5-11-0	0-0-0	1-1-0	- 4.065
Maine	8-22-0	2279	2606	5-8-0	3-14-0	4-12-0	0-0-0	1-0-0	- 5.821
UMBC	7-24-0	2250	2503	4-9-0	3-15-0	3-13-0	0-0-0	3-0-0	- 4.299

American Athletic Conference

Team	WLT	PF	PA	Home	Away	Conf	Divi	ATS	Power
Southern Methodist	25-5-0	2319	1903	17-1-0	8-4-0	13-5-0	0-0-0	12-14-0	+ 1.642
Houston	22-9-0	2414	2135	15-5-0	7-4-0	12-6-0	0-0-0	15-10-1	- 1.497
Connecticut	24-10-0	2496	2145	16-4-0	8-6-0	11-7-0	0-0-0	16-13-1	+ 0.646
Cincinnati	22-10-0	2342	2012	14-4-0	8-6-0	12-6-0	0-0-0	12-16-0	+ 0.273
Temple	21-11-0	2197	2158	12-5-0	9-6-0	14-4-0	0-0-0	17-13-0	- 3.603
Tulsa	20-11-0	2294	2160	13-4-0	7-7-0	12-6-0	0-0-0	14-13-3	- 2.071
Memphis	19-15-0	2603	2390	16-6-0	3-9-0	8-10-0	0-0-0	13-17-1	- 2.042
Central Florida	12-18-0	2062	2147	8-9-0	4-9-0	6-12-0	0-0-0	17-11-0	- 7.066
East Carolina	12-20-0	2186	2301	8-10-0	4-10-0	4-14-0	0-0-0	14-11-2	- 7.373
Tulane	12-22-0	2240	2398	7-11-0	5-11-0	3-15-0	0-0-0	10-16-2	- 7.842
South Florida	8-25-0	2085	2352	4-15-0	4-10-0	4-14-0	0-0-0	15-13-0	- 8.589

Atlantic 10 Conference

WinPicks database: All Games Season To Date

Figure 7.20 - The Conference Standings Screen (CBA)

Keep in mind that the standings are always printed for the database that is currently in use. For example, if a 3-game rolling average is used, the standings will only show the three most recent games for each team. To view the standings the way they are officially published, make sure the database is set to season to date.

Viewing Statistics with Pro Football Analyst

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.3. Viewing Statistics with Pro Football Analyst

All members of the WinPicks family allow you to view statistics by selecting STATISTICS from the VIEW menu. PFA includes all of the actual game statistics in its database, and allows you to view these statistics

by team or by category. The databases of the other four packages only include the game scores and lines. The following sections explain the three ways to view statistics using PFA:

- By selecting a statistical category
- By selecting a team
- By displaying statistic charts

Viewing Stats by Category

You can view stats by category by selecting STATISTICS from the VIEW menu and then selecting BY CATEGORY. You'll see the menu shown in Figure 7.30.

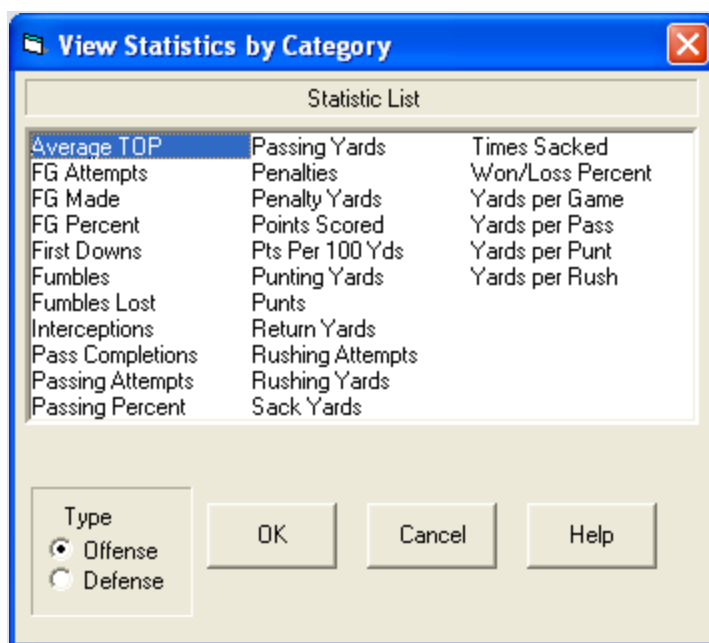


Figure 7.30 - The View Statistics by Category Menu (PFA only)

The menu lists the 32 statistical categories that you can view. Before selecting a category, use the Type box in the bottom left corner of the menu to choose between offensive and defensive stats. Keep in mind that a few stats ("Winning Percentage", for example) are identical for both offense and defense. After you select a category, all teams are listed in the order of their league ranking as shown in Figure 7.31. The name of the currently selected team is shown in capital letters. The two columns to the right of the team's name show the stat totals and the per game average.

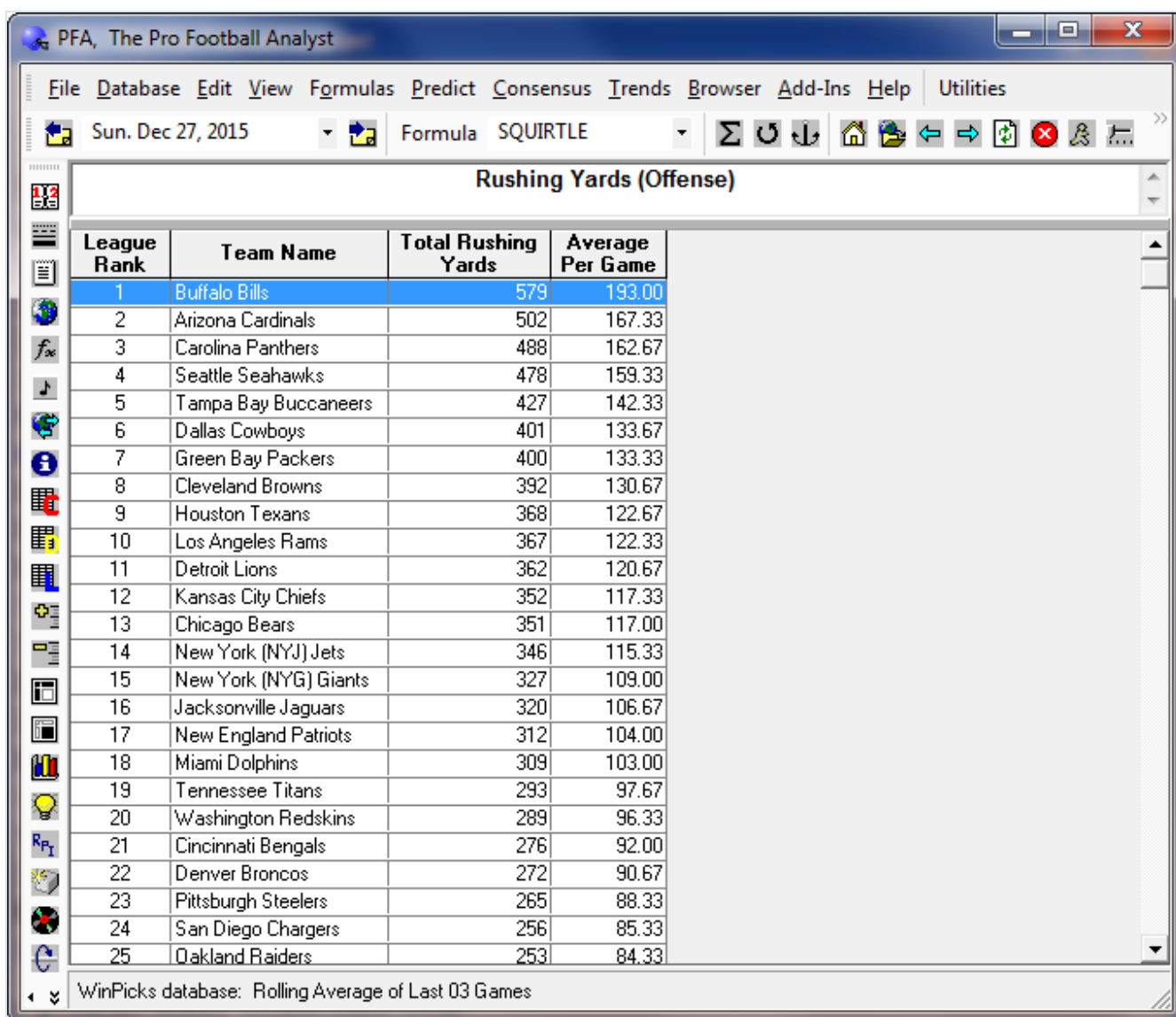


Figure 7.31 - Viewing a Statistic Report (PFA Only)

All stat reports are sortable by column. Clicking any column heading will sort the teams according to the information in that column. For example, click on TEAM NAME to sort the teams in alphabetical order (A to Z). Click it again to sort the teams in reverse order (Z to A).

Viewing Stats by Team

You can view stats by category by selecting STATISTICS from the VIEW menu and then selecting BY TEAM. A menu containing all of the NFL teams appears. When you select the team you want from this menu, you'll see a screen similar to the one shown in Figure 7.32.

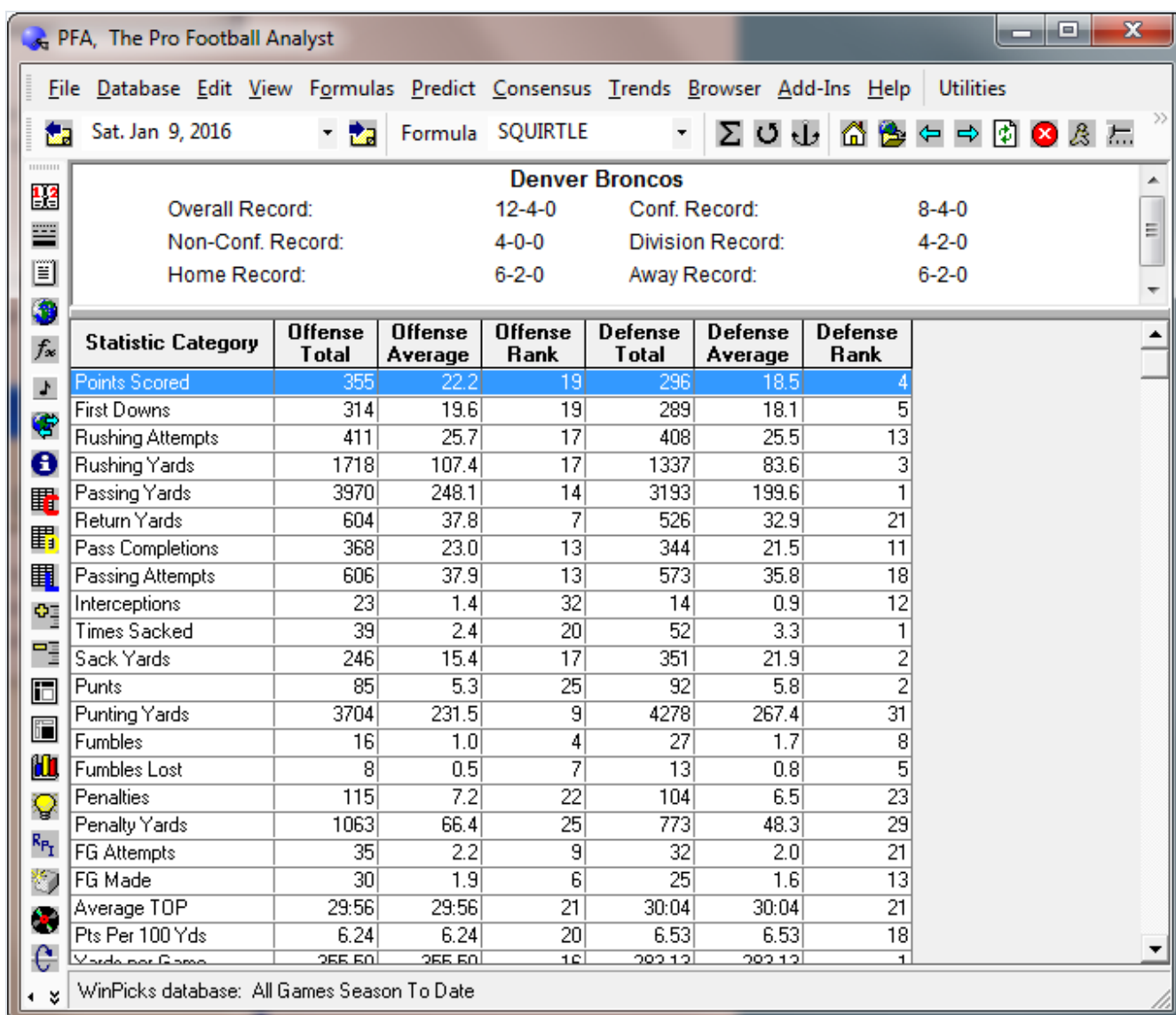


Figure 7.32 - Viewing a Team Report (PFA only)

The top part of this screen shows the team's overall won/loss record, their conference and non-conference record, and their record within the division. The rest of the screen shows the team's stats and league ranking in each offensive and defensive category. For example, a rank of 1 in the Points Scored category means that the team is the highest scoring team in the league. Keep in mind that the rankings are based on the database method currently in use. If a 3-game rolling average is in use, this means that the rankings are based on each team's performance in their 3 most recent games.

Viewing the Leaders Report

To view the top two and bottom two teams in every statistical category for both offense and defense, select LEADERS from the VIEW menu. You'll see a screen similar to the one shown in Figure 7.33. The defensive categories are listed below the offensive categories, so you will have to scroll down to view them. Keep in mind that the leaders reports is based on the database method currently in use. If a 3-game rolling average is in use, this means that the rankings are based on each team's performance in their 3 most recent games.

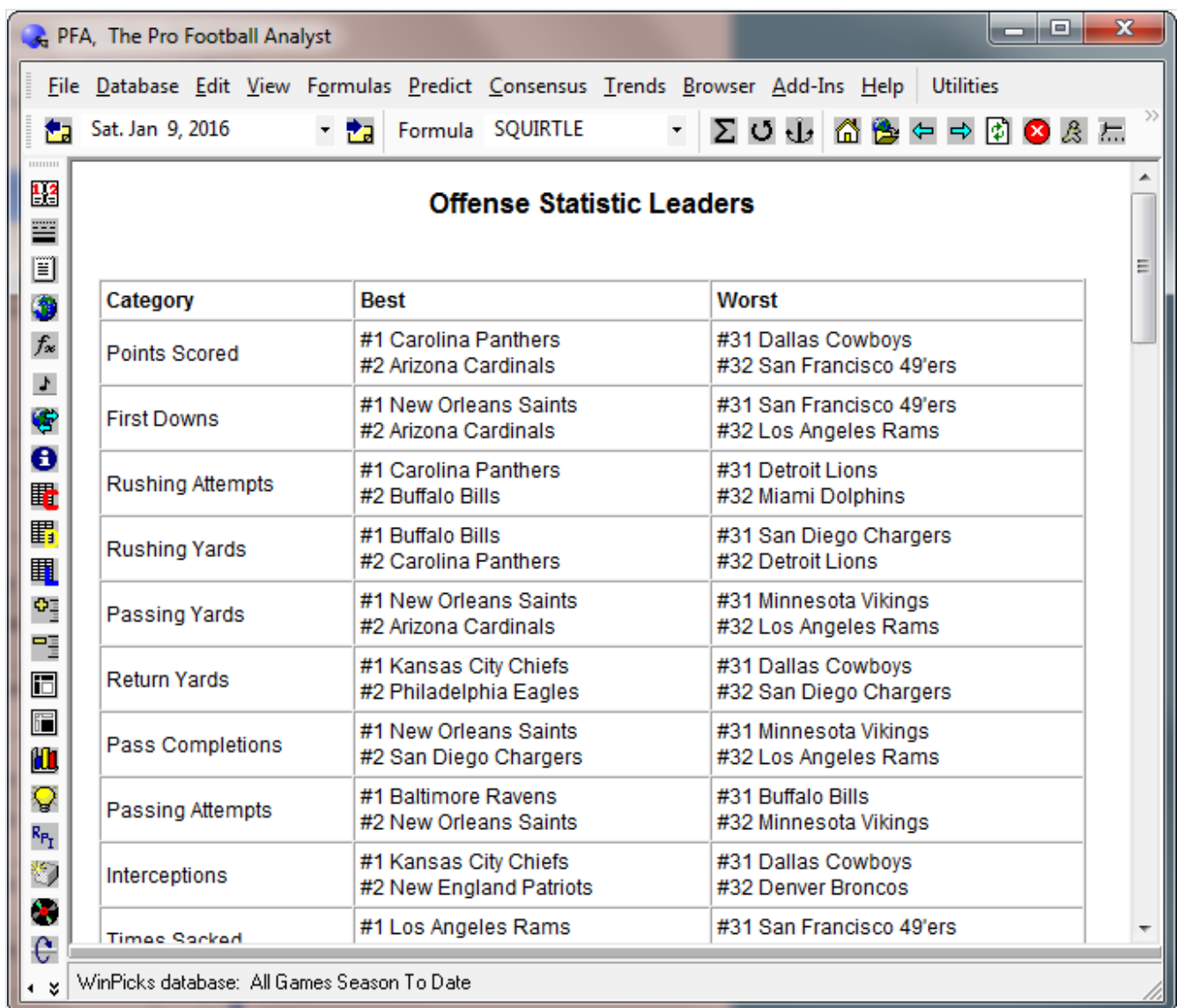


Figure 7.33 - The Leaders Report (PFA only)

Viewing the Yardage Rankings

This handy display allows you to quickly rank all of the teams based on their yardage gained/allowed statistics. To view the yardage rankings, select STATISTICS from the VIEW menu and then select YARDAGE RANKINGS. A display appears providing a quick summary of the league's best offensive and defensive teams. The handy three-column display ranks the teams in the order of yards gained, yards allowed, and yardage differential (yards gained minus yards allowed).

Viewing Stat Charts

One of the most powerful features of PFA is its ability to display statistic charts. There are three different ways you can use the CHARTS feature:

- When a team report is being displayed, select a statistic from the report. Double click with your mouse, or press ENTER after highlighting the statistic you want.

- When a statistics report is being displayed, select a team from the report. Double click with your mouse, or press ENTER after highlighting the team you want.
- Select STATISTICS from the VIEW menu and then select STAT CHARTS.

After you select STAT CHARTS, the CHARTS window appears as shown in Figure 7.33. The CHARTS window has two drop-down lists that let you change teams, or change the statistical category. This lets you chart the performance of any team, in any statistical category. A third drop-down list (on the right side of the window), lets you select the type of chart to display. There are five different types of charts:

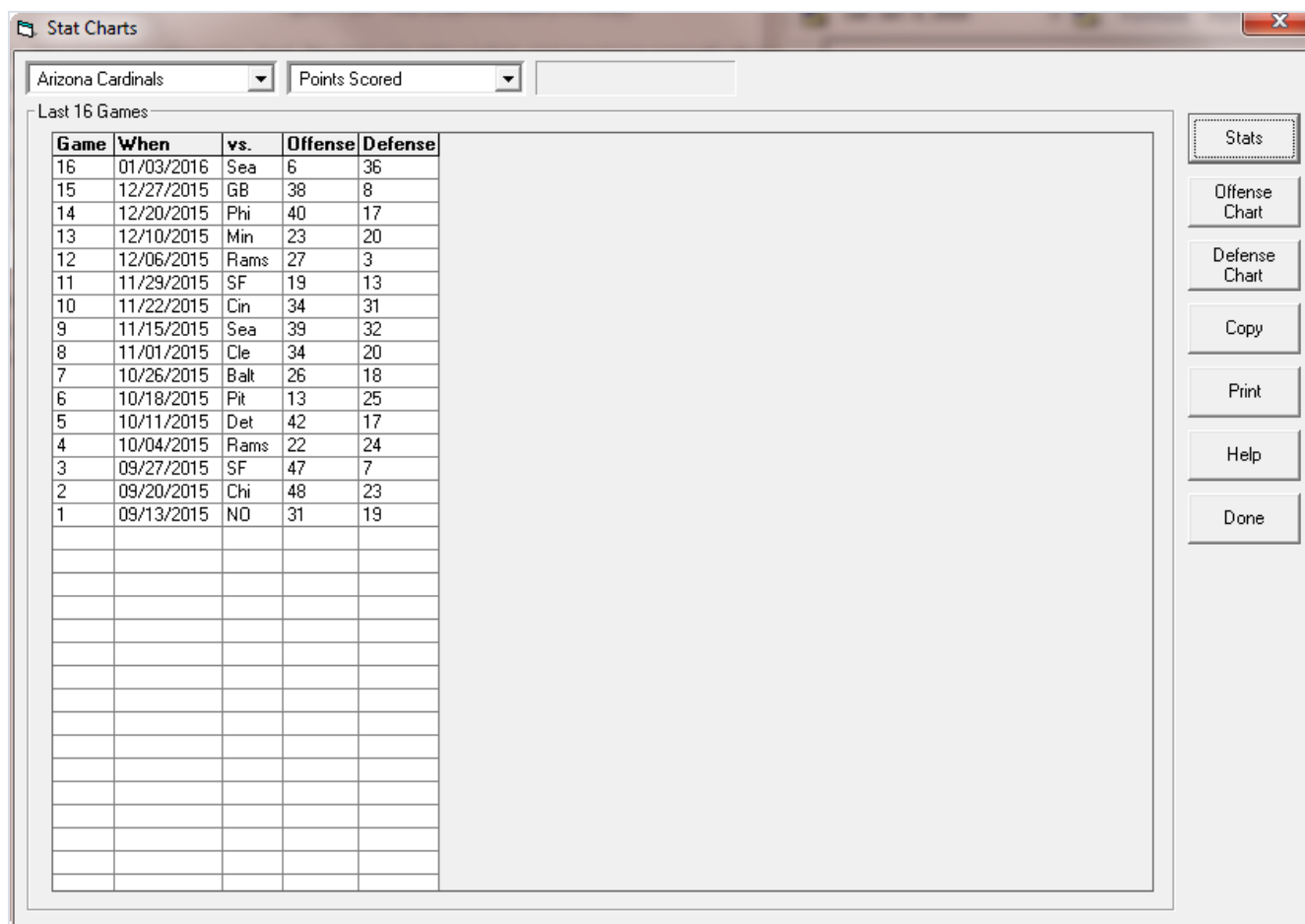


Figure 7.34 - The Chart Window (PFA only)

2D Bar Chart - This is a conventional bar chart. The bars are color-coded, and one bar is normally displayed for each game in the database. However, if a team did not register any statistics in the selected category for the game, no bar is present. In other words, if you produce an interception chart and there were no interceptions, there will not be a bar.

3D Bar Chart - This is also a conventional bar chart, but it is more elaborate than the 2D version. The bars are displayed in three dimensions, so you can see the top and side of the bar, in addition to its face. As with the 2D version, one bar is displayed for each game in the database.

Line Chart - This is a standard Cartesian graph, where each game represents one data point on the x-axis, and the statistics are plotted on the y-axis. A solid line is used to connect the data points. A dashed line

shows the slope of the data after linear regression is performed. By looking at the slope of the dashed line (whether it goes up or down) you can tell if a team's performance is getting better or worse in the selected category. Figure 7.34 shows a sample line chart.

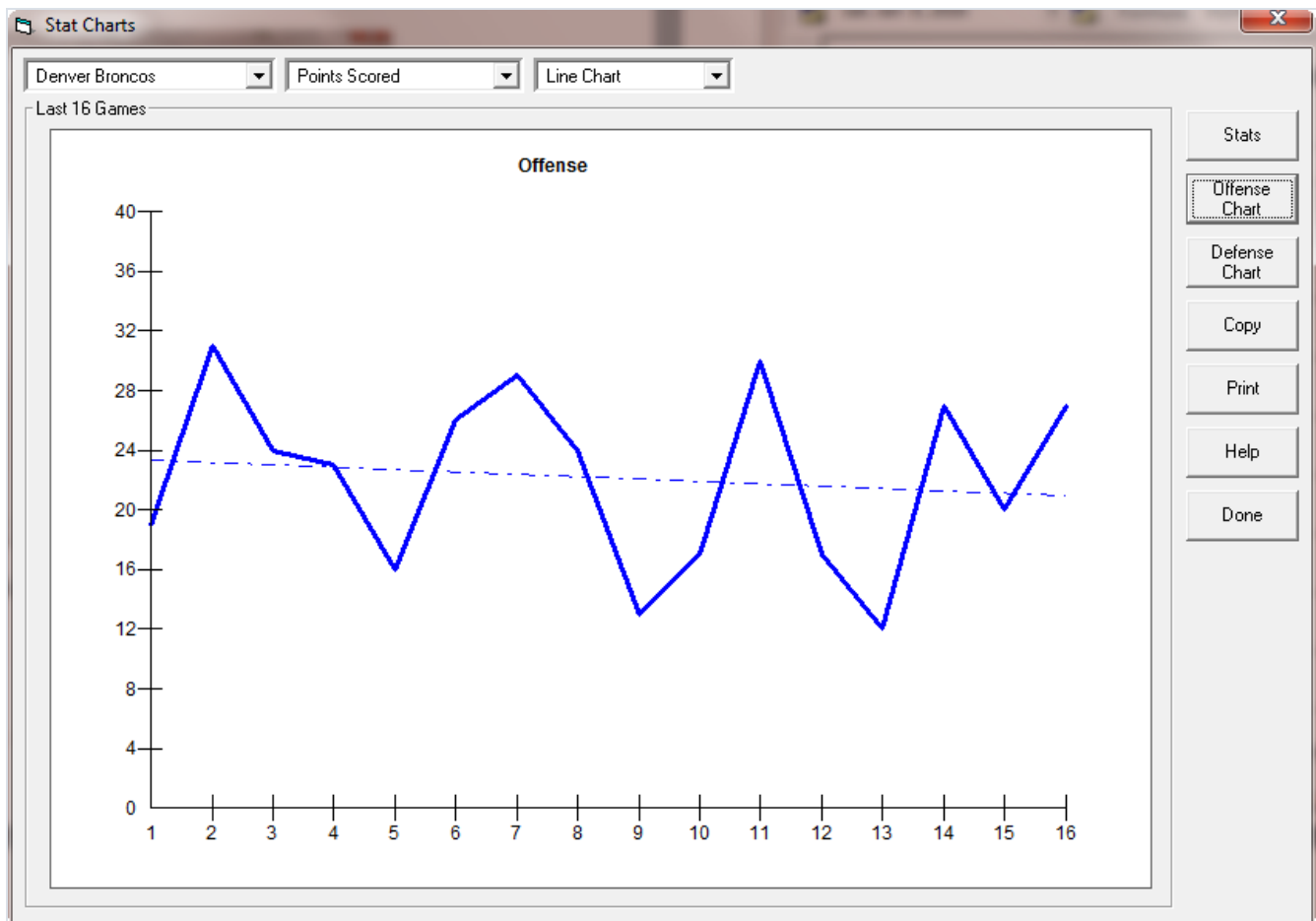


Figure 7.35 - A Sample Line Chart (PFA only)

Area Chart - This is similar to a line chart, except that the area under the line is filled in using a solid color. The data slope is not shown.

3D Pie Chart - This is a traditional pie chart, where each game represents one slice of the pie. A pie chart is useful for a small number of games (a 3-game roll, for example), but can be confusing if the number of games is too large.

You can display either offensive or defensive statistics, or display the data in a tabular format (instead of a chart). You may also copy a chart to the clipboard, or print the chart.

- Click the OFFENSE CHART button to view offensive statistics
- Click the DEFENSE CHART button to view defensive statistics
- Click the STATS button to display tabular data
- Click the COPY button to copy information to the clipboard
- Click the PRINT button to print

- Click the DONE button to exit CHARTS

Viewing CFA, CBA, PBA or PHA Statistics

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.5. Viewing CFA, CBA, PBA or PHA Statistics

CFA, CBA, PBA and PHA track only two game statistics, POINTS SCORED and POINTS ALLOWED. POINTS SCORED ranks each team according to the average number of points they have scored per game. POINTS ALLOWED ranks each team according to the number of points allowed per game.

POINTS SCORED and POINTS ALLOWED also show the average point totals for home and road games, as well as each team's record. To view this data, select STATISTICS from the VIEW MENU and then select either POINTS SCORED or POINTS ALLOWED.

Power Ratings

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.6. Power Ratings

WinPicks excels at generating power ratings. In fact, we use WinPicks to generate the MicroBrothers power ratings, which have been distributed through a number of electronic and print publications. To generate power ratings, select POWER RATINGS from the VIEW menu. You then have three options to choose from, as described in the following sections.

Current Formula

This option ranks all teams using the prediction formula and database that is currently in use. If you change formulas or use a different database, the power ratings will change.

When you select this option, you'll see a list of every team ranked according to their power rating. The average team has a power rating of 0. Above average teams have positive power ratings, below average teams have negative power ratings.

By subtracting one team's power rating from another, you can obtain the predicted point differential between the two teams. For example, if Team A has a power rating of 10, and Team B has a power rating of 6, your formula would predict Team A to defeat Team B by 4 points. The power ratings for both NFL and college football assume that the game is being played at a neutral site, and a home field advantage needs to be added or subtracted to obtain the final prediction. NBA teams receive two power ratings, one for their home performance, and one for their road performance. To project the point spread for a game, use the "Home Power" number for the home team, and the "Away Power" number for the road team.

Rating Percentage Index (RPI)

The Rating Percentage Index (RPI) is widely used to produce power ratings. It is best known for its use in college sports, where it plays a key role in the team selection for the NCAA basketball tournament, and for the NCAA football Bowl Alliance.

The RPI does not produce a point differential, but is still a useful handicapping tool. It essentially measures a team's strength of schedule and how a team does against that schedule. Unlike most power rating systems, the RPI does not consider margin of victory or how well a team has played. It only considers whether a team won or lost. In fact, the RPI is based entirely on winning percentage. It is based 25% on a

team's winning percentage, 50% on the winning percentage of their opponents, and 25% on the winning percentage of their opponent's opponents.*

For example:

- Team A is 4-1 (win percentage = .800)
- Team A's opponents are 12-8 (win percentage = .600)
- Team A's opponent's opponents are 64-16 (win percentage = .800)
- $RPI = (0.25 \cdot .800) + (0.5 \cdot .600) + (0.25 \cdot .800)$
- $RPI = .200 + .300 + .200 = .700$

The strength of schedule rating that WinPicks displays is based on the last two components of the RPI formula:

$SOS = (2/3) \text{ Opponent's Winning Percentage} + (1/3) \text{ Opponent's Opponents Winning Percentage}$

- *When used for college sports, the RPI only counts games involving Division-1 opponents.*

WinPicks weights away and home records differently when calculating winning percentages for the RPI. A road win is weighted as 1.4 when calculating the winning percentages, and a road loss is weighted as 0.6. Likewise, a home win is weighted as 0.6, and a home loss is weighted as 1.4. These adjustments apply to all percentages; e.g. a team's winning percentage, and their opponent's winning percentages.

The home/away rating weighting factors were added to WinPicks based on changes made to the RPI in December 2004 for college basketball. Previously all games were given the same weight, but historically, since home teams have won approximately two thirds of all games in college basketball, the RPI calculations were modified by the NCAAAB committee. The WinPicks RPI rating has been adjusted to remain consistent with this change.

Several published versions of the RPI use slightly different ways to calculate the opponent's winning percentage. Therefore, the WinPicks RPI may not exactly agree with what you see in other places, but it should be very close. The exact RPI calculations in use by the NCAAAB are difficult to verify. All published sources of the RPI rating we have found do not disclose the opponent winning percentages and the opponent's opponent winning percentages which were used to calculate the RPI rating, unlike WinPicks.

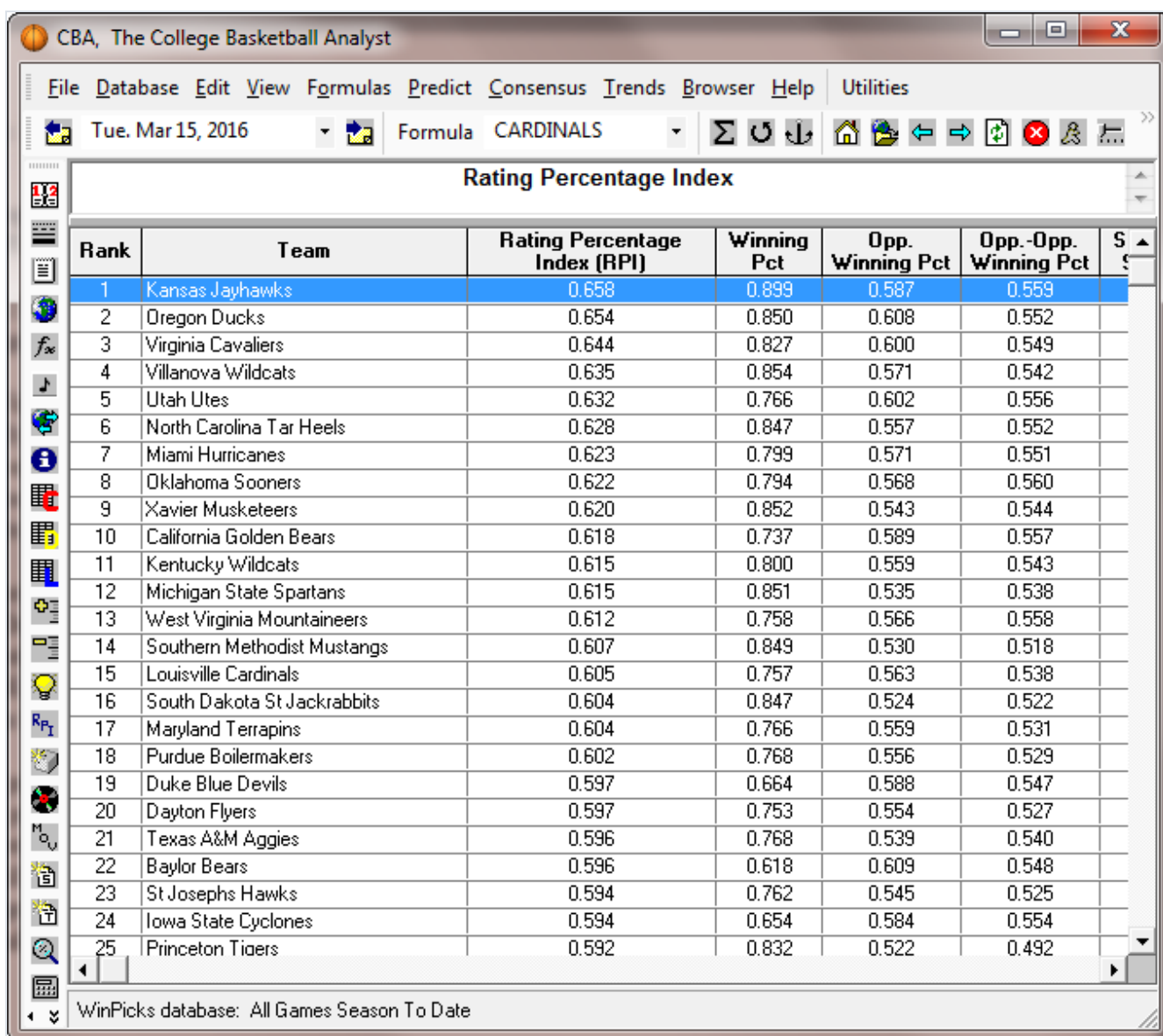


Figure 7.60 - Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) for CBA

Charts

This feature produces a grid containing each team's power rating during each week of the season. By looking at these numbers, you can tell if a team has been improving or getting worse as the season goes on.

Since it can be difficult to analyze a row of numbers, WinPicks can display a graph of the weekly power ratings. To display this graph, select CHARTS and then select a team from the alphabetical list.

A sample power ratings graph is shown in Figure 7.61. The graph is a standard Cartesian graph, with one data point for each game. The games are plotted on the x-axis, and the power ratings are plotted on the y-axis. A solid line connects the data points. A dashed line shows the slope of the data after linear regression is performed. By looking at the slope of the dashed line (whether it goes up or down) you can tell if a team is getting better or worse as the season goes on.

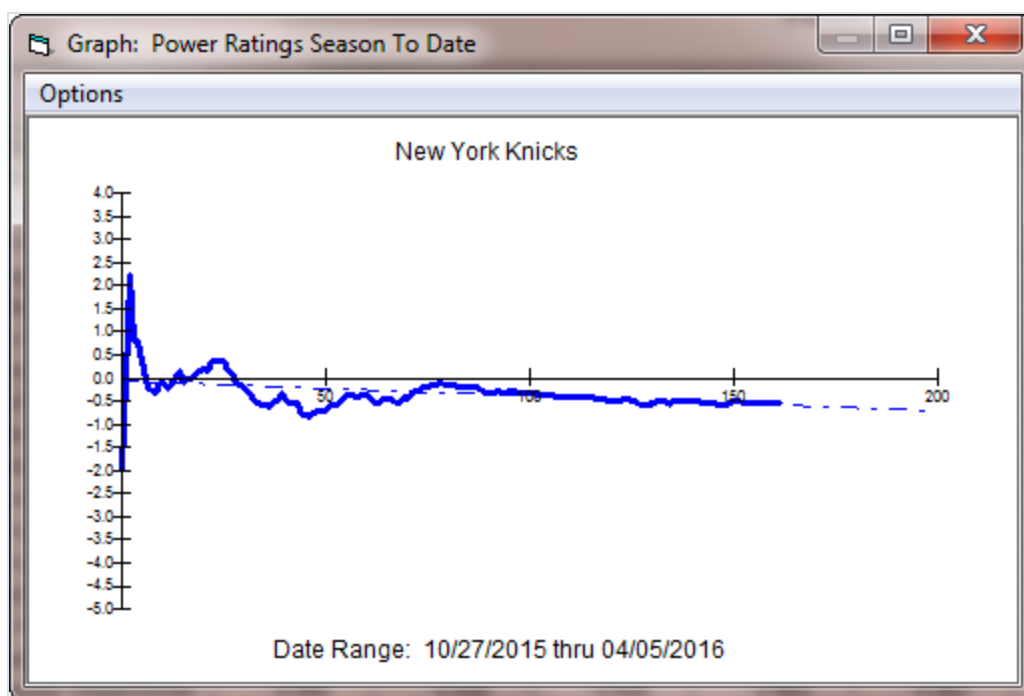


Figure 7.61 - A Sample Power Ratings Graph (PBA)

The power ratings graph has its own window with its own menu (called the OPTION menu). When you select this menu, you can print the graph, copy it to the clipboard, or exit.

Schedule Difficulty

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.7. Schedule Difficulty

All members of the WinPicks family can rank all teams according to their schedule difficulty. The team with the most difficult schedule is ranked first, and the team with the easiest schedule is ranked last. To use this option, select SCHEDULE DIFFICULTY from the VIEW menu.

Schedule difficulty is computed by taking the average power ranking of each team's opponents. When you change formulas or change the database method, the schedule difficulty rankings will also change.

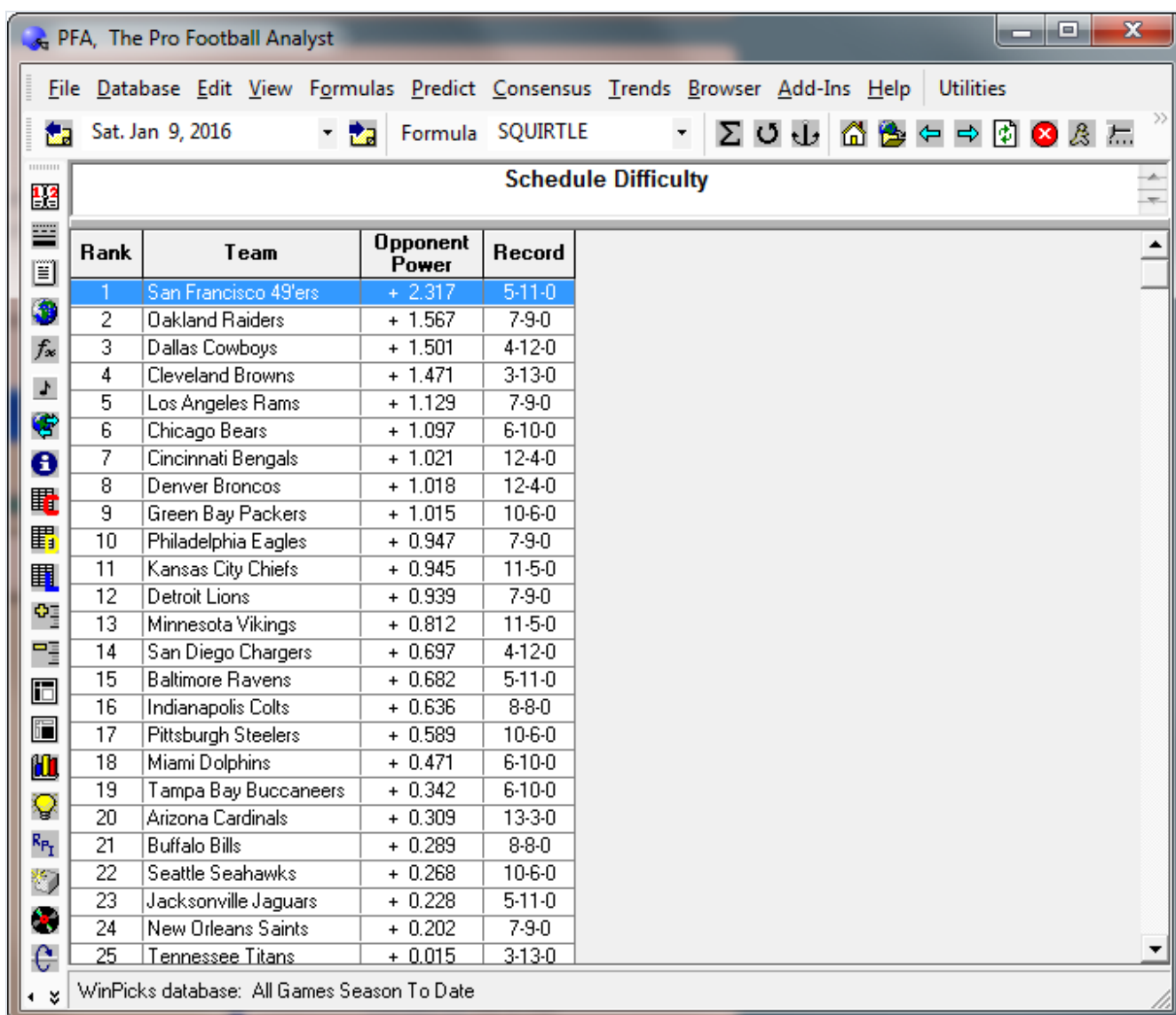


Figure 7.70 - Schedule Difficulty Rankings (PFA)

Records

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.8. Records

All members of the WinPicks family can rank teams according to their won-loss record. The records are based on the database method currently in use. If you use SEASON TO DATE as your database, the rankings will show what the league standings would look like if all of the teams were in the same division.

To use this option, select RECORDS from the VIEW menu. In addition to showing each team's straight-up record, this display also shows the home, away, and against the spread (ATS) record.

Inter-Conference and/or Inter-Division Records

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.9. Inter-Conference and/or Inter-Division Records

This option displays the won-loss record of a conference (college and pro football, college basketball) or division (pro basketball) when its teams play against teams from other conferences or divisions. To use this

option select INTER CONFERENCE RECORDS or INTER DIVISION RECORDS from the VIEW menu.

This option is especially valuable for *CFA* and *CBA* users since it reveals the relative strengths of the conferences by showing how each conference collectively performs against teams from other conferences. Independent teams are grouped together and counted as a conference. Knowing how the conferences rank relative to each other will help you create successful prediction formulas using *CFA* or *CBA*.

This feature also keeps track of teams that change their conference affiliation. For example, Miami was an independent through the 1990 season. During that time, their won-loss record was added to the cumulative record for independents. They joined the Big East Conference in 1991, and their record in non-conference games from 1991 to 2003 was added to the cumulative record of the Big East Conference. In 2004, they joined the Atlantic Coast Conference, and their games are now added to the record of that conference.

Key Factors

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.10. Key Factors

There are four additional key handicapping factors you can view with PFA, three of which you can view with all versions of WinPicks. To do so, select KEY FACTORS from the VIEW menu. The "key" factors are described below.

Turnovers (PFA only)

This option shows you how the teams rank in the net turnovers department (Figure 7.100). This is a number that is often mentioned on the radio and TV broadcasts of NFL games. To get this number, you first count turnovers forced by counting the total number of times a team's defense has intercepted a pass or recovering a fumble. Then, turnovers allowed are counted by adding together the number of times a team's offense has thrown an interception or lost a fumble. *Net Turnovers* is obtained by turnovers forced minus turnovers allowed. Most successful teams have a positive number for *Net Turnovers* so it is often a useful piece of handicapping information. The report also shows the average number of *Net Turnovers* per game, based on the database method currently in use.

Rank	Team	Offense Allowed	Defense Forced	Net Turnovers	Avg Net Turnovers
1	Carolina Panthers	19	39	20	1.250
2	Kansas City Chiefs	15	29	14	0.875
3	Cincinnati Bengals	17	28	11	0.688
4	Arizona Cardinals	24	33	9	0.563
5	New York (NYG) Giants	21	28	7	0.438
6	New England Patriots	14	21	7	0.438
7	Seattle Seahawks	16	23	7	0.438
8	Buffalo Bills	19	25	6	0.375
9	New York (NYJ) Jets	24	30	6	0.375
10	Los Angeles Rams	21	26	5	0.313
11	Washington Redskins	22	27	5	0.313
12	Minnesota Vikings	17	22	5	0.313
13	Houston Texans	20	25	5	0.313
14	Green Bay Packers	17	22	5	0.313
15	Pittsburgh Steelers	28	30	2	0.125
16	New Orleans Saints	20	22	2	0.125
17	Oakland Raiders	24	25	1	0.063
18	Miami Dolphins	19	16	-3	-0.188
19	San Diego Chargers	24	20	-4	-0.250
20	Chicago Bears	21	17	-4	-0.250
21	Denver Broncos	31	27	-4	-0.250
22	Indianapolis Colts	30	25	-5	-0.313
23	Philadelphia Eagles	31	26	-5	-0.313
24	San Francisco 49'ers	17	12	-5	-0.313
25	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	28	23	-5	-0.313

Figure 7.100 - The Turnovers Report (PFA Only)

Average Margin of Victory (all versions of WinPicks)

This option ranks all teams according to their average margin of victory (AMOV), based on the database method currently in use. The AMOV is computed by taking into account the final result of each team's games. For example, if a team has a record of 3-0, and has won the games by 4, 7, and 10 points respectively, their AMOV is +7 (21 points divided by 3). Teams that have been outscored by their opposition will have a negative AMOV. For example, a team with an 0-3 record that has lost by 4, 7, and 10 points will have an AMOV of -7. The AMOV is shown for all games, for home games, and for away games, and you can sort the rankings by clicking on the column headings.

Average Point Spread (all versions of WinPicks)

This option ranks all teams according to the average point spread in their games, based on the database method currently in use. The average point spread is computed from the closing lines for each team's games. A negative number in the "Avg Pt Spread" column means that a team is favored in their average

game; a positive number means that a team is the underdog in their average game. This is a very useful feature that shows which teams get the most respect from the oddsmakers and the betting public. The average point spread is shown for all games, for home games, and for away games, and you can sort the rankings by clicking on the column headings.

Rank	Team	Avg Pt Spread	Home	Away
1	Michigan State Spartans	-14.545	-16.568	-10.500
2	Gonzaga Bulldogs	-14.227	-14.841	-13.000
3	Villanova Wildcats	-13.842	-16.109	-10.367
4	High Point Panthers	-13.500	-13.500	+0.000
5	St Marys California Gaels	-12.952	-14.583	-10.692
6	Purdue Boilermakers	-12.306	-15.065	-7.423
7	Cincinnati Bearcats	-12.266	-14.690	-7.636
8	Duke Blue Devils	-12.029	-15.850	-6.933
9	Wichita State Shockers	-11.790	-14.389	-8.192
10	Arizona Wildcats	-10.629	-12.864	-6.846
11	Kansas Jayhawks	-9.216	-11.800	-3.833
12	Virginia Cavaliers	-9.210	-12.194	-5.077
13	Xavier Musketeers	-8.957	-13.318	-1.577
14	North Carolina Tar Heels	-8.431	-14.658	-1.471
15	West Virginia Mountaineers	-7.682	-10.579	-3.750
16	Northern Kentucky Norse	-7.603	-12.071	-3.433
17	UNLV Running Rebels	-7.532	-10.947	-2.125
18	Belmont Bruins	-7.516	-11.700	-3.594
19	Norfolk State Spartans	-7.500	-12.250	-2.750
20	Oregon Ducks	-7.486	-12.262	-0.321
21	Nevada Wolf Pack	-7.382	-9.632	-4.533
22	Murray State Racers	-7.362	-9.867	-4.679
23	Old Dominion Monarchs	-7.300	-9.200	-5.400
24	Florida Gators	-7.273	-11.125	-1.346
25	Rhode Island Rams	-6.828	-9.605	-2.769

Figure 7.101 - The Average Point Spread Report (CBA)

Average Totals (all versions of WinPicks)

This option ranks all teams according to their average totals (over/under) line in their games, based on the database method currently in use. The average totals line is computed from the closing lines for each team's games. This is a very useful feature that shows which teams the oddsmakers expect to be involved in the highest or lowest scoring games. The average totals line is shown for all games, for home games, and for away games, and you can sort the rankings by clicking on the column headings.

Viewing Non Division-1 Teams (CFA and CBA)

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.11. Viewing Non Division-1 Teams (CFA and CBA)

CFA and CBA each include an interesting feature for aficionados of college sports. This feature allows you to see the results of games where a Division-1 team played a non Division-1 team. To use this feature, select NON DIVISION-1 TEAMS from the VIEW menu. A list of non Division-1 teams will appear. When you select a team from this list, all of its games against Division-1 opponents are listed, and the display also shows a team's overall won-loss record against Division-1 teams.

Games involving non Division-1 teams usually occur early in the season. The games are usually one-sided, but in rare instances the non Division-1 team will stay close or even win. This feature provides some useful historical information if one of the smaller schools shows up on your favorite team's schedule

Viewing Stadium and Arena Information

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 7.12. Viewing Stadium and Arena Information

All members of the WinPicks family can display information about the stadium or arena where each team plays its home games. To use this option, select STADIUMS/ARENAS from the VIEW menu.

All versions of WinPicks display the name of the facility, the city and state where it is located, and the seating capacity. PFA also displays the type of facility (open, dome, or retractable dome), and the type of playing surface (natural or artificial). The list of facilities is sorted by team name.

CBA, The College Basketball Analyst

File Database Edit View **Formulas** Predict Consensus Trends Browser Help Utilities

Tue. Mar 15, 2016 Formula CARDINALS

Stadiums/Arenas Report

Date: Tue. Mar 15, 2016

Team	Stadium/Arena	Location	Capacity
Abilene Christian Wildcats	Moody Coliseum	Abilene, Texas	4,600
Air Force Falcons	Clune Arena	Colorado Springs, CO	6,003
Akron Zips	James A. Rhodes Arena	Akron, OH	5,500
Alabama Crimson Tide	Coleman Coliseum	Tuscaloosa, AL	15,043
Alabama A&M Bulldogs	T. M. Elmore Gym	Huntsville, AL	6,000
Alabama State Hornets	ASU Acadome	Montgomery, AL	7,400
Albany NY Great Danes	SEFCU Arena	Albany, NY	4,553
Alcorn State Braves	Whitney Complex	Lorman, MS	7,000
American Eagles	Bender Arena	Washington, DC	5,000
Appalachian State Mountaineers	Holmes Center	Boone, NC	8,576
Arizona Wildcats	McKale Center	Tucson, AZ	14,545
Arizona State Sun Devils	Wells Fargo Arena	Tempe, AZ	14,198
Arkansas Razorbacks	Bud Walton Arena	Fayetteville, AR	19,200
Arkansas Little Rock Trojans	Jack Stephens Center	Little Rock, AR	5,600
Arkansas Pine Bluff Golden Lions	Johnson Complex	Pine Bluff, AR	4,500
Arkansas State Indians	Convocation Center	State University, AR	10,563
Army Black Knights	Christl Arena	West Point, NY	5,043

WinPicks database: All Games Season To Date

Figure 7.120 - The Stadiums/Arenas Report (CBA)

The Weather Board and the Weather Lab (Pro Football Analyst)

Pro Football Analyst is the one package whose games are played in weather, and WinPicks 2.0 treats the weather as data: recorded conditions, game by game, and two screens that read them. Both are part of Pro Football Analyst only.

The Weather Board. Choose Database > Weather Board. The screen is shown in Figure 7.130.

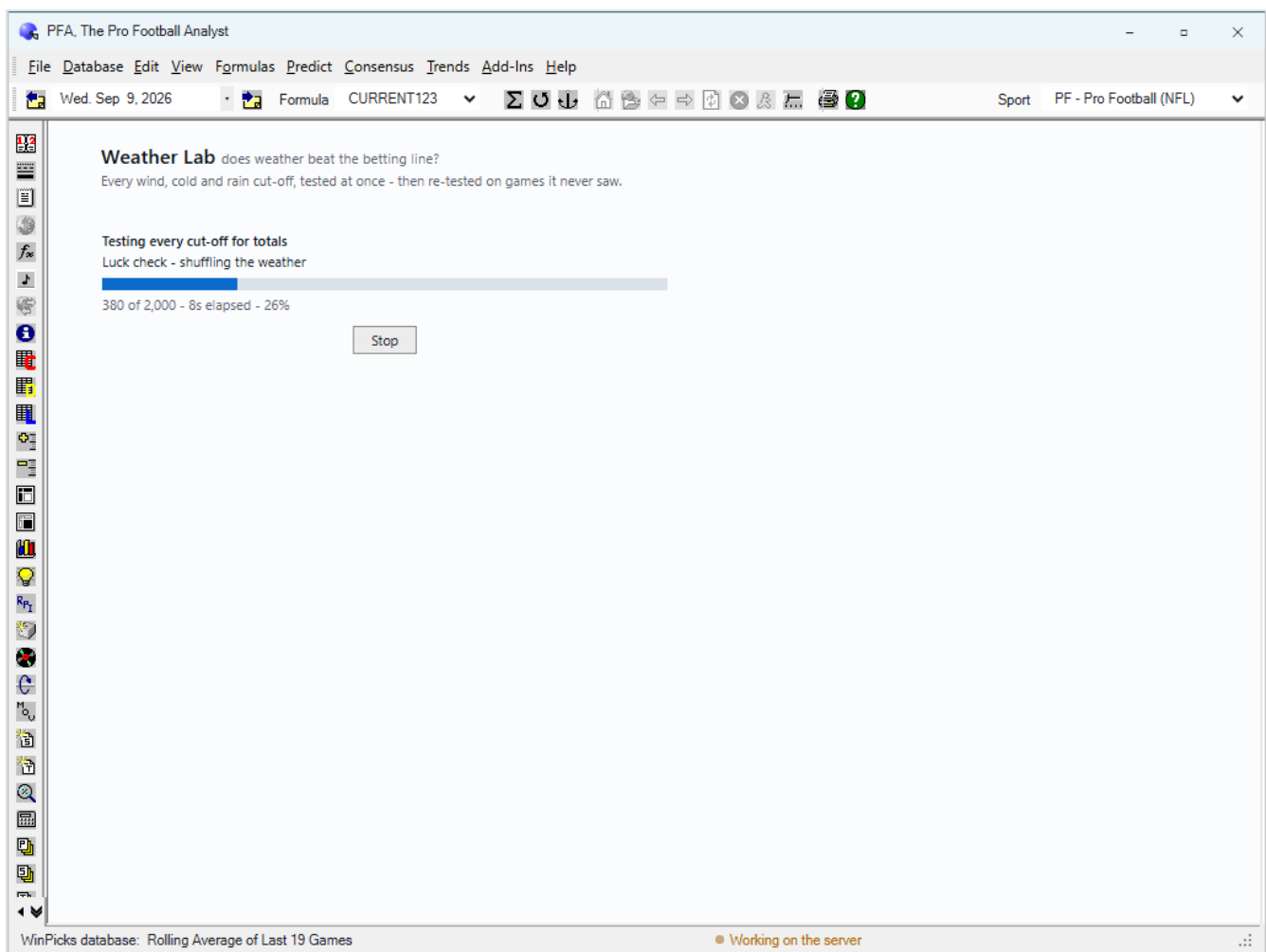


Figure 7.131 - The Weather Lab Running Its Sweep (PFA)

The unit is points against the market, and that choice is the method. Everyone knows wind lowers scoring; so do the oddsmakers, and a windy game gets a lower total to start with. A measurement of raw scoring would "discover" that fact endlessly and profit from it never. The Lab therefore grades every effect in points against the posted number: how far the actual result beat or missed the total (or the spread) that was on offer. An effect the market has already priced in reads as zero, however dramatic the weather was - only the part the number missed counts.

What a run does. Press nothing: the Lab tests every cut-off at once - wind at each threshold, gusts, cold, heat, rain, crosswind, snow - for totals or for sides, over every game with recorded conditions. It does not ask you to nominate a theory first, because nominating the theory after seeing the data is the oldest trick a handicapper plays on himself; instead it runs the whole family and then asks, honestly, whether the best of the family means anything.

The luck check is the slow part, and the point. The progress line in Figure 7.131 is worth reading: "Luck check - shuffling the weather, 380 of 2,000". Testing every cut-off takes seconds. What takes minutes is re-running that entire search two thousand times with the weather shuffled against the games - to learn what the *best* cut-off of a whole family looks like when weather means nothing at all. The strongest of many tries is always impressive; the shuffles measure how impressive it is by accident. The result is the **Luck Meter**:

not a pass or fail light, but a distance - how far your finding stands from the best that pure chance produced.

Blind test first. When the run finishes, the screen opens on one sentence stating the strongest finding - and the finding that leads is always the blind-test result, measured on games the search never saw, never the hindsight number. Click through and the working unfolds in layers: a curve across every cut-off, and behind a "Full numbers" expander, the complete statistics. Nothing is removed for the plain view, only deferred.

Reading the curve. The curve is the test a headline cannot fake. A real physical effect grows with its cause: if wind suppresses scoring beyond what the market priced, the effect should deepen as the cut-off climbs from 10 to 15 to 20 miles per hour - a gradient down the axis. A lucky cut looks different: flat nothing, one spike at a single threshold, flat nothing. The spike is the winner of the family competition; the gradient is a finding.

Saving. A finding you want to follow is saved with **Save as System**, where it is graded from that day forward on games the search never touched (see My Systems, in section 9). The button is deliberately not called "add to picks": a recommendation is exactly the claim this screen exists to avoid making.

What weather does not predict. Honesty about the limits is part of the method, and the program's own measurements supply it. First: most of what weather does to scoring is already in the number, so most cut-offs read near zero - that is the market working, not the Lab failing. Second: a strong in-sample cut-off can be an era in disguise. The league's own over rate drifts - it ran 45.4% across 2021-23 and 52.5% across 2024-25 - so any weather filter whose games bunch into one era inherits that drift and looks like a discovery. The program's measured example is exactly this shape: wind over 10 miles per hour scored $z = -5.30$ against a coin on 2021-23 totals, a seemingly overwhelming effect - but only -4.08 against the same games' baseline, and on the held-out 2024-25 seasons, -0.66 . The Lab's blind-first layout, the shuffled-weather Luck Meter and the vs-rest comparison in the Trend Finder all exist because of results like that one. Treat any weather finding that has not survived a blind test as a hypothesis about the past, not an edge in the future.

Weather in the Trend Finder. The same recorded conditions are filters in the Trend Finder - wind, temperature, rain or snow - with dome games neutralised so that indoor teams can never produce a cold-weather trend by mistake. See Trend Finder, in section 9.

Predicting Games

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8. Predicting Games

In previous sections, we've shown you how to keep all members of the WinPicks software family up to date, and how to view, print, and graph stats from the database. In this section, we'll show you how WinPicks can use the information stored in its database to accurately predict winners and beat the point spread.

This section covers the following topics:

- 8.1 - General Information about Prediction Formulas
- Forge: Designing a Formula from a Question

- 8.2 - Using Prediction Formulas
- 8.3 - Testing a Formula with Different Databases
- 8.4 - Analyzing a Prediction Formula
- 8.5 - Tuning a Prediction Formula for Best Results
- Tuning Against Closing Line Value
- Holding Out a Period, and Reading the Luck Line
- 8.6 - Sharing Formulas: The Formula Warehouse
- 8.7 - Predicting Sides (Straight-Up and ATS)
- Predicting Straight Up
- 8.8 - Predicting Totals (Over/Unders)
- Prices on the Predict Screens
- 8.9 - Making Pool Picks
- 8.10 - Making Detailed Predictions
- 8.11 - Making Single Game Predictions
- 8.12 - Making Consensus Predictions
- 8.13 - NightShift Formula Tuner
- 8.14 - The Platinum Page
- 8.15 - Show all Platinum Picks
- 8.16 - Analyze Platinum Picks
- 8.17 - Line Shifter

General Information about Formulas

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.1. General Information About Prediction Formulas

WinPicks is very versatile. It doesn't force you to use a predefined handicapping method. Instead, you can design your own prediction formulas and instantly analyze their performance.

Predictions are based on the stats that are currently in the database. For example, if your database uses a 3-game rolling average, the predictions are based on the stats from the past 3 games. To change the stats included in the database, or to see which stats are currently included, please see Section 4.

Each member of the WinPicks family includes at least three prediction formulas that have worked well in past seasons. However, there is no limit to the number of formulas you can use, so you can create and test as many formulas as you wish. In fact, you can even use a consensus method that lets you use as many prediction formulas as you want at the same time!

Win Picks allows you to analyze the performance of a formula, fine tune a formula for best results, or even share formulas with other Win Picks users.

Forge: Designing a Formula from a Question

Forge is a front door to formula design for people who did not use the original program. Choose Add-Ins > Forge - Formula Designer. Like the SureLock Formula Wizard it supersedes, Forge is part of *Pro Football Analyst*. The screen is shown in Figure 8.19.

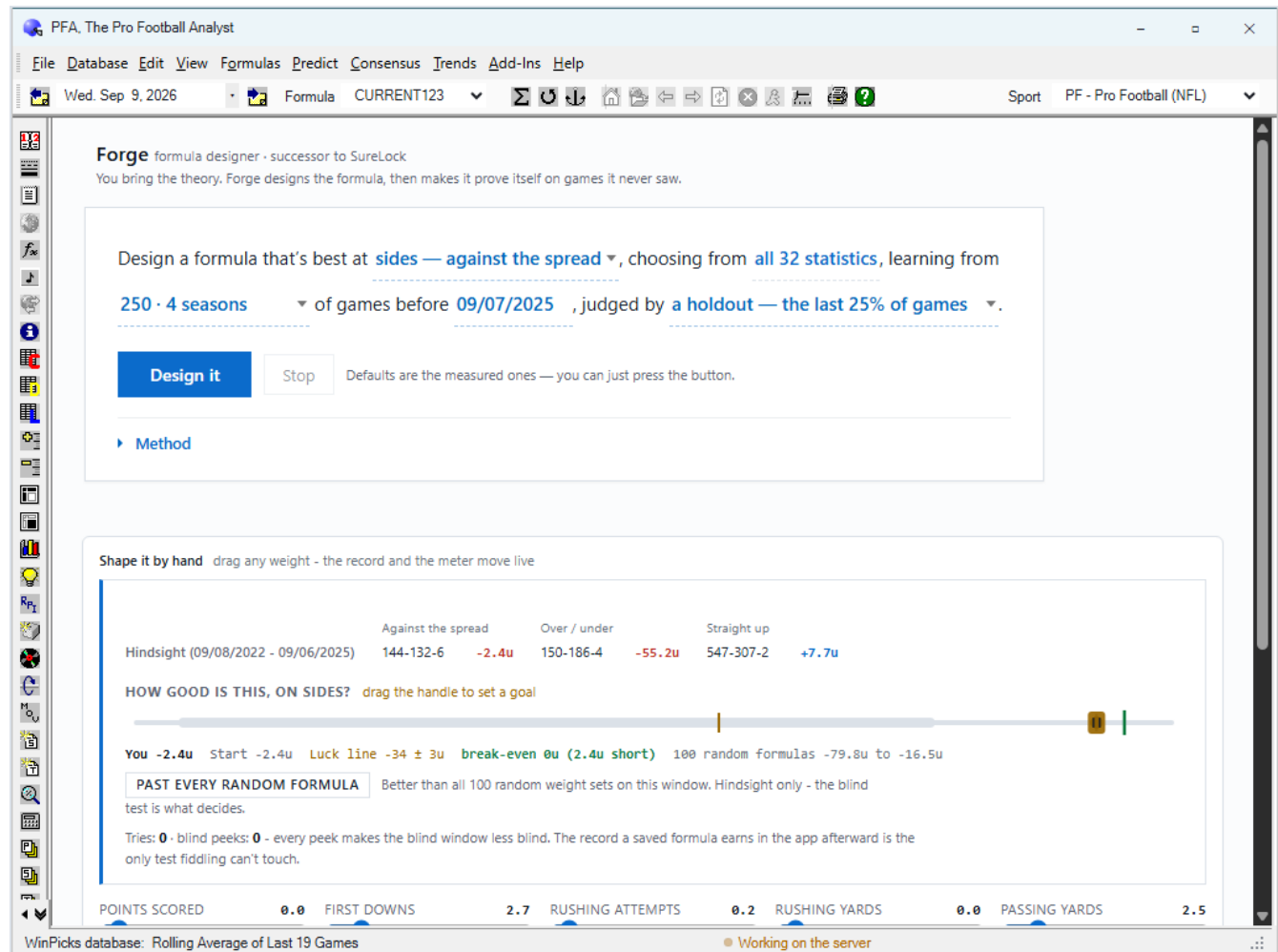


Figure 8.19 - The Forge Screen (PFA)

The original SureLock asked its questions across nine wizard screens. Forge asks them in one sentence, printed across the top panel with the choices underlined - read it off Figure 8.19:

*Design a formula that's best at **sides - against the spread**, choosing from **all 32 statistics**, learning from **250 - 4 seasons** of games before **09/07/2025**, judged by **a holdout - the last 25% of games**.*

Each underlined phrase is a control:

- **Best at** decides the objective: sides, totals or straight up. This is the decision SureLock's "Sides or Totals" screen asked, plus the straight-up choice that only makes sense now that real money lines are in the database.

- **Choosing from** decides the ingredients. "All 32 statistics" lets the design pick freely from everything Pro Football Analyst tracks.
- **Learning from** is the sample - the figure's 250 games is about four seasons - and **before** sets the cutoff date, so the design never sees anything after it.
- **Judged by** is the part SureLock never had: ****a holdout - the last 25% of games****. Forge fits on the earlier games and scores on the last quarter, which the fit never saw. Turned off, you have reproduced 1998: the reported record and the design come from the same games, and the number is a compliment the formula pays itself.

Press **DESIGN IT** and Forge builds the formula; **STOP** halts a run. The note beside the buttons is the short version of this section: the defaults are the measured ones - you can just press the button. A **METHOD** expander underneath explains, in the screen's own words, how the design run works.

What comes back is an ordinary formula - weights in the same slots the formula editor shows - and the number to look at is the holdout number, because it is the only one the design could not court.

Shape it by hand. The lower panel in Figure 8.19 is the same honesty applied to manual work. The row of weights along the bottom (POINTS SCORED, FIRST DOWNS, RUSHING ATTEMPTS, and the rest) can each be dragged, and the record and the meter move live as you drag.

The **Hindsight** line names itself honestly: over the window in the figure (09/08/2022 to 09/06/2025) the current weights went 144-132-6 against the spread for -2.4 units, 150-186-4 on totals for -55.2 units, and 547-307-2 straight up for +7.7 units. Hindsight, because every one of those games was visible while you dragged.

The meter under "HOW GOOD IS THIS, ON SIDES?" places your current units figure on one scale beside four fixed marks, and the figure's own values show how to read them:

- **You -2.4u** and **Start -2.4u** - where you are and where you began; nothing has been dragged yet, so they sit together.
- **Luck line -34 +/- 3u** - what random weight sets reach on this window. It is deeply negative because random picking pays the vig on every bet; merely beating it means little more than "better than throwing darts".
- **break-even 0u (2.4u short)** - the mark that matters for money, with the distance to it spelled out.
- **100 random formulas -79.8u to -16.5u** - the full range one hundred random weight sets spanned on this same window. The badge "PAST EVERY RANDOM FORMULA" lights when you clear all of them - necessary, and nowhere near sufficient.

Under the meter, two counters: **Tries** and **blind peeks**. Every peek at the held-out games makes the blind window less blind - adjust, peek, adjust, peek, and you are fitting the holdout by hand. The counter keeps the honest score of how blind the blind test still is, and the record a saved formula earns in the app afterward is the only test that fiddling cannot touch.

From Forge to the rest of the program. A sensible first pass: press DESIGN IT with the defaults; read the holdout number, not the fit; if it holds, save, and the formula appears on MY FORMULAS like any other. Run

ANALYZE THE CURRENT FORMULA over seasons the design never learned from, and let the Formula Tuner refine the weights later if you wish - with its own Track out-of-sample ticked, for the same reason. If instead you have a theory of your own, start from Shape it by hand, and treat the meter's marks as the standard of proof: past the luck line, past the random field, past break-even, and only then interesting.

Everything Forge produces is an ordinary formula file; there is no separate Forge format and nothing it makes is locked to it. It is a convenience, not a different engine: a formula Forge writes and a formula you build by hand are graded identically, by the same code, at the same prices.

Using Prediction Formulas

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.2. Using Prediction Formulas

Prediction formulas are easy to make and use. This section explains how to load, create, delete, modify, and view prediction formulas.

The My Formulas Screen

You don't have to create your own prediction formulas. Each member of the WinPicks family comes with at least three ready to use formulas. These formulas have worked well in past seasons, and you'll probably be pleased with their accuracy.

Your prediction formulas are managed using the MY FORMULAS screen. To get to this screen, select MY FORMULAS from the FORMULAS menu, or click the MY FORMULAS icon, or press the F9 key. You'll see a screen similar to Figure 8.20:

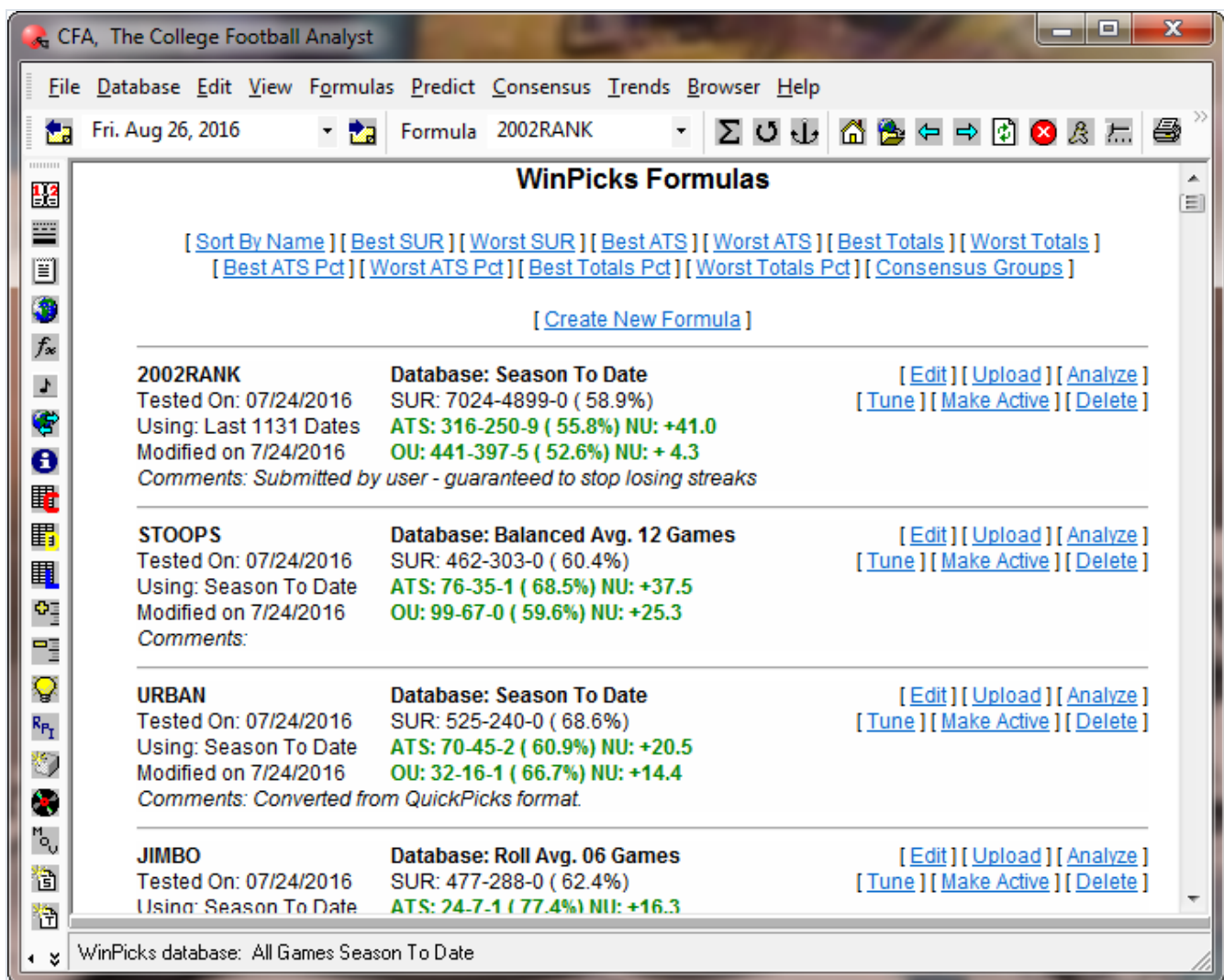


Figure 8.20 - The My Formulas Screen (CFA)

The formulas listed on the MY FORMULAS screen are sorted according to a method that you can select by clicking on the text links at the top of the screen. There are 11 different ways you can sort your formula list: by name, by best straight-up record (SUR), by worst SUR, by best against the spread (ATS) record, by worst ATS record, by best totals (over/under) record, by worst totals record, by best ATS percentage, by worst ATS percentage, by best totals percentage, and by worst totals percentage. By changing the sort method, you can explore your list of formulas and quickly find the formula that you want to find. There is also a text link on the MY FORMULAS screen that allows you to see each of your consensus formula groups, and the individual formulas within the group.

The MY FORMULAS screen contains the following information about each formula:

- *The Formula Name* - All formulas are stored in individual files. The screen doesn't show the file extension for the formula, but all members of the WinPicks family use unique file extensions to identify their formulas. The file extension for pro football formulas is PFF; college football formulas use CFF, pro basketball formulas PBF, college basketball formulas CBF, and pro hockey formulas PHF.

- *The Database Method* - This column lists the database method used by the formula. This information is stored inside the formula, and whenever you load a formula, it automatically selects its database method. This database method is used until you change it.
- The date when the formula was last modified.
- The date when the formula was last tested.
- *The Formula's Record* - The formula's straight-up (SUR), against the spread (ATS), and over/under (OU) records are shown, along with the number of net units the formula has won or lost for ATS and OU selections. These records were tabulated on the date when the formula was last tested. Whenever you start WinPicks, it will remind you to test formulas that have not been tested within the last three days. If you take advantage of these reminders, the formula records will be up to date, or nearly up to date.
- *Comments* - The line in italics contains comments about the formula. This line is optional, and is not included in all formulas. However, it can be used to credit the author of the formula, to provide historical information about the formula, or to provide tips or reminders on how to use the formula.

Loading Formulas

The MY FORMULAS screen lists all of the available formulas. To load a formula, select the formula that you wish, then double click the mouse or click the MAKE ACTIVE button. Or, use the box on the toolbar to select a formula.

Whenever you run WinPicks, it remembers the last formula that you used, and automatically loads the formula for you. It will continue to use the formula until you select another one.

Importing Formulas from the Original Program

If you ran WinPicks on your own PC, your formula files still work. Choose File > Import Formulas. The window shown in Figure 8.24 appears.

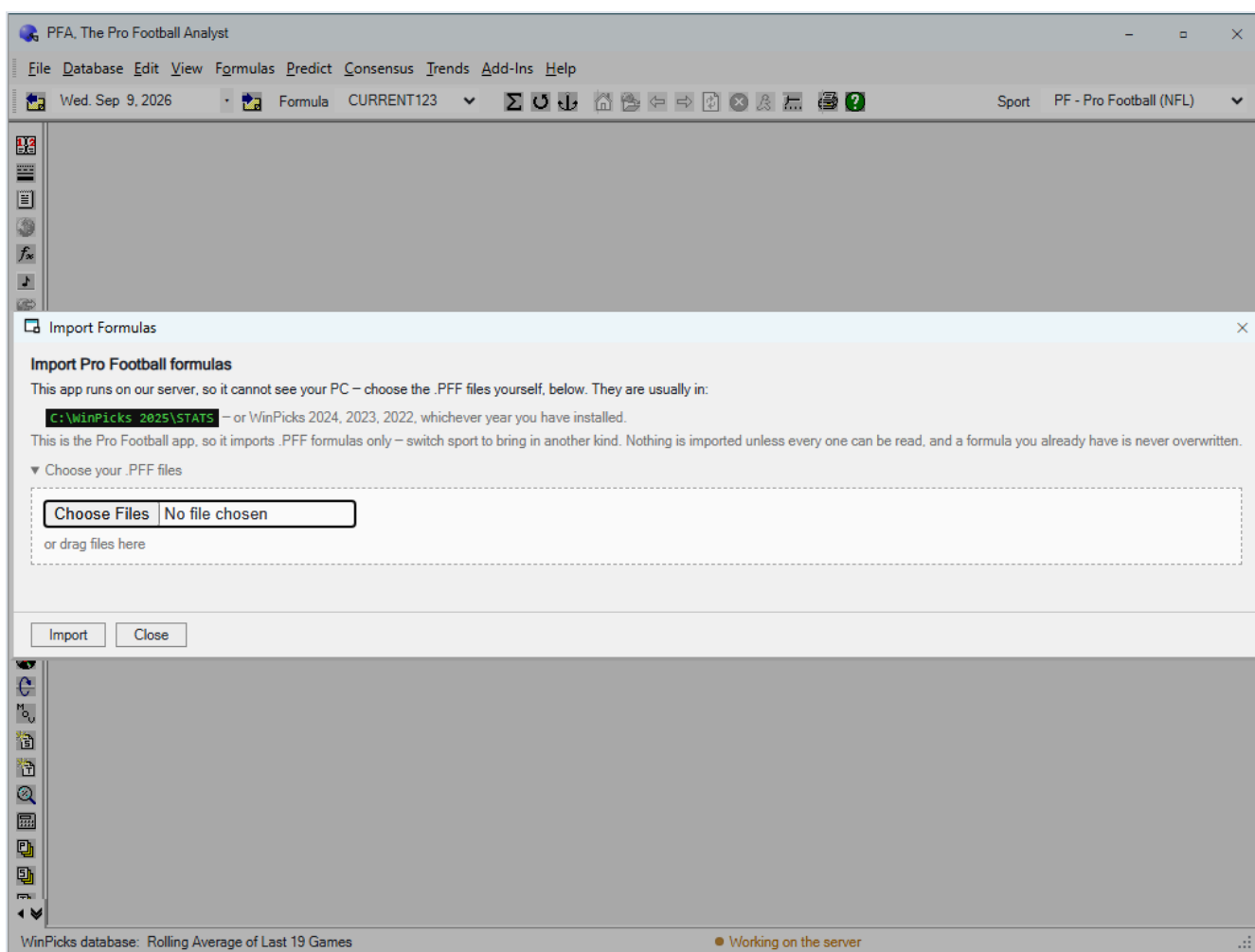


Figure 8.24 - The Import Formulas Window (PFA)

WinPicks 2.0 runs on our server, so it cannot look through your disk itself: choose the files yourself with the CHOOSE FILES button, or drag them onto the window. They are usually in a folder like C:\WinPicks 2025\STATS - or WinPicks 2024, 2023, 2022, whichever year you last installed. Each package imports its own kind - .PFF files in Pro Football Analyst, the matching extension in each other sport - so switch sports to bring in another kind. Nothing is imported unless every chosen file can be read, and a formula you already have is never overwritten. Imported formulas appear on the MY FORMULAS screen under your account, exactly as if you had created them here.

Creating Formulas

To get the most value from WinPicks, you should create your own formulas. Your formulas might outperform ours. Plus, you'll get the satisfaction of using a method that you developed yourself.

To get started, click on the CREATE NEW FORMULA text link near the top of the MY FORMULAS screen. You are then asked to enter a name for the new formula. Enter a name for the formula then click the OK box or press ENTER. There is no limit to the length of formula names, but to prevent on-screen formatting problems, it is a good idea to limit them to 20 characters.

After you select a name, the formula editing screen will appear. The appearance of the formula editing screen (and the way you create formulas) depends upon the application you are using. However, some parameters are common to all the WinPicks applications (PFA, CFA, PBA, CBA, and PHA). The common parameters are:

- *Home Field Advantage (Home Court Advantage in PBA and CBA, Home Ice Advantage in PHA)* - This is the point spread advantage given to the home team. The default value is 3 points.
- *Point Spread Multiplier* - This number is multiplied by the original point spread to obtain a new point spread. It is initially set to 1. Enter a number greater than 1 to generate bigger point spreads, or a number less than 1 to generate smaller point spreads. For example, if the formula predicts a point spread of 4 with the multiplier set to 1, it becomes 6 with the multiplier set to 1.5 ($4 \times 1.5 = 6$). By adjusting the Point Spread Multiplier, you can fine tune a formula to get the best possible results.
- *Lower Betting Window Limit & Upper Betting Window Limit* - These two parameters set the betting window and determine how many picks WinPicks will recommend. The betting window refers to the difference between predictions made by WinPicks, and the actual betting line. For example, if the betting window is set at 1 to 7 points, WinPicks recommends picks when the actual line differs from the WinPicks line by 1 to 7 points. The lower and upper bounds of the betting window are set using the parameters named Lower Betting Window Limit and Upper Betting Window Limit. The default betting window range is 1 to 10 points. If you increase the window, WinPicks recommends more picks. If you decrease the window, WinPicks recommends fewer picks.
- *Default Database* - You must select the database method that your formula will use. WinPicks will load the selected database each time the formula is activated. Keep in mind that if you change the database method (from the DATABASE menu or the toolbar) it will override the formula setting.
- *Default Test Method* - The "Default Test Method" is the number of dates (going back) a formula will be tested with using ANALYZE ALL FORMULAS on the FORMULA menu and the "Analyze" link on the MY FORMULAS screen. When set to "Season To Date", WinPicks will always show a formula's results for the current season only. When set to "Last n Dates", WinPicks will always show the results using the exact number of dates set. The "Default Test Method" is used by WinPicks to rank the best formulas on the MY FORMULAS screen. Note that the ANALYZE THE CURRENT FORMULA menu option will let you override this setting and try a different range of dates, but ANALYZE ALL FORMULAS and the "Analyze" link always use the default test method when testing a formula.
- *Exclude from Platinum Picks* - Check this box if you want the formula to be excluded from the Platinum Picks calculations. All formulas will be used by default unless this box is checked.
- *Situation Filter* - If you enable the situation filter (by checking the box), you can make a formula that only generates predictions in certain situations. Four different situations can be chosen. Two of them, the "Month" and "Day of Week" settings, are self explanatory. For example, you can create a formula specifically for NFL Monday night football that only makes predictions for Monday night games. The "Underdog" situation setting allows you to limit the formula to making predictions when either the home or away team is the underdog. The "Game Type" situation setting allows you to limit the formula to making predictions on division, conference, nonconference, or postseason games. This can be very

powerful, because you might find that college football and basketball formulas tailored for conference games only can do especially well. You can also combine settings so that your formula only makes predictions when specific situations occur, for example, when a team is a home dog in a conference game.

The remaining parameters are different for each member of the WinPicks family. Therefore, we need to explain each type of formula separately, beginning with the formulas used by PFA.

Creating Formulas with Pro Football Analyst (PFA)

The formula editing screen for PFA (Figure 8.21) includes all the statistical categories tracked by PFA. The statistical categories are listed in the column labeled Parameter Name. You can move around the formula editing screen using the arrow keys or the mouse. Each category starts out with a 0 in the column labeled Value. The value assigned to each statistic is the percentage weight that the formula will place on that particular statistic. For example, if you enter a value of 20 for points scored, predictions are based 20% on points scored, and 80% on other statistics.

If the percentage weight is left at 0, the statistic will not be used by the formula. To use a statistic in your formula, you simply assign it a non-zero percentage weight by keying in the number you want to use.

Edit Formula: WISEGUY

Sum of Parameters = 100.00%

Parameter Name	Value
Points Scored	25.0
First Downs	0.0
Rushing Attempts	0.0
Rushing Yards	0.0
Passing Yards	0.0
Return Yards	0.0
Pass Completions	10.0
Passing Attempts	0.0
Interceptions	0.0
Times Sacked	0.0
Sack Yards	0.0
Punts	0.0
Punting Yards	9.0
Fumbles	0.0
Fumbles Lost	0.0
Penalties	0.0
Penalty Yards	0.0
FG Attempts	10.0
FG Made	10.0
Average TOP	10.0
Pts Per 100 Yds	21.5
Yards per Game	0.0
Yards per Rush	0.0
Yards per Pass	0.0

Default Database

☐ Season To Date

☒ Rolling Average

☐ Balanced Average

☐ Fixed At Date

2 Games

Default Test Method

Season To Date

☒ Exclude from Platinum Picks

Comments

Last Modified: 7/22/2016

Situation Filter

☐ Enable Situation Filter

Month: Any Month

Day of Week: Any Day of Week

Underdog: Any Underdog

Game Type: Any Game Type

Save
Save As...
Cancel
Print
Help

Figure 8.21 - The Formula Editing Window for PFA

It is OK to use just a few stats in your formulas. Some stats (yards per game, points scored, points per 100 yards, winning percentage, and so on), are very important, and are assigned a high weight in many successful formulas. Other stats (punting yards, field goals attempted, return yards, and so on), are normally considered to be less important. They are usually assigned a low weight or are not used at all. At the top of the formula entry window, you'll see a number called the Sum of Parameters. This number must equal 100% before you can save the formula.

The last four items on the parameter list (Home Field Advantage, Point Spread Multiplier, Lower Betting Window Limit, and Upper Betting Window Limit) are common to all formulas and are discussed earlier in this section.

And finally, before saving the formula, you may want to type a comment in the Comments box. Adding a comment is optional, but you will probably find them useful, especially if you create a large number of formulas. When you are finished with the formula:

- Click the SAVE button to save (and load) the formula
- Click the CANCEL button to quit without saving

You can also have a formula designed for you. Forge, found under the ADD-INS menu, builds a complete prediction formula from a question - which market, over what period, judged on what - and everything it produces is an ordinary formula that you can edit and tune like any other. Forge replaces the *SureLock Formula Wizard* of earlier versions; see *Forge: Designing a Formula from a Question*, earlier in this section.

Creating Formulas with College Football Analyst (CFA) or College Basketball Analyst (CBA)

The formula editing screen for CFA is shown in Figure 8.22:

Parameter Name	Value
Home Field Advantage (points)	7.0
Blowout Limiter (points)	40.0
Point Spread Multiplier	1.15
Lower Betting Window Limit	3.5
Upper Betting Window Limit	5.0
Use Winning Percentages (0 or 1)	1.0
Non-Division-1	-8.0
Atlantic Coast Adjustment	1.0
Big East Adjustment	1.0
Big Twelve Adjustment	1.0
Big Ten Adjustment	4.0
Big West Adjustment	-4.0
Independents Adjustment	-1.0
Mid American Adjustment	-3.0
Pacific Twelve Adjustment	1.5
Southeastern Adjustment	4.0
Southwestern Adjustment	0.0
Western Athletic Adjustment	0.0
Conference USA Adjustment	0.0
Mountain West Adjustment	0.0
Sun Belt Adjustment	-2.0
American Athletic Adjustment	0.0

Default Database

☐ Season To Date

☒ Rolling Average

☐ Balanced Average

☐ Fixed At Date

3 Games

Default Test Method

Season To Date

☐ Exclude from Platinum Picks

Comments

Last Modified: 7/22/2016

Situation Filter

☐ Enable Situation Filter

Month: Any Month

Day of Week: Any Day of Week

Underdog: Any Underdog

Game Type: Any Game Type

Save Save As... Cancel Print Help

Figure 8.22 - The Formula Editing Window for CFA

CFA and CBA formulas are based on average margin of victory, winning percentage, and the relative strength of the Division-1 conferences. The formula editing screen for CFA has a column labeled Parameter Name and a column labeled Value. Four items on the parameter list (Home Field Advantage, Point Spread Multiplier, Lower Betting Window Limit, and Upper Betting Window Limit) are common to all formulas and are discussed earlier in this section. The remaining parameters are:

- *Blowout Limiter* - This number limits the significance of "blowouts", or games with one-sided scores. For example, if the blowout limiter is set to 20 (the default value), games decided by more than 20 points are given the same significance as games with a 20-point margin. In other words, if a football team wins by 70-0, the formula will assign it the same significance as a 20-0 victory. This feature prevents teams who run up the score from having an inflated power rating.
- *Use Winning Percentages* - To turn this option on, enter a 1. To turn it off, enter a 0 (the default). If "Use Winning Percentages" is turned on it enhances the power ratings of teams that win a high percentage of their games. Power ratings that do not take winning percentage into account will often give high ratings to teams that seldom win if they have played a tough schedule. By the same token, teams that almost always win may be ranked low if they have played a weak schedule. However, winning is often a habit for good teams (even when they play poorly), and losing is often a habit for bad teams (even when they play well). For this reason, you might want to take winning percentage into account.

- *Conference Adjustments* - You also need to enter a positive or negative point spread adjustment for each conference. All are set to 0 by default, but every handicapper knows that a victory over a Big 10 school has more significance than a victory over a non Division-1 school. You should add some additional points to the strongest conferences, and perhaps take points away from the weaker ones by entering negative numbers. The INTER CONFERENCE RECORDS feature provides a clear picture of the relative strength of the conferences.

And finally, before saving the formula, you may want to type a comment in the Comments box. When you are finished with the formula:

- Click the SAVE button to save (and load) the formula
- Click the CANCEL button to quit without saving

Creating Formulas with Pro Basketball Analyst (PBA)

The formula editing screen for PBA is shown in Figure 8.23:

Edit Formula: CRAZYJOE

Parameter Name	Value
Home Court Advantage (points)	0.0
Blowout Limiter (points)	25.0
Point Spread Multiplier	1.15
Lower Betting Window Limit	6.0
Upper Betting Window Limit	7.5
1st Game on Road (points)	0.0
2nd Game on Road (points)	-1.0
3rd Game on Road (points)	-2.0
4th Game on Road (points)	-6.0
5th Game on Road (points)	-6.0
More than 5 on the Road (points)	-6.0
1st Game at Home (points)	0.0
2nd Game at Home (points)	0.0
3rd Game at Home (points)	0.0
4th Game at Home (points)	1.0
5th Game at Home (points)	1.0
More than 5 at Home (points)	1.0

Default Database

- ☒ Season To Date
- ☐ Rolling Average
- ☐ Balanced Average
- ☐ Fixed At Date

Default Test Method

Season To Date

☐ Exclude from Platinum Picks

Situation Filter

☐ Enable Situation Filter

Month: Any Month

Day of Week: Any Day of Week

Underdog: Any Underdog

Game Type: Any Game Type

Comments

Last Modified: 7/22/2016

Buttons: Save, Save As..., Cancel, Print, Help

Figure 8.23 - The Formula Editing Window for PBA

PBA formulas are based on average margin of victory, winning percentage, and the length of time that a team has spent at home or on the road. The formula editing screen for PBA has a column labeled "Parameter Name" and a column labeled "Value". Four parameters (Home Court Advantage, Point Spread

Multiplier, Lower Betting Window Limit, and Upper Betting Window Limit) are common to all formulas and are discussed earlier in this section. The remaining parameters are:

- *Blowout Limiter* - This number limits the significance of "blowouts", or games with one-sided scores. For example, if the blowout limiter is set to its default value of 20, games decided by more than 20 points are given the same significance as games with a 20-point margin. In other words, if a team wins by 134-88, the formula will assign it the same significance as a 99-79 victory. This feature prevents teams who run up the score from having an inflated power rating.
- *Weariness and Rest Adjustments* - These parameters allow you to select the advantage (or disadvantage) given to a team when they are playing at home or on the road. For example, an NBA team that has played several in a row on the road is at a distinct disadvantage when playing a team that has been at home for the past few games. You can assign positive or negative point spread adjustments based on the number of consecutive games a team has played during a home stand or road trip. For example, if you assign a value of -5 to "5th Game on Road", the formula will assume that the road team has a 5 point disadvantage due to the weariness caused by playing 5 consecutive road games. Likewise, if you assign a value of 5 to "5th Game at Home", the formula assumes that the home team is well rested due to the long homestand and gives them a 5 point advantage.

And finally, before saving the formula, you may want to type a comment in the "Comments" box. When you are finished with the formula:

- Click the SAVE button to save (and load) the formula
- Click the CANCEL button to quit without saving

Creating Formulas with Pro Hockey Analyst (PHA)

Hockey formulas are the simplest in the family. A PHA formula reads three things: the home ice advantage, the edge a pick must show before it is recommended, and the number of recent games the ratings are built from. Three formulas ship with the package - one for the puck line, one for goal totals, and one for the money line - and tuning adjusts the same three values. For what makes a hockey formula good, see Pro Hockey Handicapping in Appendix A.

Modifying a Formula

You can modify any formula, including those included with WinPicks. To do so, click the EDIT link near the name of the formula that you want to modify on the MY FORMULAS screen, or select EDIT CURRENT FORMULA from the FORMULAS menu (the F4 key) to edit the formula that is now loaded. The formula editing screen will appear, and you can make your changes. After you finish making changes, save the formula by clicking the SAVE button, or click the SAVE AS button to save the formula with a different name. If you decide not to modify the formula, click the CANCEL button.

Deleting Formulas

To delete a formula, click the DELETE link near the name of the formula on the MY FORMULAS screen. Select if you really want to delete the formula, or if you have changed your mind. Keep in mind that you cannot delete the formula that is currently in use.

Analyzing Formulas

To quickly analyze a formula, click the ANALYZE link near the name of the formula on the MY FORMULAS screen. When the analysis is finished, a summary of the results is shown on screen. This analysis provides the same overall results as the ANALYZE THE CURRENT FORMULA feature. However, unlike ANALYZE THE CURRENT FORMULA it only shows the total results, it does not show the results by date.

To analyze all of your formulas at once, select ANALYZE ALL FORMULAS on the FORMULA menu. After the formulas are analyzed, you are returned to the MY FORMULAS screen where the results are summarized.

Uploading Formulas

Uploading belonged to the Formula Warehouse, which has closed, and the UPLOAD link has been retired with it (see section 8.6, Sharing Formulas: The Formula Warehouse). Formulas in WinPicks 2.0 are private to your account.

Viewing Formulas

You can view the contents of the active prediction formula by selecting FORMULA from the VIEW menu. When you are finished viewing the formula, close the window.

Testing a Formula with Different Databases

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.3. Testing a Formula with Different Databases

It is sometimes useful to see the performance of a prediction formula against different database settings. The TRY CURRENT FORMULA WITH DIFFERENT DATABASES option on the FORMULA menu lets you test the currently active formula using Season To Date, Rolling Average, and Balanced Average methods. The Rolling Average and Balanced Average methods go back to 30 games. You can test back to the beginning of your database, or for the current season only.

TRY CURRENT FORMULA WITH DIFFERENT DATABASES carries its own submenu: TEST USING LAST N DATES asks for the number of game dates to test against, and TEST SEASON TO DATE ONLY tries the formula with data from the current season only. When the formula has been tested, a report will be created similar to the one in Figure 8.30.

PFA, The Pro Football Analyst

File Database Edit View Formulas Predict Consensus Trends Browser Add-Ins Help

Thu. Sep 5, 2013 Formula GUPPY

Test Formula Against Databases: GUPPY

Database	SUR	SUR Pct	ATS	ATS Pct	ATS Net Units	Totals
Rolling Average of Last 11 Games	1401-954-2 (59.5%)	59.5%	289-242-14 (54.4%)	54.4%	+22.8	372-351-9 (51.5%)
Rolling Average of Last 10 Games	1393-962-2 (59.2%)	59.2%	283-240-17 (54.1%)	54.1%	+19.0	378-344-10 (52.3%)
Balanced Average of Last 13 Games	1418-937-2 (60.2%)	60.2%	266-227-25 (54.0%)	54.0%	+16.3	387-354-7 (52.2%)
Balanced Average of Last 11 Games	1409-946-2 (59.8%)	59.8%	277-238-19 (53.8%)	53.8%	+15.2	370-335-8 (52.5%)
Balanced Average of Last 12 Games	1422-933-2 (60.4%)	60.4%	272-236-18 (53.5%)	53.5%	+12.4	371-342-8 (52.0%)
Rolling Average of Last 09 Games	1412-943-2 (60.0%)	60.0%	284-249-17 (53.3%)	53.3%	+10.1	384-338-14 (53.3%)
Rolling Average of Last 12 Games	1405-950-2 (59.7%)	59.7%	264-233-16 (53.1%)	53.1%	+ 7.7	368-358-8 (50.7%)
Rolling Average of Last 07 Games	1397-958-2 (59.3%)	59.3%	303-270-16 (52.9%)	52.9%	+ 6.0	399-336-13 (54.3%)
Balanced Average of Last 10 Games	1412-943-2 (60.0%)	60.0%	266-241-18 (52.5%)	52.5%	+ 0.9	373-346-8 (51.9%)
Balanced Average of Last 09 Games	1417-938-2 (60.2%)	60.2%	272-248-18 (52.3%)	52.3%	- 0.8	384-356-10 (51.5%)
Rolling Average of Last 06 Games	1399-956-2 (59.4%)	59.4%	310-283-17 (52.3%)	52.3%	- 1.3	372-356-10 (51.3%)
Balanced Average of Last 07 Games	1390-965-2 (59.0%)	59.0%	306-280-21 (52.2%)	52.2%	- 2.0	376-357-10 (51.1%)
Rolling Average of Last 03 Games	1385-970-2 (58.8%)	58.8%	335-310-23 (51.9%)	51.9%	- 6.0	397-381-12 (51.1%)
Rolling Average of Last 13 Games	1408-947-2 (59.8%)	59.8%	260-242-14 (51.8%)	51.8%	- 6.2	369-350-9 (51.2%)
Rolling Average of Last 20 Games	1396-959-2 (59.3%)	59.3%	250-234-21 (51.7%)	51.7%	- 7.4	350-333-10 (51.1%)
Rolling Average of Last 14 Games	1403-952-2 (59.6%)	59.6%	255-240-16 (51.5%)	51.5%	- 9.0	378-340-6 (52.0%)
Balanced Average of Last 20 Games	1398-957-2 (59.4%)	59.4%	250-237-21 (51.3%)	51.3%	-10.7	371-337-7 (52.4%)
All Games Season To Date	1320-915-2 (59.1%)	59.1%	252-239-14 (51.3%)	51.3%	-10.9	331-326-9 (50.4%)
Rolling Average of Last 04 Games	1421-934-2 (60.3%)	60.3%	321-303-17 (51.4%)	51.4%	-12.3	383-373-13 (50.4%)
Rolling Average of Last 05 Games	1382-973-2 (58.7%)	58.7%	305-289-21 (51.3%)	51.3%	-12.9	402-356-9 (53.0%)
Balanced Average of Last 26 Games	1422-933-2 (60.4%)	60.4%	242-232-20 (51.1%)	51.1%	-13.2	366-334-6 (52.3%)
Rolling Average of Last 19 Games	1419-936-2 (60.3%)	60.3%	245-235-19 (51.0%)	51.0%	-13.5	358-357-6 (50.7%)
Balanced Average of Last 05 Games	1400-947-2 (59.0%)	59.0%	247-237-23 (51.0%)	51.0%	-13.7	365-351-5 (51.0%)

WinPicks database: Balanced Average of Last 02 Games

Figure 8.30 - Testing a Formula Against Different Databases (PFA)

The report shows how the formula did using each database setting. The columns on the report are similar to the ones found in ANALYZE THE CURRENT FORMULA screen. Click on the headings at the top of the columns to sort the columns and to see which database setting works best. For example, click on the heading "ATS Net Units" to rank the various database settings in that category.

Please note that testing a formula with different databases can take a long time if you go back several seasons or more.

Analyzing a Prediction Formula

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.4. Analyzing a Prediction Formula

You can analyze the straight-up record (SUR) against the spread record (ATS), and totals record (over/under) of any prediction formula. This feature allows you to monitor the performance of your prediction formulas, and to test new formulas before you use them.

To analyze a formula, select ANALYZE THE CURRENT FORMULA from the FORMULAS menu. Then, select TEST SEASON TO DATE ONLY to analyze all games from the current season. Select TEST USING LAST N

DATES to analyze a formula over any number of past dates in the database. Select PAST SEASONS to pick a range of one or more past seasons to analyze. You can analyze the entire database by selecting a range that extends from the oldest to the current season.

Once you begin an analysis, you may stop it at any time. The Analyze Formula screen is displayed in Figure 8.40.

Date	SUR Record	SUR Percent	ATS Record	ATS Percent	ATS Net Units	Totals Record	Totals Percent
ALL DATES	151-105-0 (59.0%)	59.0%	47-30-3 (61.0%)	61.0%	+14.0	66-64-5 (50.8%)	50.8%
Sun. Jan 3, 2016	11-5-0 (68.8%)	68.8%	5-1-0 (83.3%)	83.3%	+ 3.9	3-3-1 (50.0%)	50.0%
Mon. Dec 28, 2015	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sun. Dec 27, 2015	8-5-0 (61.5%)	61.5%	3-3-0 (50.0%)	50.0%	- 0.3	3-2-0 (60.0%)	60.0%
Sat. Dec 26, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%
Thu. Dec 24, 2015	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Mon. Dec 21, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sun. Dec 20, 2015	10-3-0 (76.9%)	76.9%	1-1-0 (50.0%)	50.0%	- 0.1	1-3-0 (25.0%)	25.0%
Sat. Dec 19, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Thu. Dec 17, 2015	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	- 1.1	-----	-----
Mon. Dec 14, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%
Sun. Dec 13, 2015	5-9-0 (35.7%)	35.7%	4-1-0 (80.0%)	80.0%	+ 2.9	2-5-0 (28.6%)	28.6%
Thu. Dec 10, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%
Mon. Dec 7, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%
Sun. Dec 6, 2015	8-6-0 (57.1%)	57.1%	2-3-0 (40.0%)	40.0%	- 1.3	6-5-0 (54.5%)	54.5%
Thu. Dec 3, 2015	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Mon. Nov 30, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	-----	-----	-----	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%
Sun. Nov 29, 2015	6-6-0 (50.0%)	50.0%	1-2-0 (33.3%)	33.3%	- 1.2	4-5-0 (44.4%)	44.4%
Thu. Nov 26, 2015	2-1-0 (66.7%)	66.7%	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	- 1.1	3-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%
Mon. Nov 23, 2015	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	-----	-----	-----	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%
Sun. Nov 22, 2015	6-6-0 (50.0%)	50.0%	3-1-0 (75.0%)	75.0%	+ 1.9	4-4-0 (50.0%)	50.0%
Thu. Nov 19, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	1-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	+ 1.0	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%
Mon. Nov 16, 2015	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0.0%	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sun. Nov 15, 2015	9-3-0 (75.0%)	75.0%	3-0-0 (100.0%)	100.0%	+ 3.0	1-4-1 (20.0%)	20.0%

WinPicks database: Rolling Average of Last 03 Games

Figure 8.40 - The Analyze Formula Screen (PFA)

The ANALYZE FORMULA screen has eight columns:

- *Date* - This shows the schedule date for which the formula is being analyzed.
- *SUR Record* - This shows the formula's straight-up record for every game played.
- *SUR Percent* - This shows the formula's straight-up winning percentage for every game played.
- *ATS Record* - This shows the formula's record for the games that it recommended against the point spread.

- *ATS Percent* - This shows the formula's winning percentage for the games that it recommended against the point spread.
- *ATS Net Units* - This shows the number of net units that the formula has won or lost for the games it recommended against the point spread. Net units are calculated as plus 1 unit for every pick won, and minus 1.1 units for every pick lost. Formulas that would have won money when used for legal sports betting will show a positive value for net units, assuming that the same amount was wagered on every pick.
- *Totals Record* - This shows the formula's record for the games that it recommended against the totals line.
- *Totals Percent* - This shows the formula's winning percentage for the games that it recommended against the totals line.
- *Totals Net Units* - This shows the number of net units that the formula has won or lost for the games it recommended against the totals line. Net units are calculated as plus 1 unit for every pick won, and minus 1.1 units for every pick lost. Formulas that would have won money when used for legal sports betting will show a positive value for net units, assuming that the same amount was wagered on every pick.

The top line in the grid shows the formula's cumulative record for all of the dates being analyzed. When you evaluate formulas, keep in mind that an SUR of 65% or better is very good, and that 70% is excellent. An ATS or totals record of 52.4% is required to break even if you are using the formula for legal sports betting. An ATS or totals record of 55% or better is very good, and anything over 60% is excellent.

It is important to note that formulas with a good ATS record may not do well on totals, and vice versa. If you use Forge, you choose at the start whether the formula you create is aimed at the spread or at the totals line.

ANALYZE is a very powerful tool. It allows you to measure the quality of a prediction formula by looking at its past results.

Analyze All Formulas

Selecting this option will analyze all of your formulas at once. If you have a lot of formulas, this can take a few minutes or longer. After the formulas are analyzed, you are returned to the MY FORMULAS screen where the results are summarized.

Formula Analysis SUR Filter

Selecting this option from the FORMULAS menu will allow you to limit the games included in the straight-up record (SUR) analysis of a prediction formula. The points spread range is selectable from 1 to 25 points, or you can select all games (the default setting). This feature provides a more realistic look at a formula's ability to pick up straight winners, because you can filter out those "obvious" winners where the spread is more than 25 points. You can also limit the SUR analysis to games that are most likely to have a money line - for example, where the spread is 15 points or less, to find the formulas that work best for money line

wagers. The Formula Tuner will tune SUR formulas based on this setting, so you can tune a formula to pick SUR winners in games with small point spreads.

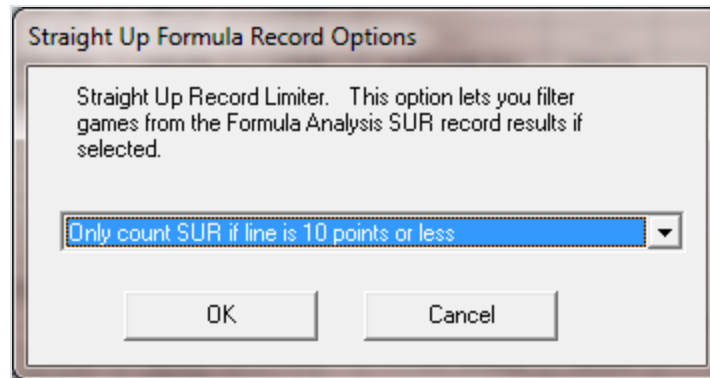


Figure 8.41 - The Formula Analysis SUR Filter Window

Tuning a Prediction Formula for Best Results

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.5. Tuning a Prediction Formula for Best Results

The Formula Tuner can tune any prediction formula and improve the results. You can start the Formula Tuner from the MY FORMULAS page, using the link called "Tune" to the right of each formula name. You can also select FORMULA TUNER from the FORMULAS menu to tune the active formula, or click the



button on the toolbar.

Most of the formula equations in WinPicks are non-linear. Finding a mathematical solution for optimizing a formula is difficult (if not impossible). *Pro Football Analyst* also includes Forge, which designs a formula from scratch by choosing which statistics to use as well as their weights. Forge and the Formula Tuner are complements rather than rivals: Forge decides what belongs in a formula, and the Tuner adjusts the weights of a formula that already exists. The Tuner works in all five sports.

Instead of using mathematical equations to solve for the best combination of formula values, the Tuner uses a Monte Carlo technique that randomly varies the numbers, testing the results along the way. When it finds a better result, it remembers the new formula values, and continues to run with new random variations. The "Formula Tuner" runs continuously under your control, letting you tune a formula for a few minutes, a few hours, or even overnight. The "Formula Tuner" never gets tired, and continually tries to make a formula better. It can start with any formula, and in nearly all cases produce a better one.

The Formula Tuner Window

The Formula Tuner window is shown in Figure 8.50 below:

Formula Tuner: STAUBACH

Tune:	Start	Test	New Results	
☒ Best ATS Units	+14.0	+ 9.6	+24.3	ATS Net Units Tries: 147
☐ Best ATS Pct	61.0%	64.1%	66.7%	ATS Pct
☒ Best Totals Units	- 4.4	+ 6.3	+14.3	Totals Net Units
☐ Best Totals Pct	50.8%	57.1%	58.4%	Totals Pct
☐ Best SU Pct	59.0%	55.9%	58.6%	Straight Up Pct ☒ Progressive Mode

1 Sigma Deviation	Parameter Name	Original Value	Test Value	New Value
☒ ± 1.0	Points Scored	0.0	0.514	0.526
☒ ± 1.0	First Downs	0.468	1.53	0.561
☒ ± 1.0	Rushing Attempts	9.355	6.12	6.748
☒ ± 1.0	Rushing Yards	3.024	0.832	1.703
☒ ± 1.0	Passing Yards	3.706	1.631	1.934
☒ ± 1.0	Return Yards	2.271	1.408	3.332
☒ ± 1.0	Pass Completions	0.432	1.159	0.82
☒ ± 1.0	Passing Attempts	3.781	3.502	1.863
☒ ± 1.0	Interceptions	6.682	5.906	5.727
☒ ± 1.0	Times Sacked	4.071	1.602	3.258
☒ ± 1.0	Sack Yards	0.0	5.076	2.573
☒ ± 1.0	Punts	0.0	0.251	1.203
☒ ± 1.0	Punting Yards	4.263	4.462	6.074
☒ ± 1.0	Fumbles	5.668	2.563	3.669
☒ ± 1.0	Fumbles Lost	6.78	4.271	4.306
☒ ± 1.0	Penalties	4.175	2.029	3.422
☒ ± 1.0	Penalty Yards	3.77	6.121	4.692

Change Deviation using Left/Right Mouse Buttons

Figure 8.50 - The Formula Tuner Window

At the top of the "Formula Tuner" window, you can select the type of results you wish to tune. You can select one or more of these options:

- **Best ATS Units** - Tunes a formula to produce the highest number of against the spread net units
- **Best ATS Pct** - Tunes a formula to produce the highest winning percentage against the spread. If the tuner reaches 100%, it will continue to try to increase the number of net units.
- **Best Totals Units** - Tunes a formula to produce the highest number of net units against the totals line (over/unders)
- **Best Totals Pct** - Tunes a formula to produce the highest winning percentage for over/unders
- **Best SU Pct** - Tunes a formula to produce the highest percentage of straight-up winners
- **Best SU Units** - Tunes a formula to produce the highest number of straight-up net units, graded at each game's money line

Two further objectives, **Best CLV ATS** and **Best CLV O/U**, are described in *Tuning Against Closing Line Value*, below.

Listed to the right, there are three columns that show the results of testing the formula. The original results of the formula (before tuning) are displayed in the first column. The second column displays the results of the last test that the Formula Tuner attempted. The numbers in the second column change as the Tuner runs, on many computers a test lasts less than 1 second. The third column shows the results of the best formula the Tuner has found since it started running. A fourth column, Best O/S, fills in when Track out-of-sample is ticked, showing each objective's record on the held-out games (see Holding Out a Period, and Reading the Luck Line, below).

The "Progressive Mode" checkbox on the window tells the Tuner to add random variations to the best formula the tuner has found so far. If the "Progressive Mode" checkbox is not checked, the Tuner will always add random variation to the original formula every time. The progressive mode is turned on by default, and allows the "Formula Tuner" to "walk" away from the original formula values as it finds better combinations.

In the middle of the "Formula Tuner" window, every parameter in the formula is shown along with its starting value, the last value the tuner checked, and the new value from the best formula found so far.

The first column of the parameter window, labeled "1 sigma deviation", contains a checkbox which lets you to enable or disable each parameter from being tuned. By default all parameters are enabled, but you can disable a parameter if you do not want the value to change. You can enable or disable parameters before starting the "Formula Tuner" or while it is running.

To the right of each checkbox is a number indicating how many standard deviations the random variations for each parameter will be allowed to wander. The "Formula Tuner" generates random variations using a normal distribution within the one sigma (one standard deviation) range. However, while the tuner is running, you can use the left and right mouse buttons to increase and decrease the size of the range where the random variations will be allowed to occur.

There are a row of five buttons directly underneath the formula parameters window:

- **Enable All** - This button enables all formula parameters to be tuned, including those that were previously disabled.
- **Disable All** - This disables all parameters from being tuned, allowing you to turn all parameters off, and then turn on the ones you want, one by one using the checkboxes.
- **Reset** - This button changes all of the sigma values back to their standard value of one (one standard deviation).
- **Save Settings** - Clicking this button allows you to save the current formula tuner settings in a file. You are allowed to name the file, and store as many tuner parameter files as you wish. The formula settings that you save can also be used later with the NightShift Formula Tuner.
- **Load Settings** - Click this button to load a previously saved parameter file into the Formula Tuner.

To start tuning, click the "Start" button at the bottom of the window. Once running, you will see the results in the "Test Value" column update as the tuner searches for a better formula, and the number of tries is also updated in the window.

You can click the "Stop" button at any time to stop the tuner from running, and save the formula with the new values. The "Save" button will save the formula with the same name as before, or you can click the "Save As" button to save the formula with a new name.

After saving a formula, you can click the "Cancel" button to leave the "Formula Tuner" and to begin using your new formula.

Note that WinPicks will allow you to run multiple copies of the "Formula Tuner" by opening WinPicks in more than one browser tab. This allows you to get the most out of your available processing power. For example, you can open four tabs of College Basketball Analyst (CBA), each tuning a different formula. Or, you can tune formulas in the college and pro football packages simultaneously, with both tuners running at high speed.

Tuning Against Closing Line Value

The tuner's objectives - best ATS units, best ATS percentage, and so on - all measure whether a formula's picks won. Closing Line Value measures something different and, over a short sample, more reliable: whether the formula was picking numbers the market later agreed with.

What CLV is. If you take a game at -3 and it closes at -4, you got half a point better than the closing number, whether or not the bet won. That is positive closing line value. A formula with a positive CLV is finding the same things the market finds, only earlier. A formula that wins while showing negative CLV has probably been lucky, and it will usually say so eventually.

Tuning for it. The Formula Tuner offers two extra objectives, **Best CLV ATS** and **Best CLV O/U**. Tick either and the tuner searches for weights that maximise line value rather than results. The figure is shown in points per bet, not units, because it is not a bankroll number: **+0.42** means the average pick beat the closing number by four tenths of a point.

Figure 8.55 shows the Formula Tuner window as it stands in WinPicks 2.0, with everything this section and the next describe in one place.

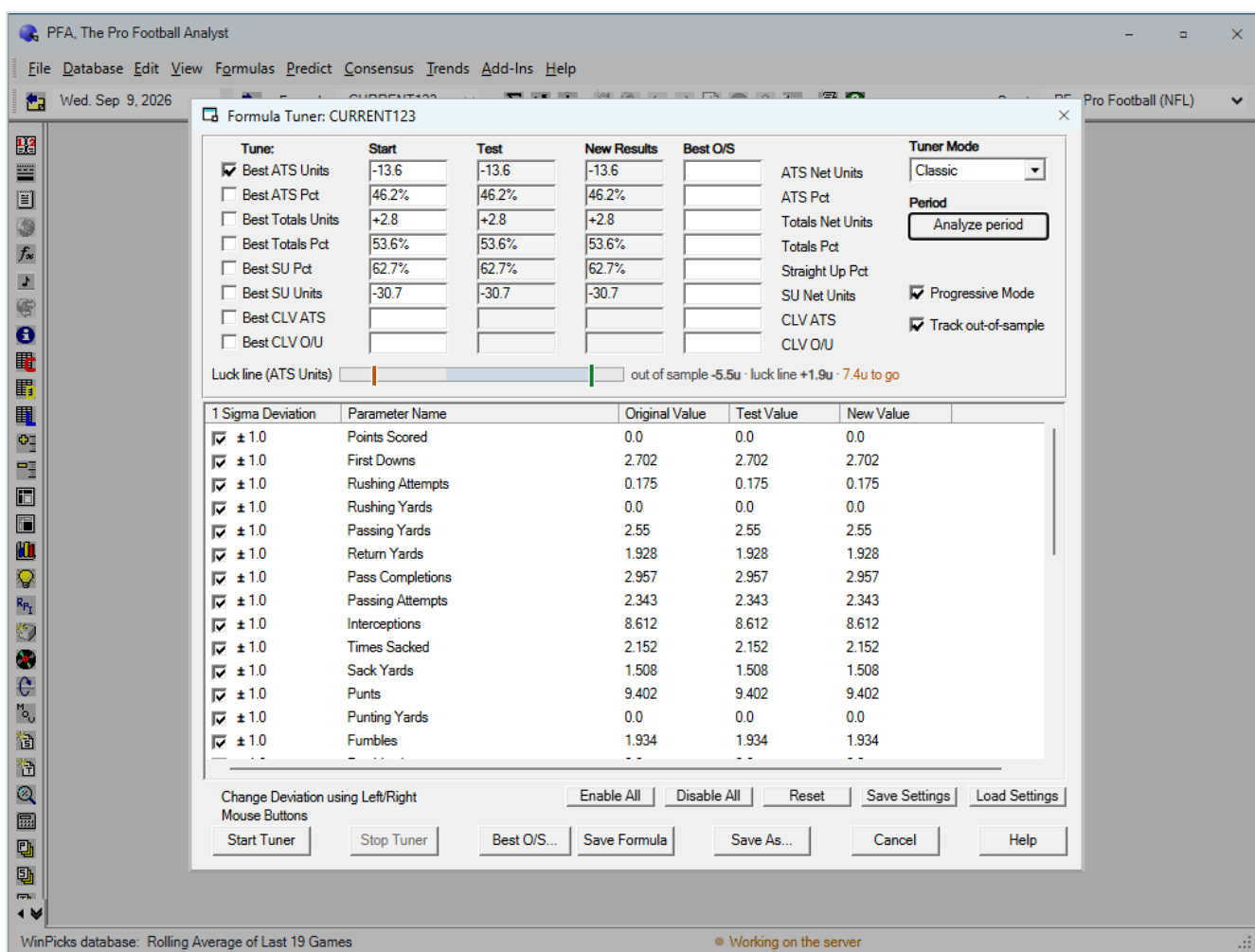


Figure 8.55 - The Formula Tuner, with the CLV Objectives and the Luck Line (PFA)

Reading Figure 8.55 from the top: the **Tune** panel lists all eight objectives - the five from section 8.5, Best SU Units, and the two CLV rows - each with its Start, Test, New Results and Best O/S columns. To the right sit the **Tuner Mode** list (Classic in the figure; Optuna is the other choice), the **Period** button that picks the dates to tune over, and the **Progressive Mode** and **Track out-of-sample** checkboxes. Under the objectives runs the **Luck line** strip - in the figure it reads "out of sample -5.5u, luck line +1.9u, 7.4u to go", which is the next section's subject. Below that, unchanged from section 8.5: the parameter grid with its deviation checkboxes, and the button rows - ENABLE ALL, DISABLE ALL, RESET, SAVE SETTINGS, LOAD SETTINGS; START TUNER, STOP TUNER, BEST O/S..., SAVE FORMULA, SAVE AS..., CANCEL and HELP.

When to use it. A season is a small sample, and a formula can post a flattering ATS record over eighty bets by luck alone. CLV over the same eighty bets is far harder to fake: to beat the close consistently you must know something before the market finishes knowing it, and there is no lucky way to do that eighty times.

The workflow. The order of operations matters more than the objective:

1. **Tune on CLV first.** Tick Best CLV ATS (or CLV O/U), pick the period, and let the tuner search for weights that find numbers the market later moves toward.

2. **Then check the results columns.** A formula with positive CLV *and* a decent ATS record is the real article: it beats the close, and the wins confirm it. Positive CLV with a mediocre record over a short stretch is often just early - the close agrees with the formula, and the bounces have not evened out yet. This is the one situation in handicapping where patience has arithmetic behind it.

3. **Distrust the reverse.** A flattering ATS record with *negative* CLV is the combination to walk away from, however good the percentage looks. It says the market moved against these picks after they were made, and the wins came anyway - which is a description of luck. Records like this are why the tuner shows both numbers side by side rather than letting either one speak alone.

4. **Hold the holdout to the same standard.** CLV can be overfit like anything else - the tuner is still keeping the best of thousands of tries. Track out-of-sample applies to the CLV objectives exactly as to the others (the Best O/S column in Figure 8.55 fills in for the CLV rows too), and the Luck Line strip is the same backdrop: a CLV headline that sits where a signal-free search reaches is the search, not the formula.

Reading the magnitude. The figure is points per bet against the closing number, so it compounds bet after bet in a way a percentage does not. Judge it the way you judge everything else in the tuner: against the Luck Line (what the same search fakes on noise) and against the held-out column (what survived on games the fit never saw) - not against a round number someone quotes in a forum.

What it needs. A game must have both an opening and a closing number on file for its CLV to be measurable. All five sports carry that pairing; where a particular sport's odds file does not, the tuner says so and ignores the objective rather than silently scoring zero.

Holding Out a Period, and Reading the Luck Line

Two features of the Formula Tuner exist to answer the same question: is this result real?

Track out-of-sample. Tick this and a second tuner runs beside the first, trained only up to a cutoff date, and records the best result it reaches on games the fit never saw. Nothing is selected on that number - the search is unchanged - it is simply kept, so that a good held-out block is not lost when it scrolls past. A formula that looks excellent in the fit and ordinary out-of-sample has been fitted to noise.

The Luck Line. The tuner keeps the best of many attempts, so its headline is a maximum over N draws and always flatters itself. The Luck Line is what the *same* search, at the *same* try budget, reaches when the outcomes carry no signal at all. If your result sits inside that band, the search found nothing; the number is what trying many times produces by itself. The strip in Figure 8.55 is this made visible: "out of sample -5.5u, luck line +1.9u, 7.4u to go" means the run's held-out result stands 5.5 units under water, and would need 7.4 more units just to reach what a signal-free search produces on its own.

It is a backdrop, not a gate. It never blocks a save, and it is not a substitute for out-of-sample - it tells you how much of the headline is the search rather than the formula.

Tuner modes. Classic works as the original program's tuner did. Optuna searches the same weights with a modern optimiser, which finds a good result in fewer tries on formulas with many parameters. Both honour the same objectives and the same held-out period.

The held-out controls. In Optuna mode a row of controls under the Luck Line sets how the holdout is scored: the number of held-out blocks (three by default), how the blocks combine into one figure (the mean less one standard deviation, the plain mean, or the worst block), and two dampers, Shrink and Robust, which trade a little of the headline for stability. The defaults are preselected; the further you loosen them, the better the fit looks and the less it tends to mean.

Best O/S. While out-of-sample tracking is on, a **Best O/S...** button sits beside Save. It shows the full held-out record - against the spread, totals and straight up - for the best out-of-sample candidate the run has found, and offers to save that formula rather than the in-sample winner.

Sharing Formulas: The Formula Warehouse

The Formula Warehouse was a MicroBrothers web page where customers uploaded formulas for others to download. It is no longer running, and the menu item that opened it is shown greyed out.

Formulas in WinPicks 2.0 are stored with your account rather than in a folder, so they follow you to any machine you sign in from. To work on a copy of a formula rather than the original, open it and use Save As under a new name - the starter formulas that ship with each package cannot be overwritten, which means you can always get back to a known starting point.

Predicting Sides (Straight-Up and ATS)

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.7. Predicting Sides (Straight-Up and ATS)

After you load a formula, WinPicks is ready to make predictions for the current date. To predict games both straight-up and against the spread (ATS), select SIDES from the PREDICT menu. The predictions appear as shown in Figure 8.70.

CFA, The College Football Analyst

File Database Edit View Formulas Predict Consensus Trends Browser Help Utilities

Sat. Nov 21, 2015 Formula DOROTHY

Predict Sides

WinPicks Favorite	By	WinPicks Underdog	Line Favorite	By	Line Underdog	Recommended	Score	Result SUR	R A
at Pittsburgh	9.0	Louisville	Louisville	1.0	at Pittsburgh		45-34	WON	
at Akron	6.5	Buffalo	at Akron	5.0	Buffalo		42-21	WON	
at Georgia	7.5	Georgia Southern	at Georgia	13.5	Georgia Southern	Georgia Southern	23-17	WON	W
Rutgers	1.0	at Army	Rutgers	4.0	at Army		31-21	WON	
at Kentucky	21.5	Charlotte	at Kentucky	23.5	Charlotte		58-10	WON	
at Maryland	6.0	Indiana	at Maryland	1.0	Indiana	Maryland	28-47	LOST	L
at Massachusetts	9.5	Miami of Ohio	at Massachusetts	7.5	Miami of Ohio		13-20	LOST	
West Virginia	13.5	at Kansas	West Virginia	29.0	at Kansas		49-00	WON	
at Georgia State	3.0	South Alabama	at Georgia State	3.0	South Alabama		24-10	WON	

WinPicks database: All Games Season To Date

Figure 8.70 - Predicting Sides (CFA)

The prediction screen is divided into 11 columns:

- *WinPicks Favorite* - The team that WinPicks predicts to win.
- *By* - The WinPicks line. WinPicks expects its favored team to win by this many points.
- *WinPicks Underdog* - The team that WinPicks predicts to lose.
- *Line Favorite* - The team the sportsbook predicts to win.
- *By* - The actual betting line (point spread) for the game.
- *Line Underdog* - The team the sportsbook predicts to lose.
- *Recommend* - If a team appears in this column, WinPicks is predicting that this team will cover the line. A formula recommends picks when the difference between the actual line and the WinPicks line is within the range of the betting window.

- *Score* - Once the game has been played, this column lists the score in this format: WinPicks Favorite - WinPicks Underdog.
- *Result SUR* - If the game has been played, this column tells you if WinPicks picked the winner of the game correctly. WON means that WinPicks was right. LOST means that WinPicks was wrong.
- *Result ATS* - If the game has been played, this column displays how WinPicks did against the spread. If WinPicks did not recommend a pick against the spread, this column is left blank. However, if WinPicks did recommend a pick, WON means that WinPicks was right. LOST means that WinPicks was wrong.
- *Details* - Click this link to see a summary of how WinPicks made its prediction.

Predicting Straight Up

STRAIGHT UP is the third prediction grid, new in WinPicks 2.0, and it answers the simplest question of the three: who wins the game? Select STRAIGHT UP from the PREDICT menu.

The original program had no such screen, because it graded everything against the spread at a flat -110. A straight-up pick only becomes a bet when the money line's actual price is known - which it now is. The screen is shown in Figure 8.75.

Visitor Team	Home Team	WinPicks Pick	Price	Score	Result SUR	Details
+ North Carolina	Texas Christian	Texas Christian	-325	-----		Details Platinum
+ San Jose State	Southern California	Southern California	-100000 *	-----		Details Platinum
+ Hawaii	Stanford	Stanford	-225	-----		Details Platinum
+ New Mexico State	Florida State	Florida State	-8000	-----		Details Platinum
+ Memphis	UNLV	Memphis	+185	-----		Details Platinum
Results					0-0-0	

* No price is on file for that game in the prices Analyze grades against - the figure shown is the consensus of the books quoting it live.

WinPicks database: Rolling Average of Last 20 Games

Working on the server

Figure 8.75 - Predicting Straight Up (CFA)

The screen lists every game on the current date, in the same format as Predict Sides and Predict Totals:

- *Visitor Team* and *Home Team* - the matchup.
- *WinPicks Pick* - the team the current formula predicts to win outright, in green.
- *Price* - the money line for the picked side, from your price basis. An asterisk means no price is on file in the basis Analyze grades against, so the figure shown is the consensus of the books quoting it live - the footnote under the grid in Figure 8.75 says exactly that (see Prices on the Predict Screens, below).
- *Score* and *Result SUR* - once the game is played, the score and whether the pick WON, LOST or pushed. A Results line at the bottom totals the record; in the figure it reads 0-0-0 because none of the games have been played.
- *Details* - the same detailed prediction window the other grids open, and beside it a Platinum link straight to the game's Platinum Page.

The picks here can never disagree with Predict Sides: both screens read the same engine run, and the straight-up pick is simply the side the formula makes the winner. What this screen adds is the price - and Figure 8.75 shows why that matters. The formula likes Stanford at -225 and Florida State at -8000: picks that will almost certainly "win", and can barely pay. A formula that picks 60% of winners straight up can still lose money if every winner was priced like that, and the Price column is where you see it before it happens, not after.

Click the green + at the left of any row to see every book's price for the game.

Predicting Totals (Over/Unders)

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.8. Predicting Totals (Over/Unders)

TOTALS is used to handicap the total (or over/under) odds for a game. When you select TOTALS from the PREDICT menu, a screen appears like the one shown in Figure 8.80.

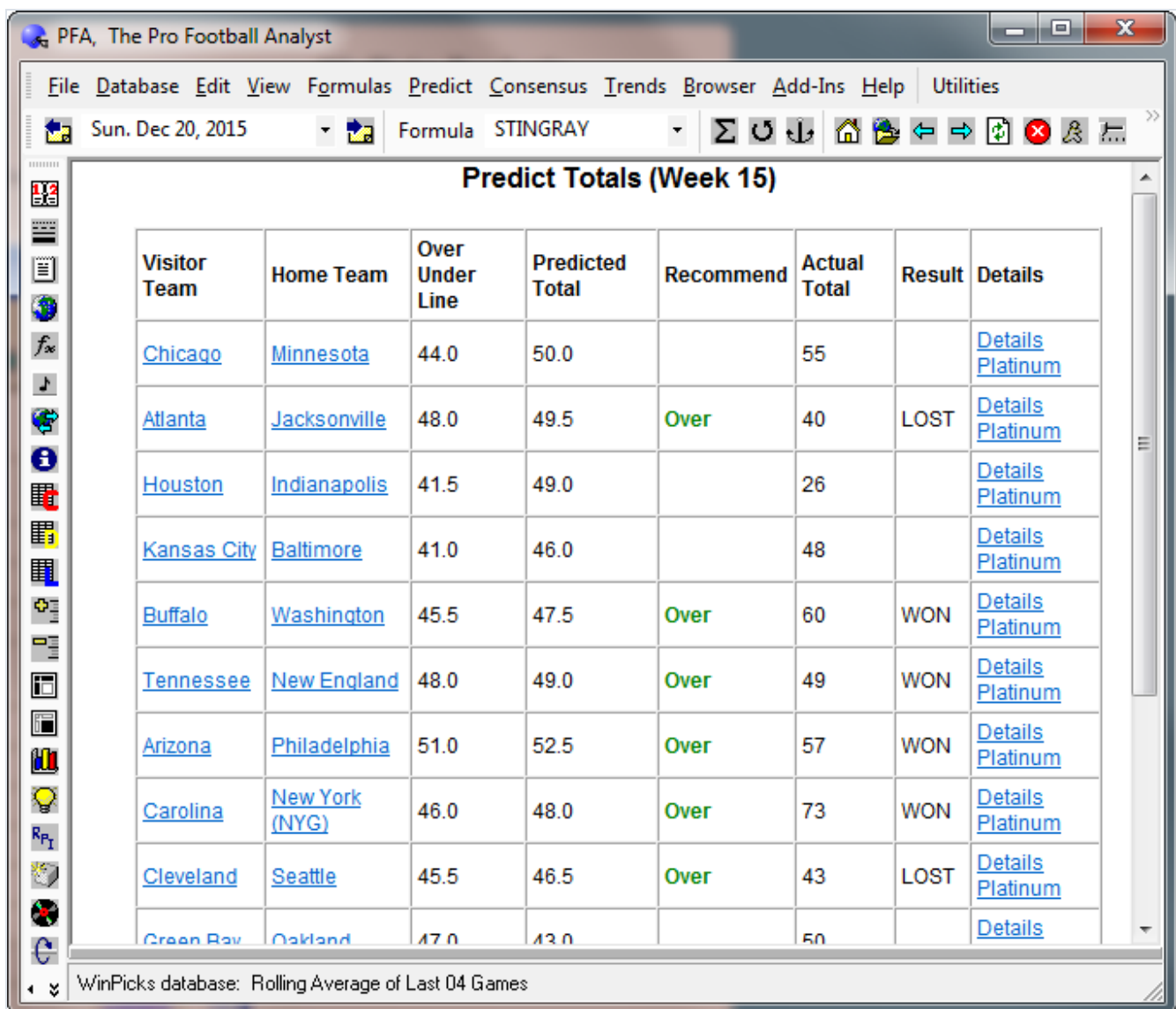


Figure 8.80 - Predicting Totals (PFA)

The PREDICT TOTALS screen is divided into eight columns:

- *Visitor Team* - This is the visitor, or road team.
- *Home Team* - This column lists the home team, or the site where the game will be played. The game site could be a very important piece of information when handicapping over/unders for college or pro football. If the game will be played in an outdoor stadium in a city expecting bad weather (Chicago in December, for example) it could mean a low score.
- *Over/Under Line* - This is the number you wager against. It is the point total the oddsmakers have predicted for the game.
- *Predicted Total* - This is the point total that WinPicks is predicting for the game, based on the prediction formula currently in use.

- *Recommend* - This is the pick that WinPicks is recommending. OVER means play the over. UNDER means play the under. If nothing appears in this column, WinPicks has no recommendation for the game.
- *Actual Total* - If the game has already been played, this column shows the total number of points scored in the game.
- *Result* - If the game has been played, this column tells you if WinPicks made the right recommendation on the game. WON means that WinPicks was right. LOST means that WinPicks was wrong.
- *Details* - Click here to see details of how WinPicks made its prediction.

Like ATS predictions, over/under picks are made using the stats included in the prediction formula. However, when picking over/unders, WinPicks doesn't try to analyze matchups to determine who has the stronger team or who is more likely to win. Instead, it tries to determine the collective strength of both teams. It determines the collective strength by computing the sum of both team's offensive rankings minus the sum of both team's defensive rankings. This value is scaled by the point spread multiplier in the same manner as for ATS picks. The result is then added to the overall league average for total points scored in each game. By adding in the league average, the over/under prediction is indexed to actual results for all games in the database.

Sound confusing? One simple way to look at it is this: If the two competing teams have good offenses and weak defenses, WinPicks will predict a high point total. Two teams with good defenses and weak offenses will result in a low predicted point total. Once a prediction is made, WinPicks compares the projected over/under to the actual over/under using the betting window discussed in Section 8.2. If the projected over/under is within the betting window, WinPicks will recommend that you play the OVER or UNDER.

Prices on the Predict Screens

Every Predict grid in WinPicks 2.0 carries prices beside its lines. The conventions are the same on every screen that shows a price - the Predict grids, the Platinum Page and Odds Compare - so they are described once, here. Figure 8.85 shows Predict Sides with a game's price panel open.

CFA, The College Football Analyst

File Database Edit View Formulas Predict Consensus Trends Add-Ins Help

Sat. Aug 29, 2026 Formula DAWGS Sport CF - College Football

Predict Sides (Week 1)

WinPicks Favorite	By	WinPicks Underdog	Line Favorite	By	Line Underdog	Price	Recommended	Score	Result SUR	Result ATS	Details																																																																																																																				
at Texas Christian	10.0	North Carolina	at Texas Christian	7.5	North Carolina	-118 / -102	Texas Christian	-----			Details Platinum																																																																																																																				
<table><tr><th>Book</th><th>Spread</th><th>Total</th><th>Money line</th></tr><tr><td>1Xbet</td><td>-105 / -115 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Ballybet</td><td>-113 / -108 -7.5</td><td>-113 / -108 47</td><td>+240 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Betmgm</td><td>-105 / -115 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>+260 / -325</td></tr><tr><td>Betonline</td><td>-105 / -115 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 48</td><td>+249 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Betparx</td><td>-113 / -108 -7.5</td><td>-113 / -108 47</td><td>+240 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Betrivers</td><td>-114 / -109 -7.5</td><td>-114 / -109 47</td><td>+230 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Betus</td><td>-105 / -115 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 48</td><td>+250 / -300</td></tr><tr><td>Bovada</td><td>-110 / -110 -8.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>+270 / -340</td></tr><tr><td>Boylesports</td><td>-110 / -110 -8.5</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>Caesars</td><td>-106 / -114 -7.5</td><td>-112 / -108 47.5</td><td>+255 / -325</td></tr><tr><td>Coral</td><td>-105 / -118 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>+260 / -333</td></tr><tr><td>Draftkings</td><td>-102 / -118 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>+260 / -325</td></tr><tr><td>Espnbet</td><td>-110 / -110 -7.5</td><td>-115 / -105 47.5</td><td>+260 / -320</td></tr><tr><td>Fanduel</td><td>-110 / -110 -7.5</td><td>-115 / -105 47.5</td><td>+260 / -330</td></tr><tr><td>Fliff</td><td>-115 / -115 -8.5</td><td>-115 / -115 47.5</td><td>+250 / -330</td></tr><tr><td>Gtbets</td><td>-104 / -114 -7.5</td><td>-109 / -109 47.5</td><td>+255 / -315</td></tr><tr><td>Kalshi</td><td>-126 / -107 -7.5</td><td>-121 / -121 47.5</td><td>+252 / -306</td></tr><tr><td>Ladbrokes</td><td>-105 / -118 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>+260 / -333</td></tr><tr><td>Lowvig</td><td>-101 / -111 -7.5</td><td>-108 / -108 48</td><td>+249 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Mybookie</td><td>-110 / -110 -7.5</td><td>-110 / -110 47.5</td><td>+255 / -350</td></tr><tr><td>Novig</td><td>+106 / -111 -7.5</td><td>-113 / -113 47.5</td><td>+264 / -355</td></tr><tr><td>Sportsbet</td><td>-115 / -115 -7.5</td><td>-</td><td>+266 / -345</td></tr><tr><td>Sugarhouse</td><td>-114 / -109 -7.5</td><td>-114 / -109 47</td><td>+230 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Tabtouch</td><td>-117 / -112 -7.5</td><td>-117 / -112 47</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>TheScorebet</td><td>-110 / -110 -7.5</td><td>-115 / -105 47.5</td><td>+260 / -320</td></tr><tr><td>Unibet</td><td>-115 / -110 -7.5</td><td>-</td><td>+260 / -370</td></tr><tr><td>Unknown</td><td>-114 / -109 -7.5</td><td>-114 / -114 47.5</td><td>+230 / -305</td></tr><tr><td>Betsson</td><td>-</td><td>-114 / -114 48</td><td>+249 / -345</td></tr></table>												Book	Spread	Total	Money line	1Xbet	-105 / -115 -7.5	-110 / -110 47.5	-	Ballybet	-113 / -108 -7.5	-113 / -108 47	+240 / -305	Betmgm	-105 / -115 -7.5	-110 / -110 47.5	+260 / -325	Betonline	-105 / -115 -7.5	-110 / -110 48	+249 / -305	Betparx	-113 / -108 -7.5	-113 / -108 47	+240 / -305	Betrivers	-114 / -109 -7.5	-114 / -109 47	+230 / -305	Betus	-105 / -115 -7.5	-110 / -110 48	+250 / -300	Bovada	-110 / -110 -8.5	-110 / -110 47.5	+270 / -340	Boylesports	-110 / -110 -8.5	-	-	Caesars	-106 / -114 -7.5	-112 / -108 47.5	+255 / -325	Coral	-105 / -118 -7.5	-110 / -110 47.5	+260 / -333	Draftkings	-102 / -118 -7.5	-110 / -110 47.5	+260 / -325	Espnbet	-110 / -110 -7.5	-115 / -105 47.5	+260 / -320	Fanduel	-110 / -110 -7.5	-115 / -105 47.5	+260 / -330	Fliff	-115 / -115 -8.5	-115 / -115 47.5	+250 / -330	Gtbets	-104 / -114 -7.5	-109 / -109 47.5	+255 / -315	Kalshi	-126 / -107 -7.5	-121 / -121 47.5	+252 / -306	Ladbrokes	-105 / -118 -7.5	-110 / -110 47.5	+260 / -333	Lowvig	-101 / -111 -7.5	-108 / -108 48	+249 / -305	Mybookie	-110 / -110 -7.5	-110 / -110 47.5	+255 / -350	Novig	+106 / -111 -7.5	-113 / -113 47.5	+264 / -355	Sportsbet	-115 / -115 -7.5	-	+266 / -345	Sugarhouse	-114 / -109 -7.5	-114 / -109 47	+230 / -305	Tabtouch	-117 / -112 -7.5	-117 / -112 47	-	TheScorebet	-110 / -110 -7.5	-115 / -105 47.5	+260 / -320	Unibet	-115 / -110 -7.5	-	+260 / -370	Unknown	-114 / -109 -7.5	-114 / -114 47.5	+230 / -305	Betsson	-	-114 / -114 48	+249 / -345
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WinPicks database: Rolling Average of Last 20 Games

Working on the server

Figure 8.85 - Predict Sides with Every Book Open (CFA)

The Price column. On Predict Sides and Predict Totals the price is shown in the form -118 / -102: the favourite's price first, then the underdog's (for totals, the over's and then the under's). On Predict Straight Up it is the money line for the picked side. The prices come from your price basis - see The Price Basis, in section 6.

The green +. Every row starts with a green +. Click it and the row opens into every bookmaker pricing that game - the open panel in Figure 8.85. Each book is a row; the columns are the three markets, each read the same way: under **Spread**, "-105 / -115 -7.5" is the price on each side and then the line itself; under **Total**, the over and under prices and the number; under **Money line**, the two teams' outright prices. Click the + again (it becomes a -) to close the panel. It is the quickest way to answer "who has the best number on this game?" without leaving the screen you are on.

The Platinum Page has the same panel behind its "+ all books" link, shown open in Figure 8.86 - along with the page's price summary: the spread price, the total price, the money line, the game type, and a **Price basis** line naming the basis grading this page, so the numbers above it cannot be misread.

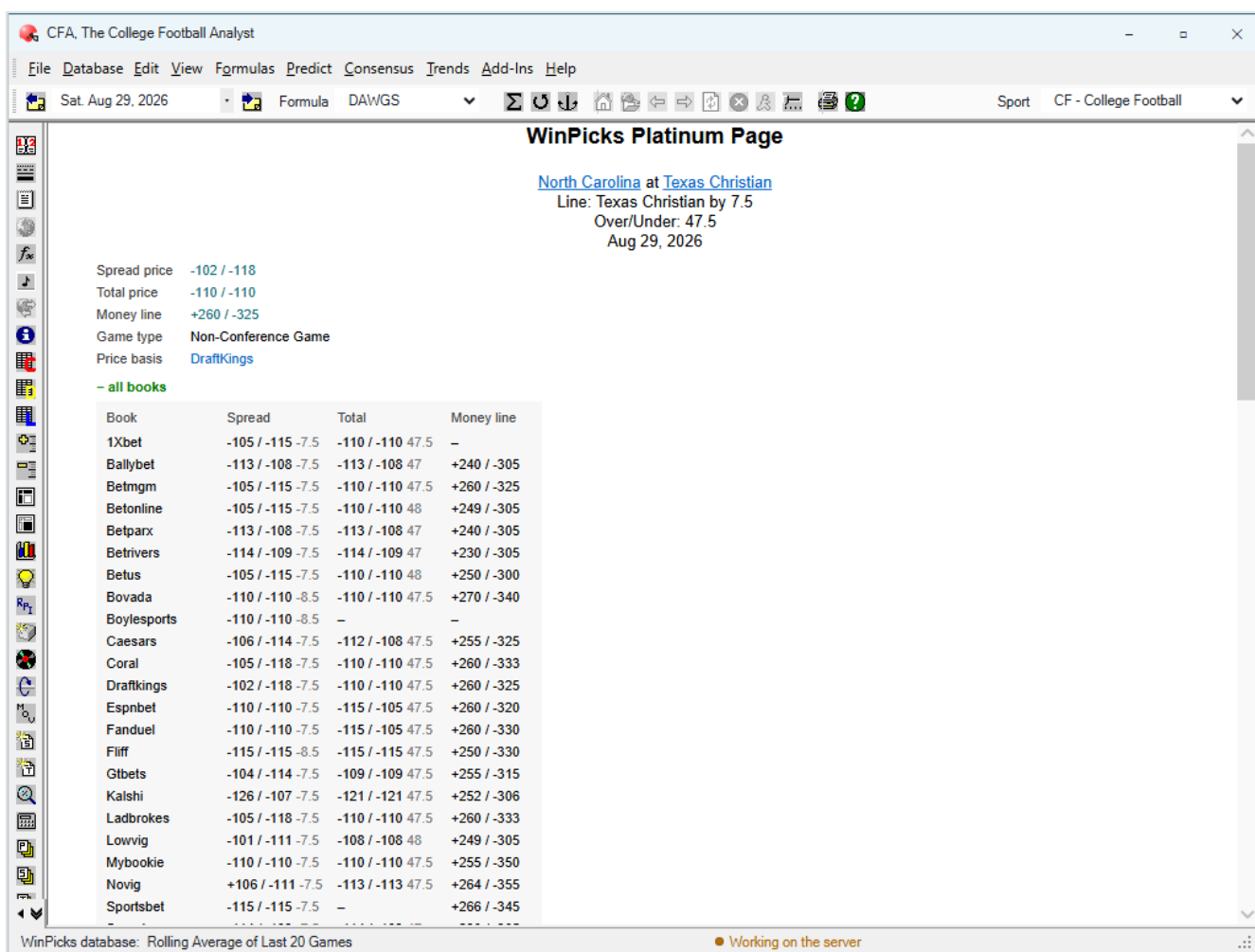


Figure 8.86 - The Platinum Page's Price Summary and All Books Panel (CFA)

The asterisk. A price marked with an asterisk did not come from the basis in force: no price is on file there for that game, so the figure shown is the consensus of the books quoting it. A footnote under the grid repeats this. The mark exists so that a number is never silently passed off as the basis's own quote.

The dash. A dash means no book posted the market at all - several appear in Figure 8.85, where a book carries the spread but not the total. A dash is never replaced with a guessed -110. The program does not invent a price it does not have, because every units figure downstream would inherit the invention.

Movement. Where the opening number is on file, screens that write a line out in words append the move - "(opened -3, moved 1.5 toward home)" - so a closing number is never mistaken for the number that was there all week. The trend alert reports carry this notation, and Odds Compare colours its best prices by whether they improved or worsened since the open.

Making Pool Picks

Win Picks Reference Manual Section 8.9. Making Pool Picks

POOL PICKS is a useful feature for those who participate in pools where a point value is assigned to each game. For example, in a football pool with 15 games, you might get 15 points for making your top pick correctly, 14 points for your second pick, and so on.

To see this information, select POOL PICKS from the PREDICT menu. A screen appears with nine columns. The first four columns (from left to right) show the game date and the WinPicks prediction for the game. The remaining columns are:

- *Pick Value* - Each game is ranked in the order of the predicted point spreads. The games with the biggest point spreads are ranked the highest. For example, the biggest predicted point spread might be 13 points. If so, the team favored by 13 is the top ranked pick of the week. If 15 games are scheduled the top pick has a value of 15, and the bottom pick has a value of 1.
- *Total* - This column will only contain information if the games have already been played. If the game was picked correctly, this column shows the number of points awarded for each game. The pool score is also shown, at the top of the column. The pool score is the total value of the correct picks. For example, a perfect pool score is 120 for a 15-game schedule, 105 for a 14-game schedule, 91 for a 13-game schedule, or 78 for a 12-game schedule.
- *Score* - If the game has been played, this column shows the score.
- *Result SUR* - If the game has been played, this column shows whether WinPicks was right or wrong about the straight-up outcome of the game. WON means that WinPicks was right. LOST means that WinPicks was wrong.
- *Line* - This column shows the team that was favored, and the point spread for the game. Normally, but not always, the heavily favored teams will have the highest pick value.
- *Result ATS* - If the game has been played, this column shows whether WinPicks was right or wrong about the ATS outcome. WON means that WinPicks was right. LOST means that WinPicks was wrong.

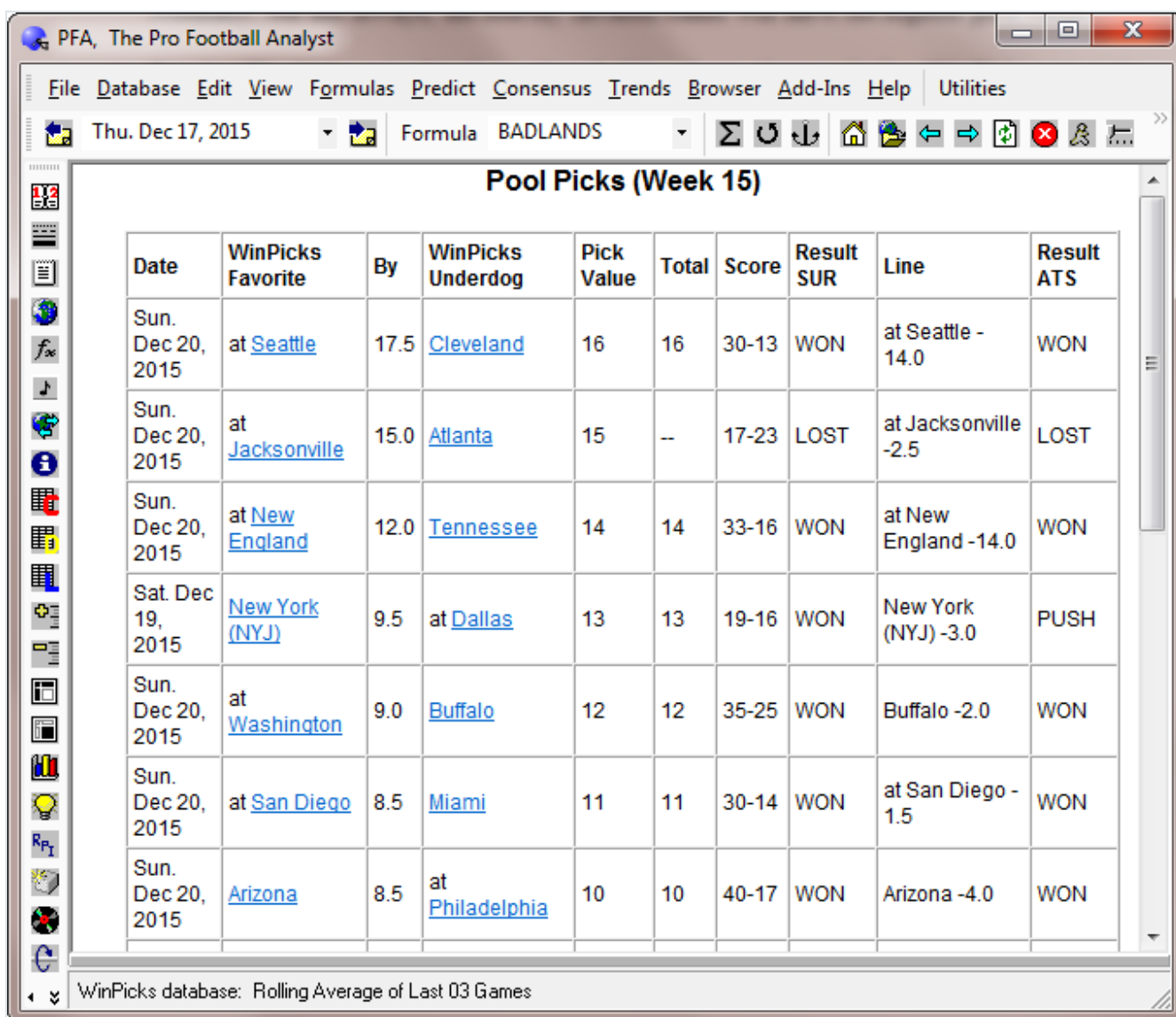


Figure 8.9 - Pool Picks (PFA)

Making Detailed Predictions

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.10. Making Detailed Predictions

WinPicks can show you how predictions are made by displaying a summary of game information. This summary includes the predicted outcome, the line, the projected point total, and a bar graph (*PFA* only) that illustrates how the two teams match up statistically. To use this feature, select SIDES or TOTALS and then click on "details" next to one of the games on the list. The detailed prediction window (*PFA* version) appears as shown in Figure 8.100.

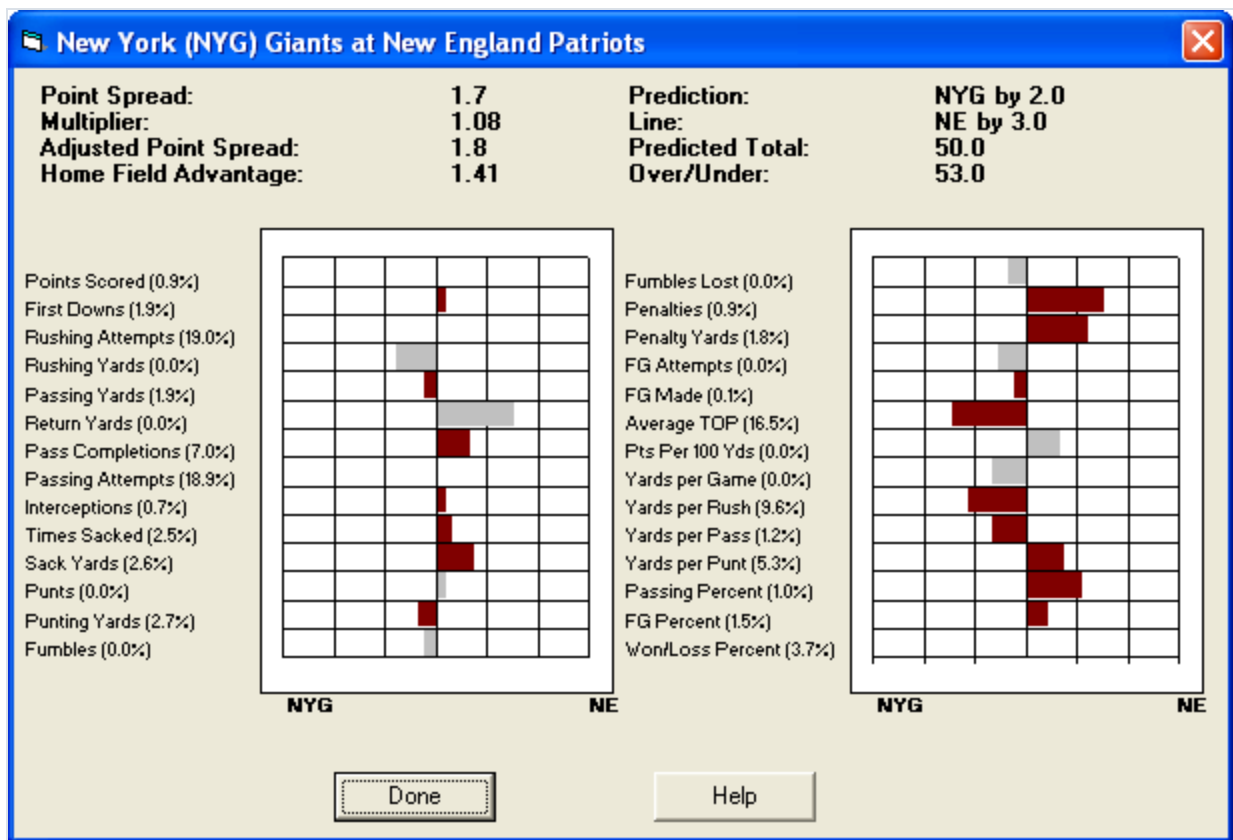
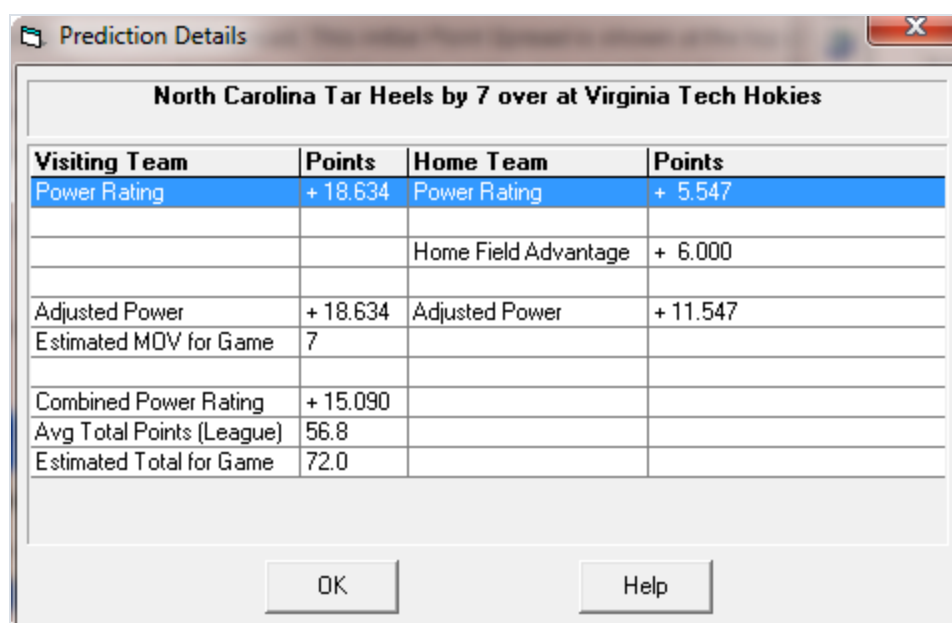


Figure 8.100 - The Detailed Prediction Window (PFA)

The detailed prediction window for *PFA* compares the teams in 32 different statistical categories. This information is displayed using a bar graph. The bar for each statistic points toward the team with the advantage. The longer the bar, the greater the advantage. If no bar is shown for a given statistic, then the two teams are considered equal in that category. Dark colored bars are used for statistics included in the prediction formula. Light colored bars are used for statistics that are not included (percentage weight equals 0).

The percentage weights in the formula are used to obtain a point spread. This initial *Point Spread* is shown at the top of the window. This point spread is then multiplied by the formula's *Point Spread Multiplier* to get the *Adjusted Point Spread*. Then, the *Home Field Advantage* is added to obtain the final prediction for the game. For example, the initial *Point Spread* might be 3.1. If the *Point Spread Multiplier* is set to 0.8, the *Adjusted Point Spread* is 2.48 points (3.1×0.8). If the HFA is 2.5 points, the home team is predicted to win by 4.98 points ($2.48 + 2.5$). This number is rounded to the nearest half point, so *PFA* predicts that the home team will win by 5 points. The prediction is shown in the top right corner of the window along with the line for the game, and the projected point total.

The detailed prediction windows for *CFA* and *PBA* display the prediction information in tabular form (no bar graph) as shown in Figure 8.101.



North Carolina Tar Heels by 7 over at Virginia Tech Hokies			
Visiting Team	Points	Home Team	Points
Power Rating	+ 18.634	Power Rating	+ 5.547
		Home Field Advantage	+ 6.000
Adjusted Power	+ 18.634	Adjusted Power	+ 11.547
Estimated MOV for Game	7		
Combined Power Rating	+ 15.090		
Avg Total Points (League)	56.8		
Estimated Total for Game	72.0		

OK Help

Figure 8.101 - The Detailed Prediction Window (CFA)

Making Single Game Predictions

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.11. Making Single Game Predictions

SINGLE GAME lets you predict the outcome of any possible game, including preseason games or "what-if" matchups between teams not scheduled to play each other. To use this feature, simply select the visiting and home team. The detailed prediction window then appears, displaying the prediction for the game and the projected point total. No line for these games are shown, since they are not on the schedule.

Making Consensus Predictions

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.12. Making Consensus Predictions

WinPicks includes an extremely powerful feature that lets you use more than one formula at once, and then predict games using a formula consensus. In fact, you can load as many formulas as you wish. WinPicks will recommend unanimous picks (where all formulas recommending a pick agree), or majority vote picks (where more than half of the formulas recommending a pick agree). You can do everything with multiple formulas that you can do with a single formula; you can predict straight-up, you can predict sides, you can predict totals, and you can analyze the prediction results.

To get started, select STRAIGHT-UP, SIDES or TOTALS from the CONSENSUS menu. You'll see a menu like the one in Figure 8.120.

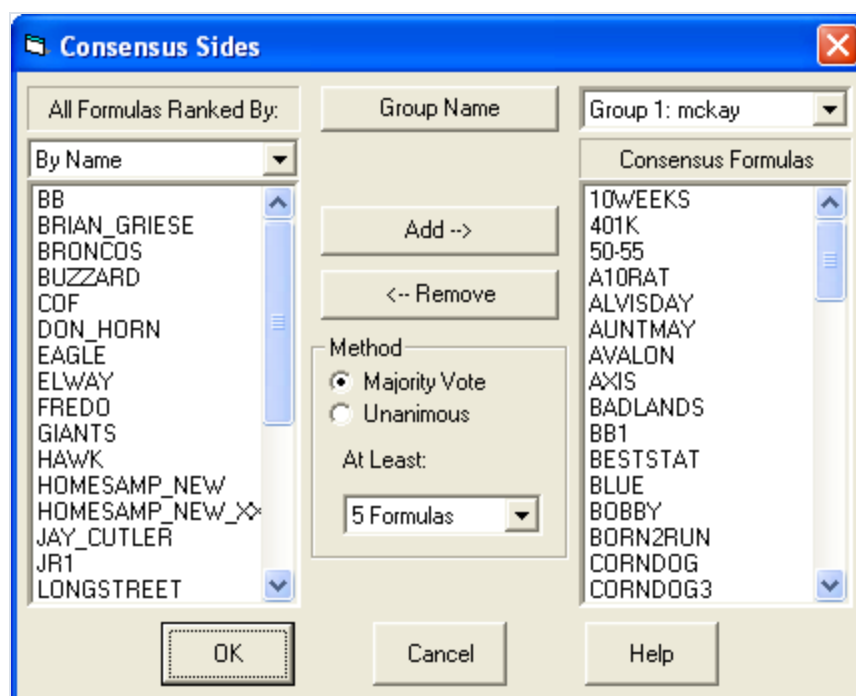


Figure 8.120 - Choosing the Formulas to Include in the Consensus

The menu shown in Figure 8.120 shows two lists of formulas: the left side list shows all of the formulas that contain a database setting. This list can be sorted using the pull down menu above the list. The sort order can be made alphabetically by name, or by the current rankings for the formula as displayed on the MY FORMULA screen. The right side lists the formulas included in the currently selected consensus group. The right side box has a pull down menu on top that allows you to select one of 20 different formula consensus groups. You can add or remove formulas from any of these 20 groups, and all of the groups are automatically saved.

To add a formula to the currently selected group, select a formula from the Formula List and click the ADD button. To remove a formula from the currently selected group, select a formula from the Consensus Group and click the REMOVE button. To add all of the formulas on your system to a formula group, click the USE ALL FORMULAS button.

Each consensus formula group can be given a name. Click the GROUP NAME button to enter a descriptive name for the current formula group.

Consensus Method

After you select the formulas to include in the Consensus Group, you then must decide what method to use. There are two methods to choose from:

- *Majority Vote Method* - If you select this method, WinPicks will check the recommended picks from all of the formulas in the Consensus Group. It then counts which picks are recommended for every game. Each formula recommendation counts as one "vote". For example, if you are predicting SIDES and Denver is playing Kansas City, WinPicks will count the number of votes for each team. If more formulas vote for Denver than Kansas City, the consensus will recommend Denver. There has to be a majority for

the consensus to recommend a pick. If an equal number of formulas vote for each team, there is no majority and the consensus will not recommend a pick.

- *Unanimous Method* - If you select this method, WinPicks will check the recommended picks from all of the formulas in the Consensus Group. It then counts which picks are recommended for every game. Each formula recommendation counts as one vote. The consensus will only recommend a pick if the voting is unanimous, or if every formula that recommends a pick on a given game recommends the same pick. For example, if you are predicting SIDES and Denver is playing Kansas City, WinPicks will count the number of votes for each team. If all of the votes go to Denver, the consensus will recommend Denver. However, if even one formula recommends Kansas City, the consensus is not unanimous, and the consensus will not recommend a pick.

The AT LEAST parameter determines the number of formulas that must vote before a majority or unanimous pick is recommended. For example, if you have selected that at least four formulas must vote, a pick will not be recommended if the unanimous method is in favor of the pick by a vote of 3-0, or if the majority method is in favor of the pick by a vote of 2-1.

After selecting a consensus group and method, select OK to save the information. WinPicks will use this consensus group and method as default settings until you change them. Select STRAIGHT-UP, SIDES (Figure 8.121), or TOTALS from the CONSENSUS menu depending upon the type of predictions that you want to make.

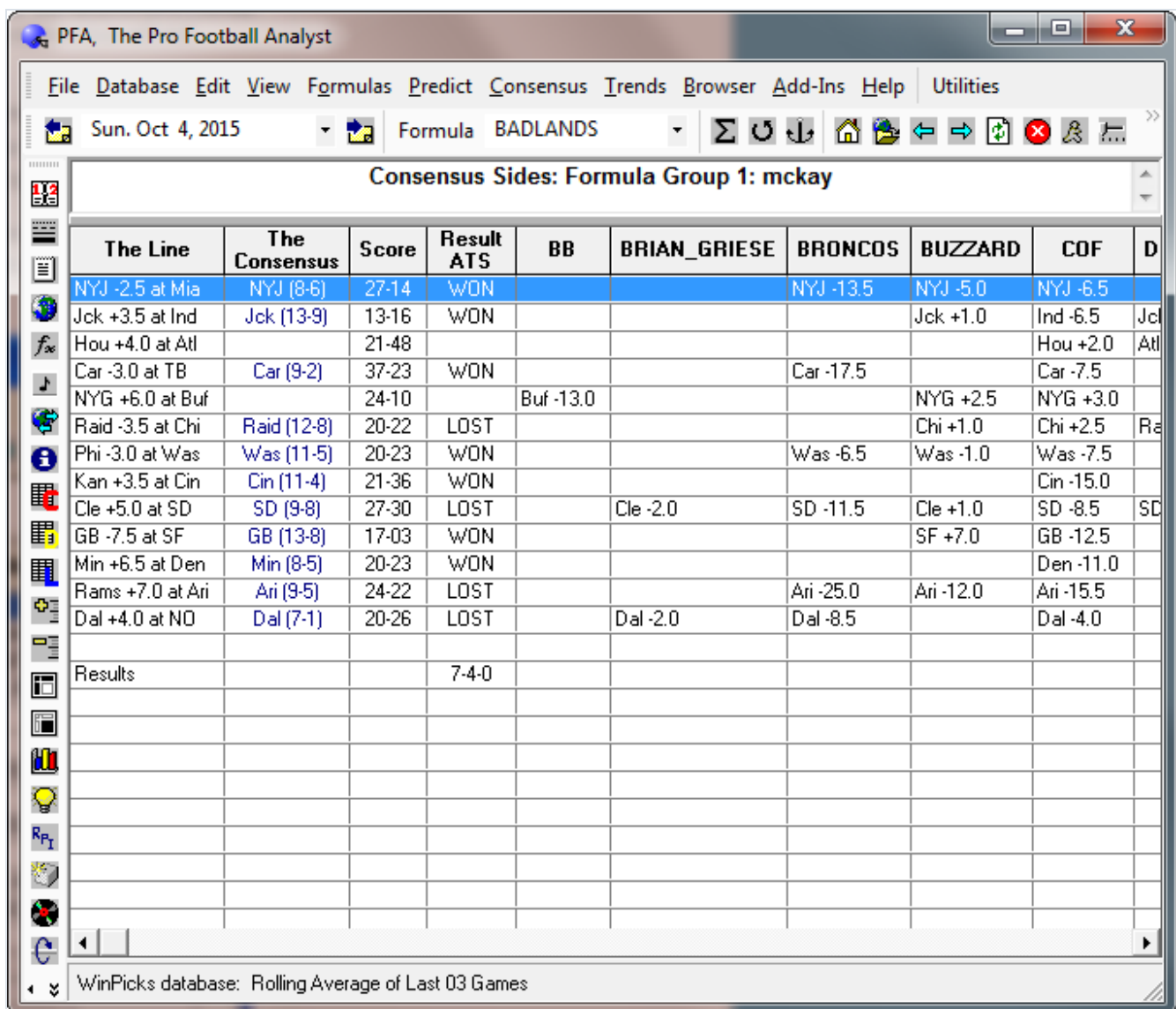


Figure 8.121 - Consensus Sides (PFA)

The unanimous vote method was selected in Figure 8.121. Each formula's picks are listed in a separate column. If you use more than a few formulas, you may have to scroll the screen to the right to see them all. The column labeled The Consensus shows the picks recommended by the consensus, and the results of the consensus vote.

Analyzing the Consensus

WinPicks can analyze the consensus picks just as it analyzes the picks made by a single formula. To analyze a formula consensus group for the current season, select ANALYZE THIS YEAR from the CONSENSUS menu, and then select the formula group you want to analyze. SELECT ANALYZE N GAMES from the CONSENSUS menu to see how well the consensus has picked over any number of past dates in the database.

Compare Formula Parameters

The formula consensus generally works best if it includes a diverse group of formulas (see "Consensus Tips" below). To compare the parameters of the formulas in your group, select COMPARE FORMULA

PARAMETERS from the CONSENSUS menu. A display will appear like the one shown in Figure 8.122. The display lists the contents of every formula contained in the consensus group, so you can see if they are emphasizing the same parameters. This will allow you to make decisions about whether to add or delete formulas for the group to make it more diverse.

Formula Parameters for Consensus Group 1: mckay

Formula Parameter	BB	BRIAN_GRIESE	BRONCOS	BUZZARD	COF	DON_
Points Scored	0.0	19.274	0.0	0.2595	27.79	1.8647
First Downs	0.0	0.303	9.237	1.7196	21.17	13.3146
Rushing Attempts	0.0	0.0	0.519	9.7624	5.76	3.1162
Rushing Yards	0.0	8.286	2.97	5.0497	1.63	2.2727
Passing Yards	0.0	0.41	0.0	0.0	34.27	7.3985
Return Yards	0.0	4.142	0.173	0.7106	0.0	0.0
Pass Completions	0.0	0.409	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3792
Passing Attempts	0.0	2.425	0.646	0.2044	0.0	2.676
Interceptions	0.0	1.938	1.381	10.7887	0.0	3.7299
Times Sacked	10.0	0.0	1.602	3.1675	9.38	1.1592
Sack Yards	0.0	3.647	0.774	0.0	0.0	13.8954
Punts	0.0	2.234	2.836	0.0	0.0	1.6355
Punting Yards	0.0	0.0	17.173	2.6607	0.0	0.0
Fumbles	0.0	9.44	3.554	4.2848	0.0	1.757
Fumbles Lost	0.0	1.729	2.505	0.0	0.0	12.8212
Penalties	0.0	7.647	7.827	8.3743	0.0	3.9438
Penalty Yards	0.0	0.0	5.058	1.5638	0.0	6.6788
FG Attempts	0.0	4.16	3.247	3.7835	0.0	2.4823
FG Made	0.0	0.793	0.0	1.3072	0.0	0.8299
Average TOP	70.0	0.829	2.122	4.3355	0.0	3.2293
Pts Per 100 Yds	6.0	16.873	0.0	6.7426	0.0	2.8071

WinPicks database: Rolling Average of Last 03 Games

Figure 8.122 - Comparing Consensus Group Formula Parameters (PFA)

Consensus Tips

The formula consensus is a powerful tool that can produce very high winning percentages when used properly. However, there are a few things you should be aware of when using consensus picks.

- *Speed* - The number of formulas you can use in a consensus is limited only by the amount of memory you have. However, if a large number of formulas are loaded, it might take a long time to analyze the performance of the consensus.
- *A majority vote may yield too many picks* - If you use a majority vote with a large number of formulas, WinPicks might recommend a pick on nearly every game. For example, if you include 25 formulas in your consensus, you will probably get 5 or more formulas voting on every game. Since its unlikely for the vote to end in a draw, the consensus may recommend a pick for every game on the schedule. Keep

in mind that the majority vote will recommend a pick whether the consensus is 9-8 or 16-1, so be sure and look at the actual voting results. A close vote (like 9-8) may be a signal to avoid the game.

- *A unanimous vote may yield too few picks* - If you use a unanimous vote with a large number of formulas, WinPicks may seldom recommend a pick. For example, if you include 25 formulas in your consensus, you will probably get 5 or more formulas voting on every game. The more formulas you have voting, the less likely you are to receive a unanimous pick.
- *Use a diverse group of formulas in the consensus* - The consensus works best if it includes formulas that use different variables and database methods. If your consensus consists of a group of formulas that are nearly the same, it probably won't work. Every formula looks at a game from a unique angle. If you look at a game from a wide variety of angles and still come up with a consensus pick, you probably have a very solid play.
- *Formulas used in the consensus must have a database selected* - Only formulas that have a database selected can be used as part of the consensus group.

NightShift Formula Tuner

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.13. NightShift Formula Tuner

WinPicks lets you tune multiple formulas over long periods using the NightShift Formula Tuner. While you are at work, or while you are sleeping, it keeps searching for the weights that score best against the objective you picked - and reports the holdout result beside the training one, so you can see how much of the improvement was real.

To get started, select NIGHTSHIFT FORMULA TUNER from the FORMULAS menu. You'll see a window similar to Figure 8.130:

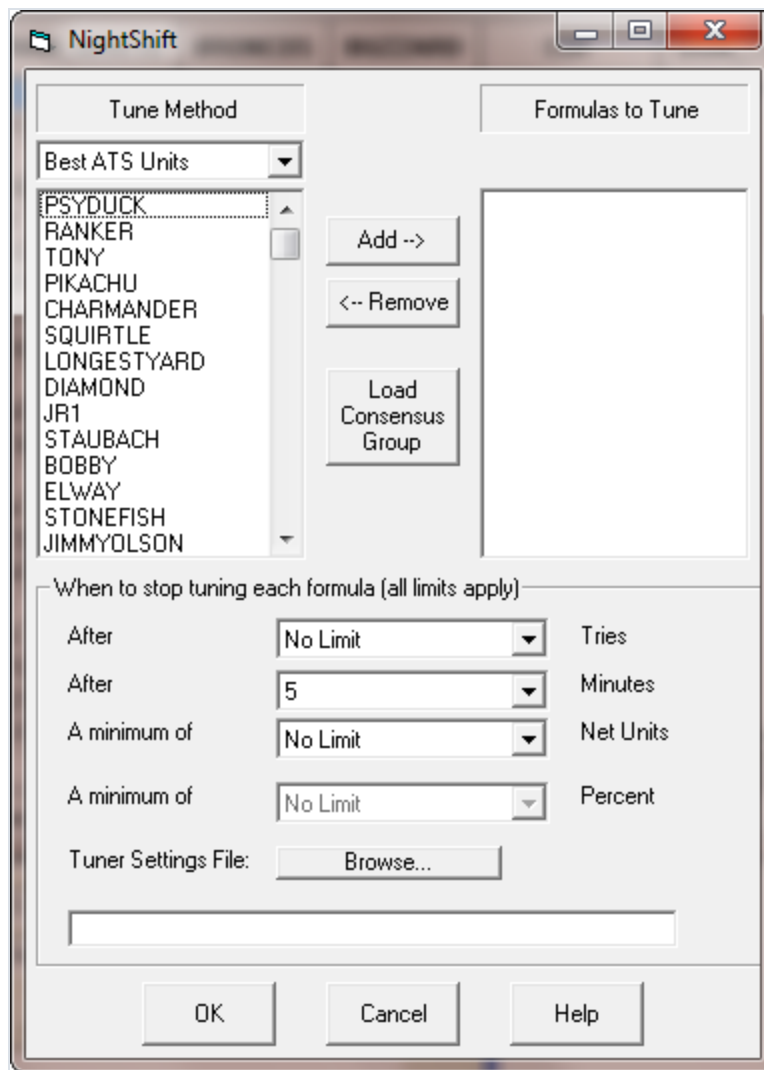


Figure 8.130 - The NightShift Formula Tuner Window

The window lists all of your prediction formulas sorted according to the currently selected "Tune Method". There are five different tune methods that you can select, including "Best ATS", "Best OU", "Best SUR", "Best ATS Percent", and "Best OU Percent". You can change the "Tune Method" by using the dropdown list on the upper left side of the window.

To select formulas to tune, highlight the formula name(s) and click ADD. The list on the right side of the screen always displays the formulas that will be tuned by NightShift. To remove a formula, highlight the formula name and click REMOVE. To save time, you can also load an entire consensus group of formulas at once by clicking on the large button labeled LOAD CONSENSUS GROUP.

At the bottom of the window, NightShift lets you select when to stop tuning each formula. All three limits apply, and NightShift will stop when the first of the three limits is reached. The limits are:

- The number of tries to attempt
- A time limit in minutes for each formula
- A minimum number of net units or straight up percentage (depending on the method selected)

After selecting the formulas to tune and limits to use, click OK to start NightShift. A small window will appear that tells you how many formulas that NightShift has tuned so far. The large FORMULA TUNER window will also appear. It displays the results for the formula that is currently being worked tuned. You can stop the tuner at any time by clicking the "Stop Tuner" button. Another window will then appear that asks you whether you want to exit NightShift.

By default, NightShift uses a 5 minute limit on each formula, but you can change the settings depending on how many formulas you want to tune, and by how long you want NightShift to run. For example, if you have 20 formulas to tune and need to limit the time to 10 hours, you can set the time limit to 30 minutes per formula.

Creating a Tuner Settings File for use with NightShift

NightShift will tune all formulas to "Best ATS Units" unless you first create a "Tuner Settings File" from the Formula Tuner window. To create a "Tuner Settings File" start the Formula Tuner and select any combination of the following five parameters:

- *Best ATS Units* - Tunes a formula to produce the highest number of against the spread net units
- *Best ATS Pct* - Tunes a formula to produce the highest winning percentage against the spread
- *Best Totals Units* - Tunes a formula to produce the highest number of net units for totals (over/unders)
- *Best Totals Pct* - Tunes a formula to produce the highest winning percentage for totals (over/unders)
- *Best SU Pct* - Tunes a formula to produce the highest percentage of straight-up winners

When you are finished, click the "Save Settings" button at the bottom of the window and select a name for the "Tuner Settings File". Then, click "Cancel" to exit the Formula Tuner. To load the settings file using NightShift, click on the "Browse" button and select the file that you wish to use.

The Platinum Page

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.14. The Platinum Page

WinPicks has so many powerful options for analyzing games, that it can sometimes be difficult to sort through all of the available information. If you are looking for a way to quickly handicap a particular game, the "Platinum Page" is a perfect solution. All versions of WinPicks can generate a "Platinum Page" for every game on their schedule. This page summarizes WinPicks's opinion on a game using three methods: how your prediction formulas are picking the game, how the key trends pick the game, and how well the two teams have fared against each other in the past in head-to-head matchups.

If all three methods favor the same team, then WinPicks recommends the game as a **Platinum Pick**. If two methods agree, and one has no opinion, the game is recommended as a strong play. If two methods agree and one method is opposed, the game is called a possible play. Otherwise, no recommendation is made. The analysis is performed both against the spread (ATS), and against the totals line (for over/under selections).

To view a "Platinum Page," select PLATINUM PAGE from the PREDICT menu. A window appears listing all of the games scheduled on the current date. Select a game from the list to view its "Platinum Page." To view

the next game on the list, press the F6 key. To view the previous game on the list, press the F5 key. Note that the entire "Platinum Page" is too large to view on one screen, so scroll down to see the entire page.

The Three Methods Displayed on the Platinum Page

The three methods used by the "Platinum Page" to handicap a game are described in the sections below.

- **The Prediction Formula Method** - This method summarizes how each of your prediction formulas predict this particular game. The SELECT PLATINUM FORMULAS option on the PREDICT menu allows you to select the prediction formulas that you want to use. You can select all of the available formulas that you have, or you can select only the formulas included in a formula consensus group. Both of these options are available for ATS picks and for Totals picks. If you select all of the available formulas, a formula will be included unless it was specifically excluded by checking a box on the EDIT FORMULA screen. However, if a formula is part of a consensus group, it will be included even if the exclude box has been checked.

The prediction formula method is illustrated in Figure 8.140. This example shows the 2012 Super Bowl game between the New York Giants and New England Patriots where New England was favored by 3 points. In this instance, 31 of the user's formulas are on the Giants, and 28 are on New England, so the formula method will take New York +3 as its ATS pick. Thirty-seven formulas like the under, and only 11 like the over, so the formula method will favor taking the under. Note that only the prediction formulas that are making a recommended play on the game are counted in this summary, and that most formulas recommend only a small percentage of the games. For this example, 59 formulas on the user's system have an ATS recommendation on the game, out of about 200 formulas on the system. Thus, the results produced by this method become more interesting and accurate when you have a large number of formulas.

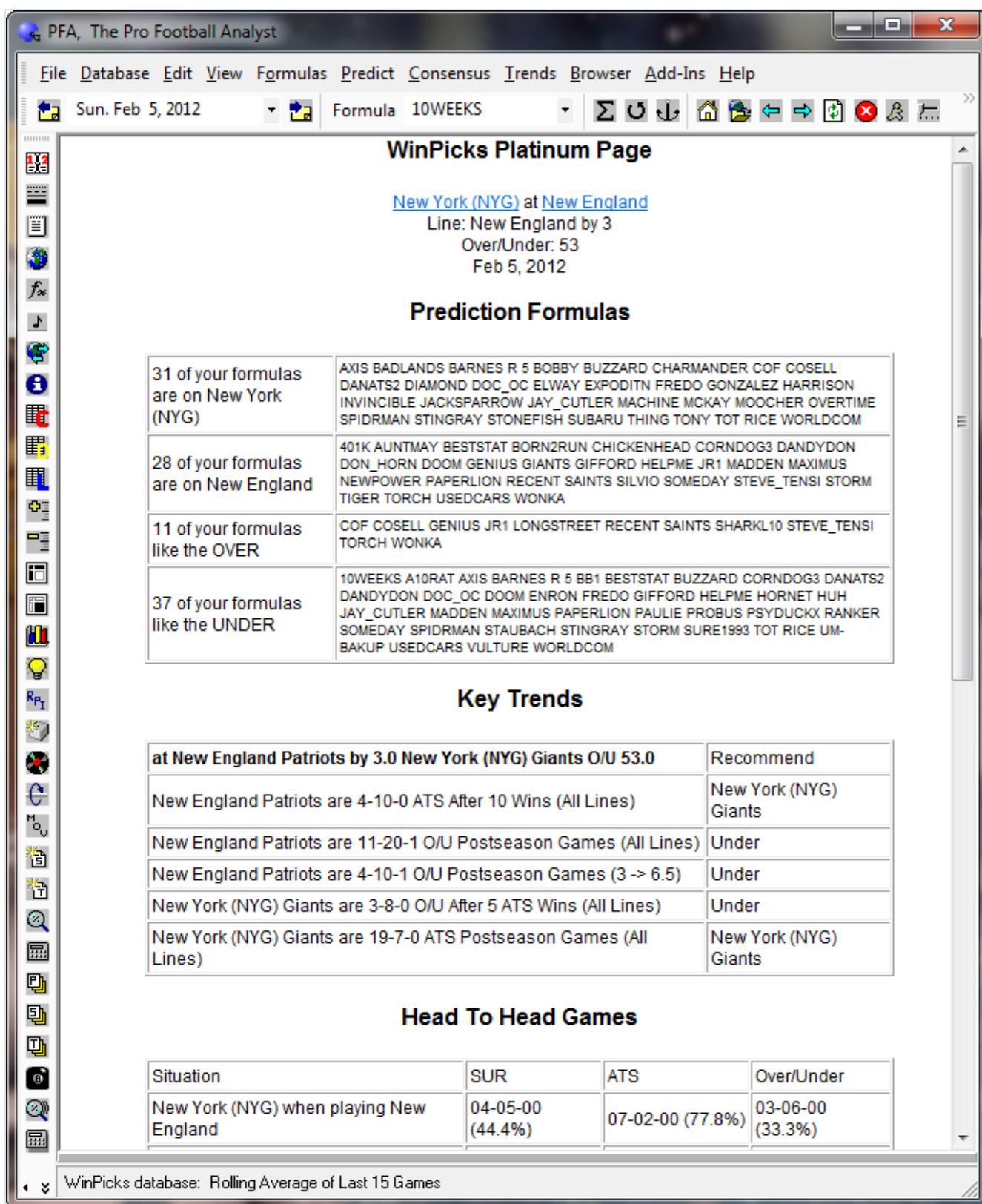


Figure 8.140 - The Top Section of the Platinum Page (PFA)

- **The Key Trends Method** - As shown in Figure 8.140, two key trends favor New York as the ATS pick, and none favor New England, so the edge goes to New York. Note all that three key trends

recommended the under and none recommend the over. The date range the key trends are drawn from is set with CHANGE PLATINUM TREND DATE RANGE on the PREDICT menu.

- **The Head-to-Head Matchup Method** - This section summarizes all of the head-to-head matchups between the two teams in past games. A table summarizes the results, followed by a list that shows the date, the score, and the odds information for every head-to-head matchup. In this example, New York has the ATS edge (7-2) and the under also as the edge by 6-3.

The Pick Recommendation Summary

The bottom of the "Platinum Page" shows the pick recommendation summary. All three of the methods favor New York ATS so New York +3 is recommended as a **Platinum Pick**. The under was also recommended as a Platinum Pick.



Figure 8.141 - The Pick Recommendation Summary (PFA)

Platinum Picks should be given strong consideration when you place your wagers. In this particular game, the New York Giants (+3) not only covered, but won the Super Bowl by a score of 21-17. The point total of 38 was well under the totals line of 53, so the under was also a winner.

Show All Platinum Picks

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.15. Show All Platinum Picks

SHOW ALL PLATINUM PICKS is a useful feature that summarizes all of the games on today's schedule, and displays whether or not the game received an ATS or OU recommendation as a "Platinum Play", a "Strong Play", or a "Possible Play". "Platinum Plays" are displayed in **boldface blue letters**.

To use this feature, select SHOW ALL PLATINUM PICKS from the PREDICT menu. You'll see a screen similar to Figure 8.150. All of the recommendations displayed on this screen were generated using the Platinum Page feature. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the Platinum Page to learn how these picks are

generated, because SHOW ALL PLATINUM PICKS is only a summary of the recommended picks, it does not display the detailed information provided by the Platinum Page.

Please note that SHOW ALL PLATINUM PICKS is calculation intensive, and it can sometimes take several minutes or more before the summary is displayed. This will be particularly true with CFA and CBA when there are a large number of games on the schedule.

WinPicks Platinum Pick Summary

Feb 20, 2016

Game	ATS Recommendation	ATS Result	OU Recommendation	OU Result
Memphis -8.5 at South Florida, OU 141	Memphis is a Possible Play	LOST	The UNDER is a Possible Play	LOST
Toledo -2.5 at Eastern Michigan, OU NL	Eastern Michigan is a Strong Play	WON	No recommendation	---
Georgia +8.5 at Vanderbilt, OU 134	No recommendation	---	The OVER is a Possible Play	WON
Florida +2.5 at South Carolina, OU 142.5	Florida is a Possible Play	LOST	The OVER is a Possible Play	LOST
St Bonaventure +10.0 at Dayton, OU 142	St Bonaventure is a Possible Play	WON	The OVER is a Strong Play	WON
Xavier -2.5 at Georgetown, OU 149.5	Xavier is a Platinum Play	WON	The UNDER is a Possible Play	LOST
Duke +7.0 at Louisville, OU 143	Duke is a Possible Play	PUSH	No recommendation	---
Elon +6.0 at Towson, OU NL	Towson is a Possible Play	WON	No recommendation	---
Miami +7.5 at North Carolina, OU 147	Miami is a Possible Play	LOST	The OVER is a Possible Play	WON
Penn State -8.5 at Rutgers, OU 138.5	Rutgers is a Possible Play	LOST	The OVER is a Platinum Play	LOST
Drexel +14.0 at William & Mary, OU NL	Drexel is a Possible Play	WON	No recommendation	---
Marquette -4.5 at DePaul,	Marquette is a Possible	WON	No recommendation	---

WinPicks database: Rolling Average of Last 03 Games

Figure 8.150 - Platinum Pick Summary (CBA)

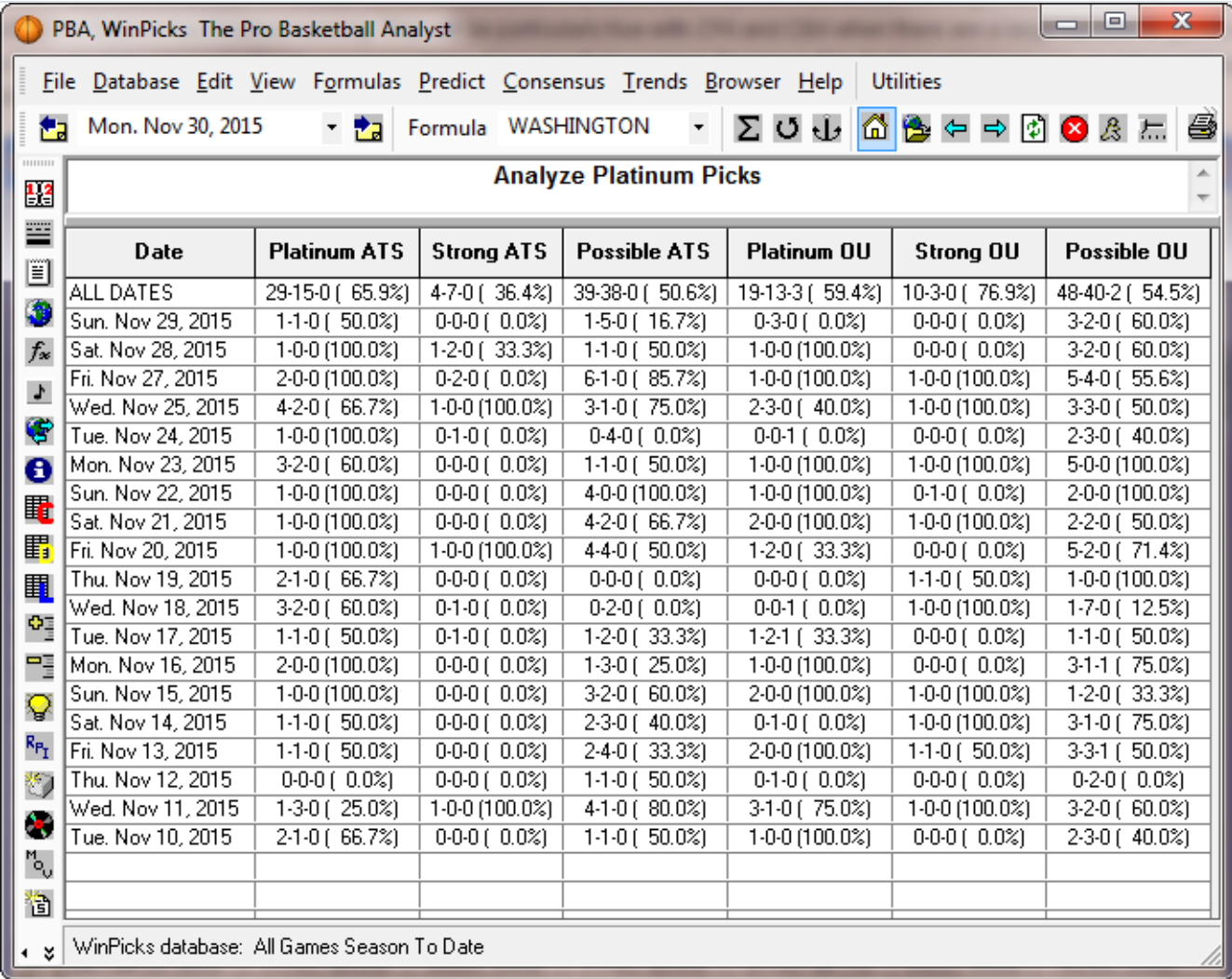
Analyze Platinum Picks

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 8.16. Analyze Platinum Picks

ANALYZE PLATINUM PICKS allows you to see the past winning percentage of the picks generated by the Platinum Page. It shows the past records of the "Platinum Plays", a "Strong Plays", and "Possible Plays" for both against the spread (ATS) and over/under (OU) selections.

To use this feature, select ANALYZE PLATINUM PICKS from the PREDICT menu. You'll then see a menu that asks how many dates that you want to analyze. If you select 20 dates, for example, the analysis will cover the 20 dates prior to the current date. When the analysis is finished, you'll see a screen similar to Figure 8.160. The screen shows the winning percentage for each type of selection over all of the selected dates. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the Platinum Page to learn how these selections were generated.

Please note that ANALYZE PLATINUM PICKS is calculation intensive, and it can sometimes take a long time (many minutes) before this feature has finished running. This will be particularly true with *CFA* and *CBA* when there are a large number of games on the schedule. Also note that the more prediction formulas that you have, the longer this feature will take to run, and that adding, deleting, or modifying prediction formulas can change the picks generated by the Platinum Page.



Date	Platinum ATS	Strong ATS	Possible ATS	Platinum OU	Strong OU	Possible OU
ALL DATES	29-15-0 (65.9%)	4-7-0 (36.4%)	39-38-0 (50.6%)	19-13-3 (59.4%)	10-3-0 (76.9%)	48-40-2 (54.5%)
Sun. Nov 29, 2015	1-1-0 (50.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-5-0 (16.7%)	0-3-0 (0.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	3-2-0 (60.0%)
Sat. Nov 28, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	1-2-0 (33.3%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	3-2-0 (60.0%)
Fri. Nov 27, 2015	2-0-0 (100.0%)	0-2-0 (0.0%)	6-1-0 (85.7%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	5-4-0 (55.6%)
Wed. Nov 25, 2015	4-2-0 (66.7%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	3-1-0 (75.0%)	2-3-0 (40.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	3-3-0 (50.0%)
Tue. Nov 24, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0-4-0 (0.0%)	0-0-1 (0.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	2-3-0 (40.0%)
Mon. Nov 23, 2015	3-2-0 (60.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	5-0-0 (100.0%)
Sun. Nov 22, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	4-0-0 (100.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-1-0 (0.0%)	2-0-0 (100.0%)
Sat. Nov 21, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	4-2-0 (66.7%)	2-0-0 (100.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	2-2-0 (50.0%)
Fri. Nov 20, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	4-4-0 (50.0%)	1-2-0 (33.3%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	5-2-0 (71.4%)
Thu. Nov 19, 2015	2-1-0 (66.7%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)
Wed. Nov 18, 2015	3-2-0 (60.0%)	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0-2-0 (0.0%)	0-0-1 (0.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	1-7-0 (12.5%)
Tue. Nov 17, 2015	1-1-0 (50.0%)	0-1-0 (0.0%)	1-2-0 (33.3%)	1-2-1 (33.3%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)
Mon. Nov 16, 2015	2-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-3-0 (25.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	3-1-1 (75.0%)
Sun. Nov 15, 2015	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	3-2-0 (60.0%)	2-0-0 (100.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	1-2-0 (33.3%)
Sat. Nov 14, 2015	1-1-0 (50.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	2-3-0 (40.0%)	0-1-0 (0.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	3-1-0 (75.0%)
Fri. Nov 13, 2015	1-1-0 (50.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	2-4-0 (33.3%)	2-0-0 (100.0%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)	3-3-1 (50.0%)
Thu. Nov 12, 2015	0-0-0 (0.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)	0-1-0 (0.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	0-2-0 (0.0%)
Wed. Nov 11, 2015	1-3-0 (25.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	4-1-0 (80.0%)	3-1-0 (75.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	3-2-0 (60.0%)
Tue. Nov 10, 2015	2-1-0 (66.7%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	1-1-0 (50.0%)	1-0-0 (100.0%)	0-0-0 (0.0%)	2-3-0 (40.0%)

Figure 8.160 - Analyze Platinum Picks (PBA)

Line Shifter

Predictions formulas recommend picks that fall within the betting window. The betting window is the difference between the point spread or total predicted by the formula, and the actual line or totals line. When the line moves, a formula might drop or add picks from its list of recommendations. If the pick is on the edge of the betting window, a line move as small as 1/2 point can cause this to happen.

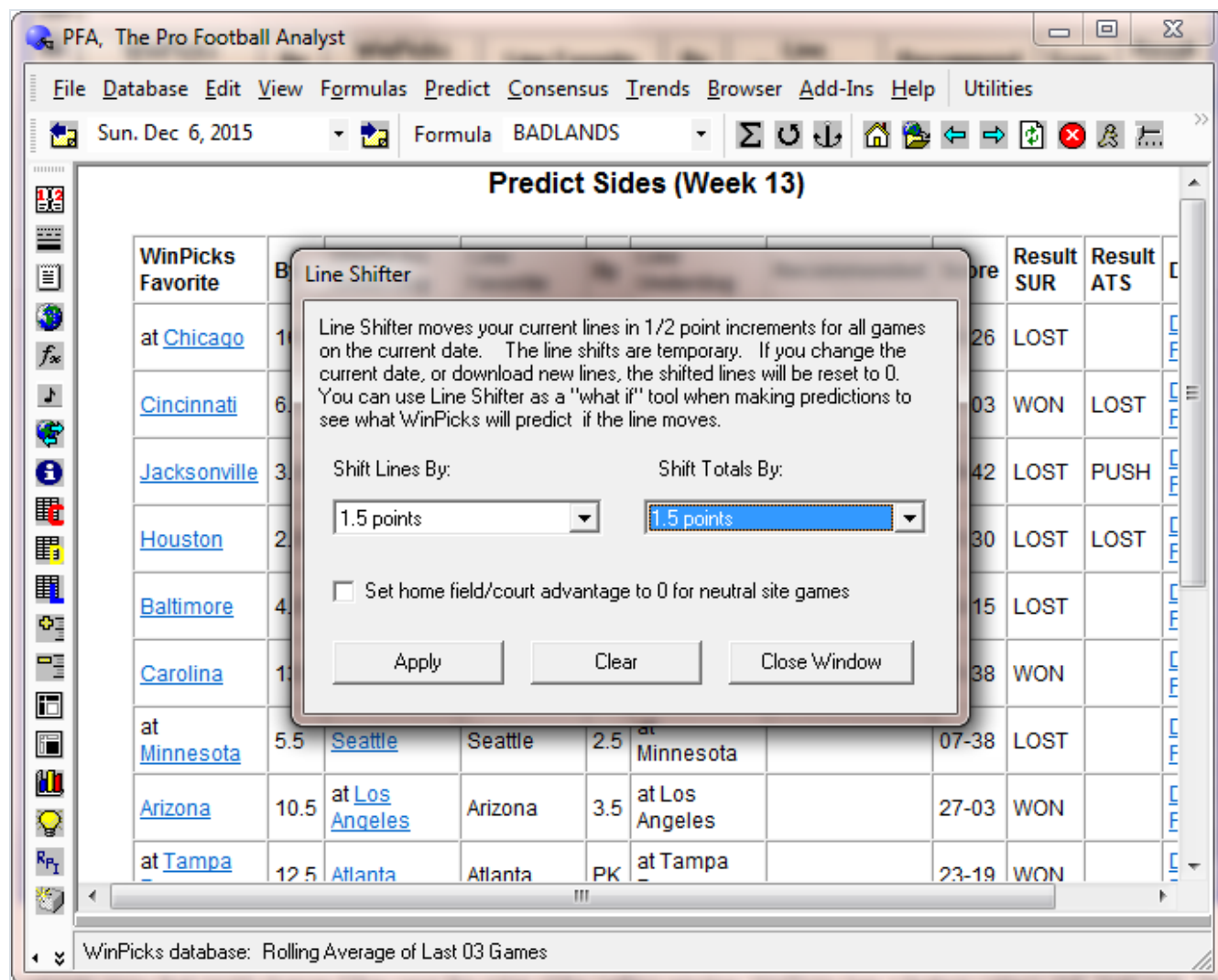


Figure 8.170 - Line Shifter (PFA)

To validate picks that might change if they near the edge of the betting window, WinPicks has a feature called LINE SHIFTER. This feature allows you to shift all of the lines for the current date to see what happens to the picks when the line moves. To use this feature, select LINE SHIFTER from the FILE menu. A window appears as shown in Figure 8.170. Use the menus to shift either the line or the totals line by any amount up to 10 points in 1/2 point increments. Check the box in the window if you want the home field/home court advantage to be set to 0 for games played at a neutral site. Click the "Apply" button to see how your picks change. Click the "Clear" button to return to the original lines.

Analyzing Trends

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9. Analyzing Trends

WinPicks lets you check the performance history of any team. It can show you how a given team (or an entire conference or league) has performed in thousands of different situations. You can go as far back as your database allows. The size of the database varies from product to product, as listed below:

- *Pro Football Analyst (PFA)* - The database includes all games from the 1985-86 NFL season through the current season.
- *College Football Analyst (CFA)* - The database includes all games from the 1985-86 NCAA season through the current season.
- *Pro Basketball Analyst (PBA)* - The database includes all games from the 1990-91 NBA season through the current season.
- *College Basketball Analyst (CBA)* - The database includes all games from the 2000-01 NCAA season through the current season.
- *Pro Hockey Analyst (PHA)* - The database includes all games from the 2020-21 NHL season through the current season.

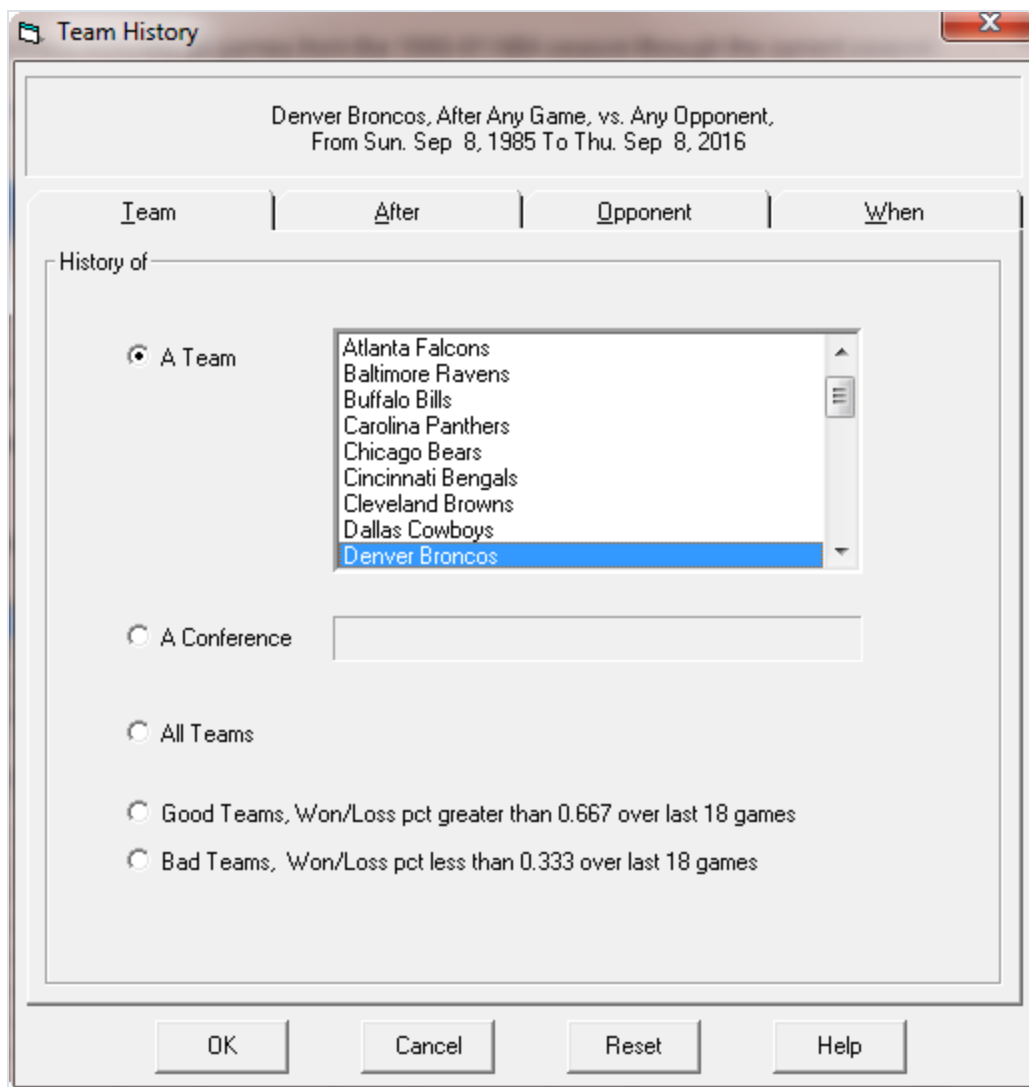


Figure 9.00 - The Team History Window (PFA)

The TRENDS menu is shorter in WinPicks 2.0 than the one this section was written against. Trend Finder, described below, is the front door for trend questions; Trend Seeker, My Systems, My Trends, the Watch Lists and the alerts are on the menu as before. Team History, Situation Analysis and Key Trends are no longer menu items, but their screens are unchanged and their toolbar buttons still open them.

This section covers the following topics:

- 9.1 - Finding Trends Manually using Team History
- 9.2 - Displaying and Saving Trends using Team History
- 9.3 - Finding Trends Automatically using Trend Seeker
- Trend Finder
- My Systems
- 9.4 - Viewing Trends using the Trend Seeker Watch List or My Trends

- 9.5 - Using Trends to Generate Alerts
- 9.6 - Situation Analysis
- 9.7 - The Key Trends Report
- 9.8 - Statistically Significant Trends

Finding Trends Manually using Team History

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.1. Finding Trends Manually Using Team History

To open Team History, click its button on the toolbar. The team history window allows you to set four different parameters (TEAM, AFTER, OPPONENT and WHEN). Each parameter is represented by an "index card". When you select the file tab of one of the "index cards", you can modify the parameter and customize TEAM HISTORY so that it only includes the games that you are interested in.

Whenever you change a parameter, the text at the top of the team history window is modified so that it describes which games are now being included in the team history. For example, *PBA* users could customize TEAM HISTORY so that the heading looks like this:

Denver Nuggets, After Losing ATS 3 or More Games, vs. Conference Opponents, When Playing on Thursday

As you can see from this heading, the number of trends you can look for is almost limitless. The four parameters you can modify are explained in the sections below.

Team

The TEAM parameter allows you to select the team(s) that you wish to include in the team history. You may select one of the following five options:

- *A Team* - This is the most commonly selected option. After selecting this option, you are required to select a team from the menu (teams are listed alphabetically). *PFA* users may select any NFL team, *PBA* users may select any NBA team, and *CFA* and *CBA* users may select any Division-1 college team.
- *A Conference* - After selecting this option, you are required to select a conference or division from the menu (listed alphabetically). *PFA* users may select any NFL division or conference, *PBA* users may select any NBA division or conference, and *CFA* and *CBA* users may select any Division-1 division or conference.
- *All Teams* - When you select this option, you select all of the teams tracked by WinPicks. For example, *PFA* users select all NFL teams, *PBA* users select all NBA teams, and *CFA* and *CBA* users select all Division-1 college teams.
- *Good Teams* - When you select this option, you select teams that have done well in recent games. By default, a good team is defined as one with a winning percentage of better than 66.7 percent in a number of games approximately equal to one season. However, you can define the settings by selecting Set Trend Options.
- *Bad Teams* - When you select this option, you select teams that have done poorly in recent games. By default, a bad team is defined as one with a winning percentage of less than 33.3 percent in a number

of games approximately equal to one season. However, you can define the settings by selecting Set Trend Options.

After

This parameter is extremely powerful. It allows you to limit the team history to games that took place after a specified condition. There are six different selectable categories. Each category has two possible choices, or you can deselect both choices to ignore the category completely, as shown in Figure 9.10. Every possible combination can use the number of games that you select, up to a maximum of 10 games.

Team History

Atlanta Hawks, After Losing (>3)+Losing ATS (>3)+Going Under (>3)+On The Road+As Dog+Good Team, vs. Any Opponent, From Fri. Nov 2, 1990 To Sat. Apr 2, 2016

Team | **After** | Opponent | When

After Conditions

☐ Winning ☒ Losing
By more than 3 pts

and

☐ Winning ATS ☒ Losing ATS
By more than 3 pts

and

☐ Going Over ☒ Going Under
By more than 3 pts

and

☒ Good Team ☐ Bad Team

and

☐ At Home ☒ On the Road

☐ As Favorite ☒ As Dog

Streak: 1 or More Games

Days Rest

☒ Doesn't Matter
☐ Less Than
☐ More Than

OK Cancel Reset Help

Figure 9.10 - Selecting the After Conditions (PBA)

The six categories are:

- *Winning & Losing* - *Winning* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a win. You can select the number of games (from 1 or more to 10 or more). For example, if you select "3 or more games" the team history only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after having won three or more consecutive games. *Losing* works the same way, except that it only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a loss.

- *Winning ATS & Losing ATS* - *Winning ATS* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a game where they covered the point spread. You can select the number of games (from 1 or more to 10 or more). For example, if you select "3 or more games" the team history only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after covering the spread in three or more consecutive games. *Losing ATS* works the same way, except that it only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after failing to cover the point spread.
- *Going Over & Going Under* - *Going Over* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a game where the combined point total went "over" the totals line. You can select any number of games (from 1 or more to 10 or more). For example, if you select "3 or more games" the team history only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after having gone "over" the projected total in three or more consecutive games. *Going Under* works the same way, except that it only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a game where the combined point total was under the totals line.
- *Good Team & Bad Team* - By default, *Good Team* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after playing a team with a winning percentage of 66.67 percent or higher in recent games. *Bad Team* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after playing a team with a recent winning percentage of less than 33.33 percent. To change these settings, select Set Trend Options.
- *On the Road & At Home* - *On the Road* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a road game. You can select the number of games (from 1 or more to 10 or more). For example, if you select "3 or more games" the team history only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after having been on the road for three or more consecutive games. *At Home* works the same way, but only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a home game.
- *As Favorite & As Dog* - *As Favorite* only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a game where they were favored. You can select any number of games (from 1 or more to 10 or more). For example, if you select "3 or more games" the team history only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after having been favored in three or more consecutive games. *As Dog* works the same way, except that it only includes games where the selected team(s) was playing after a game where they had been the underdog.

You are allowed to customize the team history further by using the "Days Rest" feature. There are three "Days Rest" options that you can choose from:

- *Doesn't Matter* - *Doesn't Matter* is the default setting. It includes all games.
- *Less Than & More Than* - These two settings allow you to include games where the selected team was playing after "less than" or "more than" a specific amount of rest. You can set the amount of rest to an interval of from 1 to 20 days. This feature is especially useful when looking for NBA trends.

Opponent

The *Opponent* setting lets you limit the team history to games where the selected team(s) was playing against a selected opponent or group of opponents. All members of the WinPicks family allow you to select from any one of the following *Opponent* options:

- *Any Opponent* - Includes all games against all opponents.
- *Regular Season Opponents* - Includes all games except for postseason games. WinPicks does not track preseason games.
- *Post-Season Opponents* - Includes postseason games only.
- *Division Opponents* - Includes all games against teams in the same division.
- *Conference Opponents* - Includes all games against teams in the same conference.
- *Non-Conference Opponents* - Includes all games against teams in other conferences.
- *Home Opponents* - Includes all games played at home.
- *Away Opponents* - Includes all games played on the road.
- *Good Team Opponents* - Includes all games against good teams as defined by Set Trend Options.
- *Bad Team Opponents* - Includes all games against bad teams as defined by Set Trend Options.
- *vs. Specific Team* - Includes all games against a specific team that you select.
- *vs. Specific Conference* - Includes all games against a specific conference or division that you select.
- *Exact Line Value* - Includes all games when the line was set to the specified value. For example, selecting 7 will show all games when the line was set to 7 points.

Pro Football Analyst (PFA) also allows you to see how a team has performed in specific types of stadiums. This option is not available in the other versions of WinPicks. There are three stadium types you may select from:

- *Dome*
- *Open Natural Surface*
- *Open Artificial Surface*

When

The *When* setting allows you to limit the team history to only include games where the selected team(s) was playing at a specific time as shown in Figure 9.11.

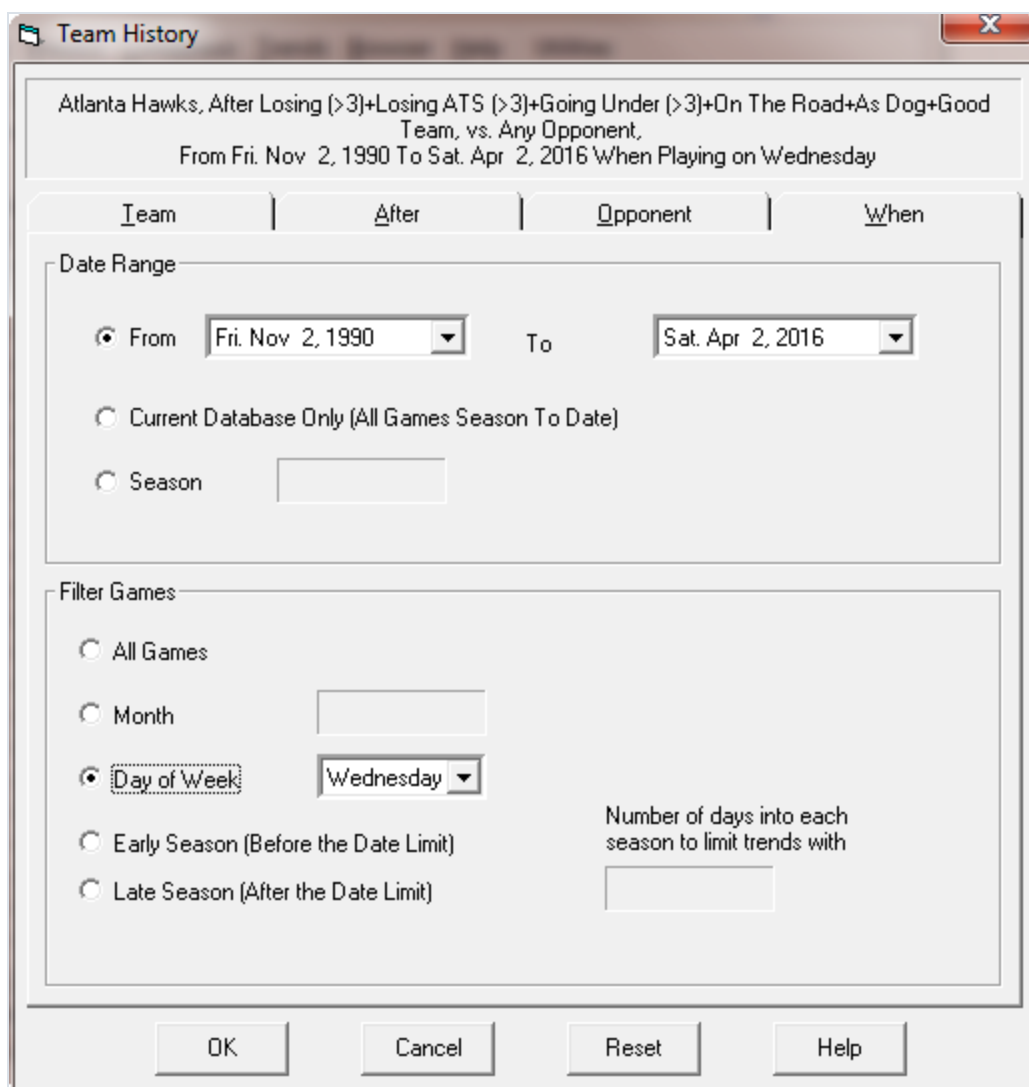


Figure 9.11 - Selecting the When Conditions (PFA)

All versions of WinPicks allow you to select a date range and filter options from the *When* screen. The date range allows you to choose from the following settings:

- *From* - Allows you to pick a starting date and end date. The default settings use the first date in the database as the start date, and the current date as the end date.
- *Current Database Only* - Only includes games from the current database. For example, if a 3-game rolling average is in use, the team history only includes the 3 most recent games played by the selected team(s).
- *Season* - Includes games from the selected season.

The filter settings allow to filter out the games you want from the selected date range:

- *All games* - Includes all games from the selected date range.
- *Month* - Only includes games from the selected month.

- *Day of Week* - Only includes games from the selected day of week. This feature's most common application is finding trends relating to Monday Night NFL games or Thursday night college football games. However, it is also quite valuable when handicapping NBA games, since many teams follow strong day of week trends.
- *Early Season or Late Season* - This option allows you to only include games early in the season or late in the season, using a day number that you specify. For example, if you select "Early Season" and set the day setting to 50, the team history will be limited to games played before the season was 50 days old.

After all team history parameters have been set:

- Click the OK button to view the team history
- Click the CANCEL button to quit
- Click the RESET button to reset all parameters

More Information about Querying the Database with Team History

TEAM HISTORY is extremely powerful and quite easy to use. It allows you to query the database and locate just about any imaginable trend. To give you a better idea of its power, here are a few sample questions you can answer in seconds using TEAM HISTORY (use RESET to reset the parameters before beginning a new query):

Q. How often do NFL home dogs cover on Monday night?

A. You can answer this question with *PFA*. Use TEAM to select "All Teams". Use WHEN to set Day of Week to Monday. To find the answer, look at the ATS record for home dogs.

Q. How often do away dogs win in dome stadiums?

A. Another question for *PFA*. Use TEAM to select "All Teams". Use OPPONENT to set Stadiums to "Dome". To find the answer, look at the SUR record for away dogs.

Q. How often do the Chicago Bulls cover after two or more losses?

A. A question for *PBA*. Use TEAM to select "A Team" and then select the Chicago Bulls. Use AFTER to select "Losing", and then select "2 or More Games". To find the answer, look at the ATS record for all games.

Q. How well do college football teams do ATS after failing to cover in 5 or more consecutive games?

A. A question for *CFA*. Use TEAM to select "All Teams". Use AFTER to set LOSING ATS to "5 or More Games". To find the answer, look at the ATS record for all games.

Q. How well do college basketball teams do ATS when playing at home after losing 3 or more consecutive games during the first 30 days of the season?

A. A question for *CBA*. Use TEAM to select "All Teams". Use AFTER to set "Losing" to 3 or more games. Use WHEN to set "Early Season" with a 30 day limit. To find the answer, look at the ATS record for home games.

Q. How well do Big 10 basketball teams do against the spread when playing a home conference game during the month of January after three or more consecutive losses?

A. A question for CBA. Use TEAM to select the Big 10 Conference. Use AFTER to set "Losing" to 3 or more games. Use WHEN to set the month to January. To find the answer, look at the ATS record for home games.

Q. How well does Notre Dame do in football against the spread after winning 5 or more consecutive games during the month of October?

A. A question for CFA. Use TEAM to select Notre Dame. Use AFTER to set "Winning" to 5 or more games. Use WHEN to set the month to October. To find the answer, look at the ATS record for all games.

Displaying and Saving Trends using Team History

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.2. Displaying and Saving Trends Using Team History

The team history display shows the performance history for the selected team(s). A sample screen is shown in Figure 9.20:

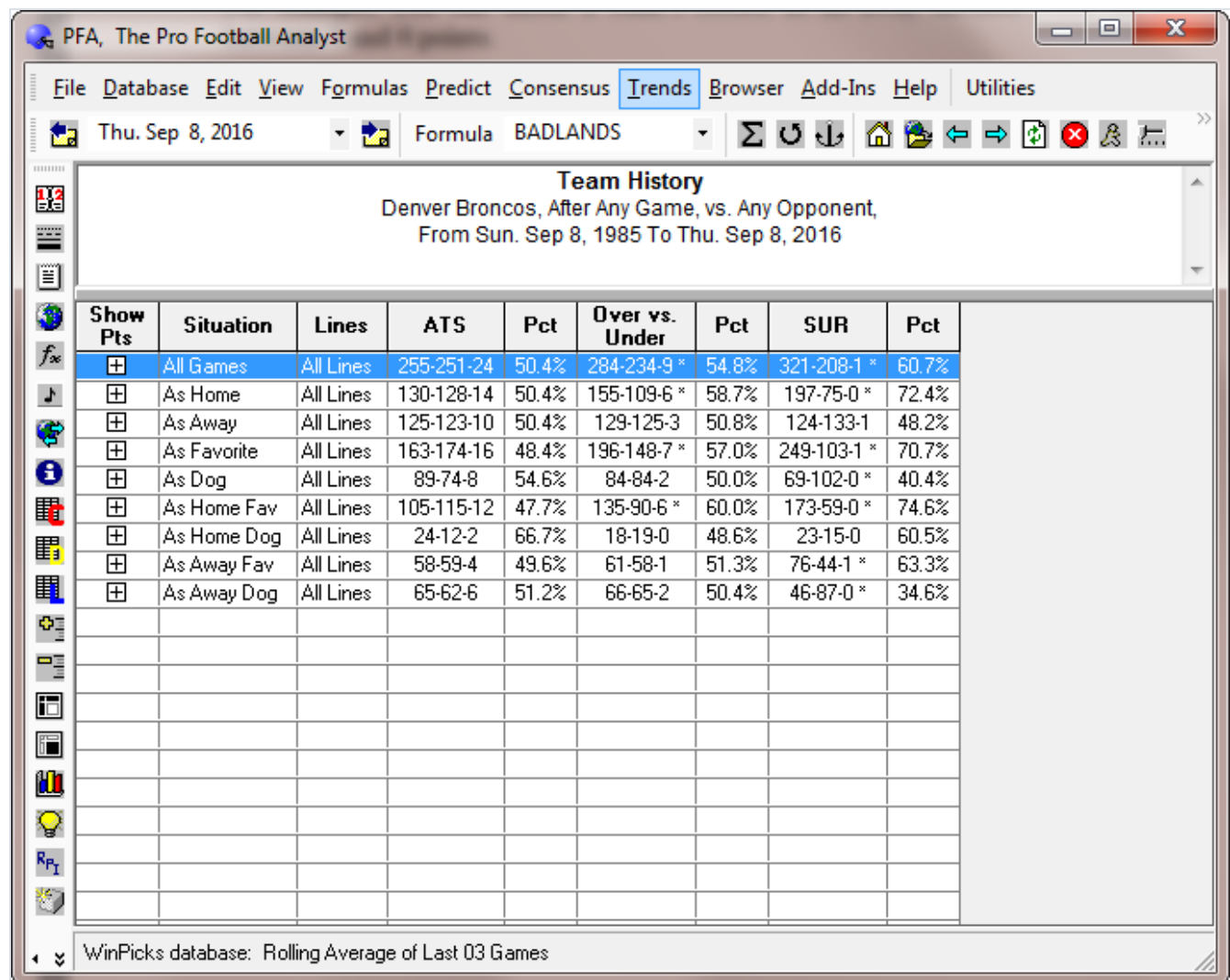


Figure 9.20 - Viewing a Team History (PFA)

The title at the top of this screen explains which data has been included in the team history. This data is further broken down into nine situations, with each situation having its own line on the grid:

- All Games
- As Home
- As Away
- As Favorite
- As Dog
- As Home Favorite
- As Home Dog
- As Away Favorite
- As Away Dog

The screen shows how the selected team(s) has fared in each situation by listing their against the spread record (ATS), their over/under record (Over vs. Under), and their straight-up record (SUR). The winning percentage in each situation is also shown (Pct). Records that show a statistically significant trend are marked with an asterisk. Keep in mind that some situations will not contain any games. For example, if you have customized team history to only include home games, all situations involving road games (Away, Away Favorite, and Away Dog) will remain blank.

The leftmost column of the TEAM HISTORY screen (Show Pts) contains a small white box with a plus sign (+) inside. If you click on this box, the plus sign becomes a minus (-) sign. At this point, the window expands, and the situation is broken down further based on the size of the point spread. This allows you to quickly research trends that would be nearly impossible to find anywhere else. For example, you can check a team's record as an away favorite when the point spread was between 3 and 6 points.

If you select any situation in the TEAM HISTORY grid, the history viewer window appears (Figure 9.21). The window title shows which options have been selected. It also shows the average points scored and allowed in this situation, and the average margin of victory (MOV). This window contains a list of games that match your selection criteria. It shows the game date, the team names, score, line, and totals line (Total) for each game (if numbers are available). The ATS column indicates whether the selected team covered against the spread (WON), or failed to cover (LOST). The OU column indicates whether the game went over or under the totals line. The folders on the left side of the window allow you to select past games or future games, so you can find upcoming games on the schedule that match this trend. If you right click the mouse button on any game in the history window, a window appears showing the previous game result.

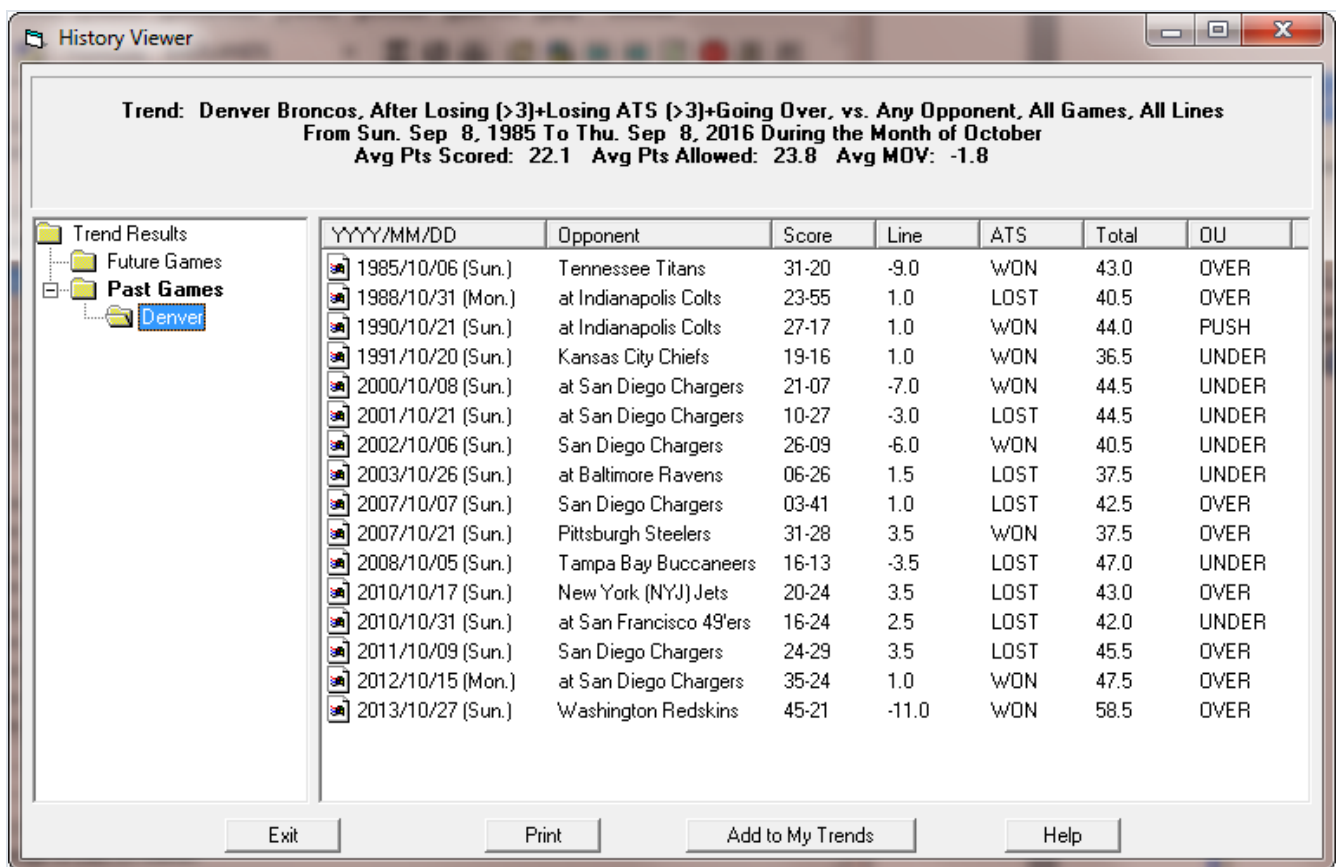


Figure 9.21 - The History Viewer Window (PFA)

Saving a Trend

You can save any trend that you find to a list of your own personal trends that you want to follow in the future. This feature is known as MY TRENDS. To add a trend to MY TRENDS, simply click on the ADD TO MY TRENDS button shown in Figure 9.21. Note that you can only save an ATS or an O/U trend with MY TRENDS, trends relating to SUR cannot be saved. However, conference trends can be saved as well as team trends. Once you add a trend to MY TRENDS, you'll be able to view it again later, or use it to generate a trend alert.

Finding Trends Automatically using Trend Seeker

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.3. Finding Trends Automatically Using Trend Seeker

WinPicks has many features to help you find significant trend information, including Team History, Situation Analysis, and Key Trends.

Trend Seeker goes one step beyond the other features by searching through multiple combinations of game conditions to find significant trend patterns in the database. And best of all, it will alert you when the trends it finds match games yet to be played.

Trend Seeker is built upon three key features listed in the table:

Feature	Function
---------	----------

Trend Seeker

Searches through past games and compiles a list of significant trends.

Trend Seeker Watch Lists

Displays the most recent list of significant trends that Seeker found.

Trend Seeker Alerts

Scans upcoming games against the Watch List, and produces a detailed report of all games that match.

You can expect to find more trends using *Trend Watch* than you could manually using the other WinPicks features. However, you should become familiar with Team History before using *Trend Watch* in order to understand all of the data.

Trend Seeker

Seeker does exactly what its name implies. It seeks out significant trends using a range of game dates and conditions you select. It saves all of the significant trends it finds to the Watch List. Select "Trend Watch", then "Seeker" from the TRENDS menu, and the following window will be displayed:

Trend Seeker

Seeker Conditions

☒ Test "After" Conditions One At a Time ☐ Test All "After" Combinations

☒ Up to game limit: 3 Game(s) or ☐ Must win or cover by: 0 points

☒ Test "Opponent" Conditions One at a Time ☐ Test Good/Bad Teams

☒ Combine After and Opponent Conditions

Date Range

☒ From: Sun. Sep 8, 1985 To: Thu. Sep 8, 2016

☐ Current Database Only (Season To Date)

☐ Season: 1985

Filter Games

☒ Month: January

☐ Day of Week: Sunday

☐ Early Season (before the day limit)

☐ Late Season (after the day limit): 1 day

Number of days into each season to limit trends with

Filters

☒ Include Game Situations

☒ Include Point Ranges

Sample Size: Only find trends where the number of games is more than this number

8 games

Units: Only find trends where the number of units won is more than this number

8 units

Pct: Only find trends where percentage is more than this number

55%

376299 Combinations To Scan 0 Trends Found

0%

Start Seeker... Cancel Help

Figure 9.30 - The Trend Seeker Window (CFA)

You can control what conditions Seeker will look for by selecting different options in the Seeker window.

Seeker Conditions

Test After Conditions One At A Time

Checking this box will cause Seeker to look for trends using all of the possible "After Playing" conditions in Team History. These conditions include:

- After Any Game
- After Winning
- After Losing
- After Winning ATS
- After Losing ATS
- After On The Road
- After At Home
- After Over
- After Under

If you select "Test After Conditions One At A Time", Seeker will try each condition one at a time. This is the default setting, and will identify many significant trends.

Test All After Combinations

If you select "Test All After Combinations", Seeker will combine the individual After conditions together. There are 191 unique combinations of After conditions tested. Using "Test All After Combinations" takes much longer to run than testing with just one at a time. However, Seeker will find trends like *"After Winning+After Winning ATS +After On The Road+After Going Over"* if you run it this way.

You can also change how many games to include in the "After" search. This is set using the "Up To:" list. The "Up To" list allows searches from 1 to 10 games back. For instance, if you check "Test All After Conditions One At A Time", and then set the "Up To" value to 3 games, Seeker will search for trends "After Winning 1 Game", "After Winning 2 Games", and "After Winning 3 Games". It repeats this process for all of the "After" conditions listed above.

Test Opponent Conditions One At A Time

Checking this box will cause Seeker to look for trends using most of the "Opponent" conditions listed in Team History. These include:

- Any Opponent
- Post Season Opponents

- Division Opponents
- Conference Opponents
- Non-Conference Opponents
- Head to Head Matchups
- Stadium (PFA only)

Combine After and Opponent Conditions Together

The *Combine After and Opponent Conditions Together* option tells Seeker to look at all "After" conditions and "Opponent" conditions together when searching for trends. If it is turned off, then Seeker only varies one condition at a time. For instance, suppose you have selected both the "Test All After Conditions One At A Time" and the "Test All Opponent Conditions One At A Time" conditions in your search. Seeker will start searching each "After" condition, but with the next opponent always set to "Any Opponent". It will then search each "Opponent" condition, but with the after condition always set to "After Any Game."

If "Combine After And Opponent Conditions Together" is turned on, Seeker combines both the "After" and "Opponent" conditions for a comprehensive trend search. Using the example above, it would try "After Winning" against every "Opponent" condition, then "After Losing" against every "Opponent" condition, and so forth until every possible combination has been searched for and found.

Test Good/Bad Teams

This option tells Seeker to search for trends involving *good teams* or *bad teams* as defined by Set Trend Options.

Date Range and Filter Games Options

The games that Trend Seeker will search are selected here. Seeker uses the same database options as the *When* feature of Team History. Refer to the Team History section for a description of each setting.

Filters

The Seeker filters let you limit the game situations to search. "Include Game Situations" tells Seeker to check all of the home/away and favorite/underdog trends. This is the default setting. If disabled, the fewer trends will be found, but Seeker will run quicker.

"Include Point Ranges" is also the default setting, and tells Seeker to try each of the point ranges in Team History when searching for trends. If you turn it off, only trends which are significant for any point range value are saved.

Start Seeker

The "Start Seeker" button begins the search. When you click "Start Seeker", the progress bar shows how long the search will take. In addition, the number of statistically significant trends that Seeker finds is updated on the window next to the total number of combinations Seeker will try. You can exit Seeker at any time by clicking the "Cancel" button. When the search is finished, Seeker saves the data to the *Watch List*.

A final note about Seeker - you may recall in Team History that you can search trends for any team, a conference, or all teams. Seeker will perform searches on each team individually, and then for all teams in the league. However, Seeker does not attempt to find trends for each conference.

Trend Finder

Trend Seeker, described in the previous section, sweeps the database and hands you the trends it finds.

Trend Finder does the opposite: you ask a question, and it answers that one. Choose Trends > Trend Finder. The screen is shown in Figure 9.35.

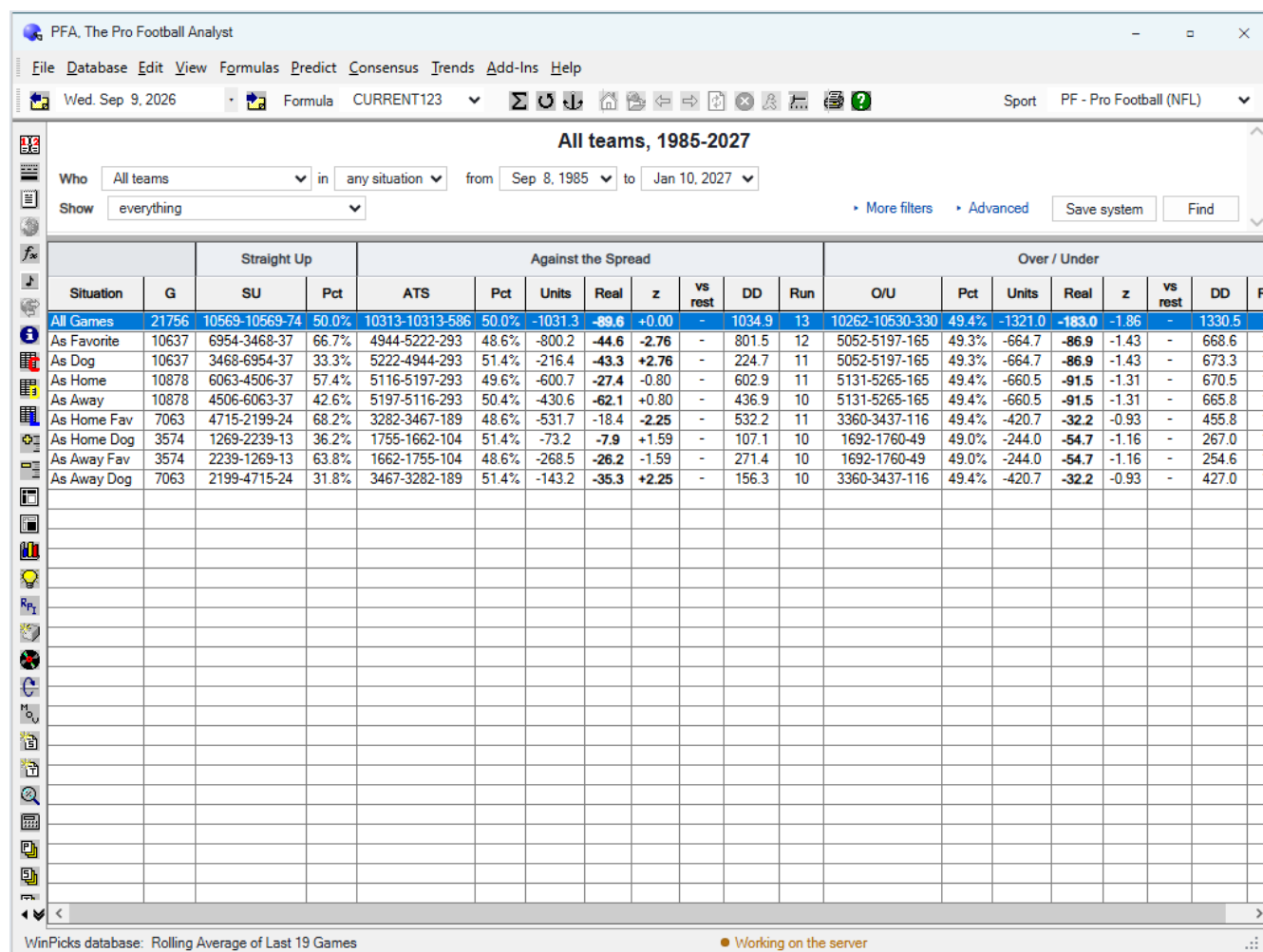


Figure 9.35 - The Trend Finder Screen (PFA)

Reading the screen, top to bottom. The title line states the question the grid below is answering, assembled in words - in the figure, "All teams, 1985-2027", because nothing has been narrowed yet. Under it the question is a sentence you edit: **Who** (one team, or all of them) *in* a situation *from* one date *to* another, and a **Show** list that reads "everything" until a filter makes it "custom". To the right sit the two panes and the two buttons: MORE FILTERS and ADVANCED open the filter controls, SAVE SYSTEM stores the query (see My Systems, the next section), and FIND runs it.

The situation list carries the nine classifications the program has always used - All Games, As Favorite, As Dog, As Home, As Away, and the four combinations of home and away with favourite and dog - and the

answer always comes back as those nine rows, whatever the question. Rows the question makes impossible simply show 0-0-0: ask about home dogs and the As Away rows stay empty rather than disappearing.

The columns. The grid is three groups. Under **Straight Up: G**, the number of games the row covers; **SU**, the outright won-lost-tied record; and **Pct**. Under **Against the Spread** (and again, identically, under **Over / Under**):

- **ATS** (or **O/U**) - the record, won-lost-pushed against the number.
- **Pct** - its winning percentage, pushes excluded.
- **Units** - profit or loss betting one unit per game at a flat -110.
- **Real** - the same profit graded at the *actual* closing prices, for the games that carry one. Real spread and total prices are routinely -105 or -108, so the two columns differ more than you would expect - but they cover different games, so do not read them as a like-for-like pair. Hover a Real cell for the honest comparison: how many of the row's games were priced, and what -110 said about those same games.
- **z** - how far the record sits from what a coin would produce, in standard deviations. Printed bold when it clears the program's own significance test.
- **vs rest** - the honest comparison: a z-score against the *same games without your filter*, rather than against a coin. It is blank until the query carries a filter, because an unfiltered query is its own baseline. A filter that does not beat its own baseline found nothing, however good its record looks alone.
- **DD** - the worst peak-to-trough fall in units along the way, walked in date order, and **Run** - the longest string of consecutive losses. Units is where a system ended; these two are what it cost to hold on the way. A push moves no money, so it neither deepens a drawdown nor breaks a run.

The filters. MORE FILTERS and ADVANCED add, to the same question:

- **a streak condition** - after 2 losses, after 4 ATS wins, and so on. A toggle asks for *exactly* N rather than N or more, and a sweep runs the same query at every streak length from 1 to 6, so you can see whether an edge grows with the streak or is noise that vanishes by 3
- **a line bin** - only games where the spread fell in a bracket
- **rest** - only games with at least or at most so many days off
- **month or day of week**
- **an opponent filter** - division, conference or non-conference games
- **a margin** - only after a win or loss by more than so many points
- **where** (*Pro Football Analyst*) - the stadium type
- **weather** (*Pro Football Analyst*) - wind above a speed, temperature above or below a figure, rain or snow. Conditions are *effective*: a dome game is 70 degrees, no wind and dry whatever the sky did outside, and games with a retractable roof or no recorded data are excluded rather than guessed - so a cold-weather trend can never be built out of dome games by mistake

Line bins are per sport. Each sport brackets the spread on its own ladder, because the spreads are different sizes: pro football stops at "20 +" in nine brackets, the college games run to "30 +" in thirteen, and

hockey and pro basketball start at "PK -> 1.5" in twelve. The list you are shown is the one your sport actually uses.

The command box. Everything the controls can ask, a line of text can ask faster. The dark strip above the grid (Figure 9.36) takes either flags - `trendquery --team Denver --cond 'After 2 Losses'` - or plain English, and whatever you type is rewritten as the flags it understood, so you can see and correct the interpretation. Nothing you type is ever sent to a shell; the text is parsed in the page against a fixed vocabulary.

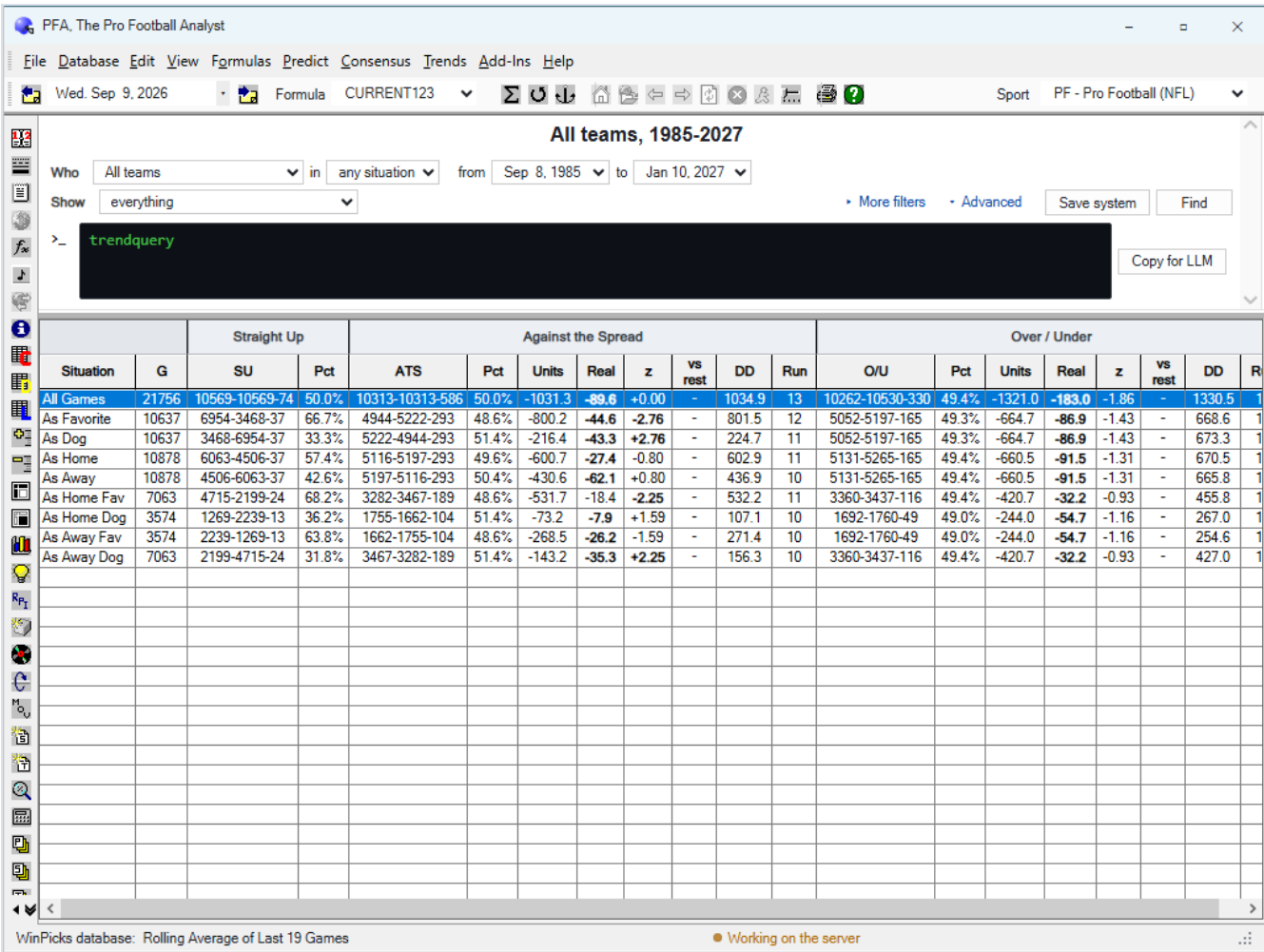


Figure 9.36 - The Command Box, with Copy for LLM Beside It (PFA)

Copy for LLM, the button at the box's right, copies the query, its result and the full flag vocabulary as one block of text, so you can paste it into any assistant you use and paste the command it suggests straight back into the box.

A worked question. Figure 9.37 shows the screen after asking: how do the Arizona Cardinals do as a home underdog, after two straight losses?

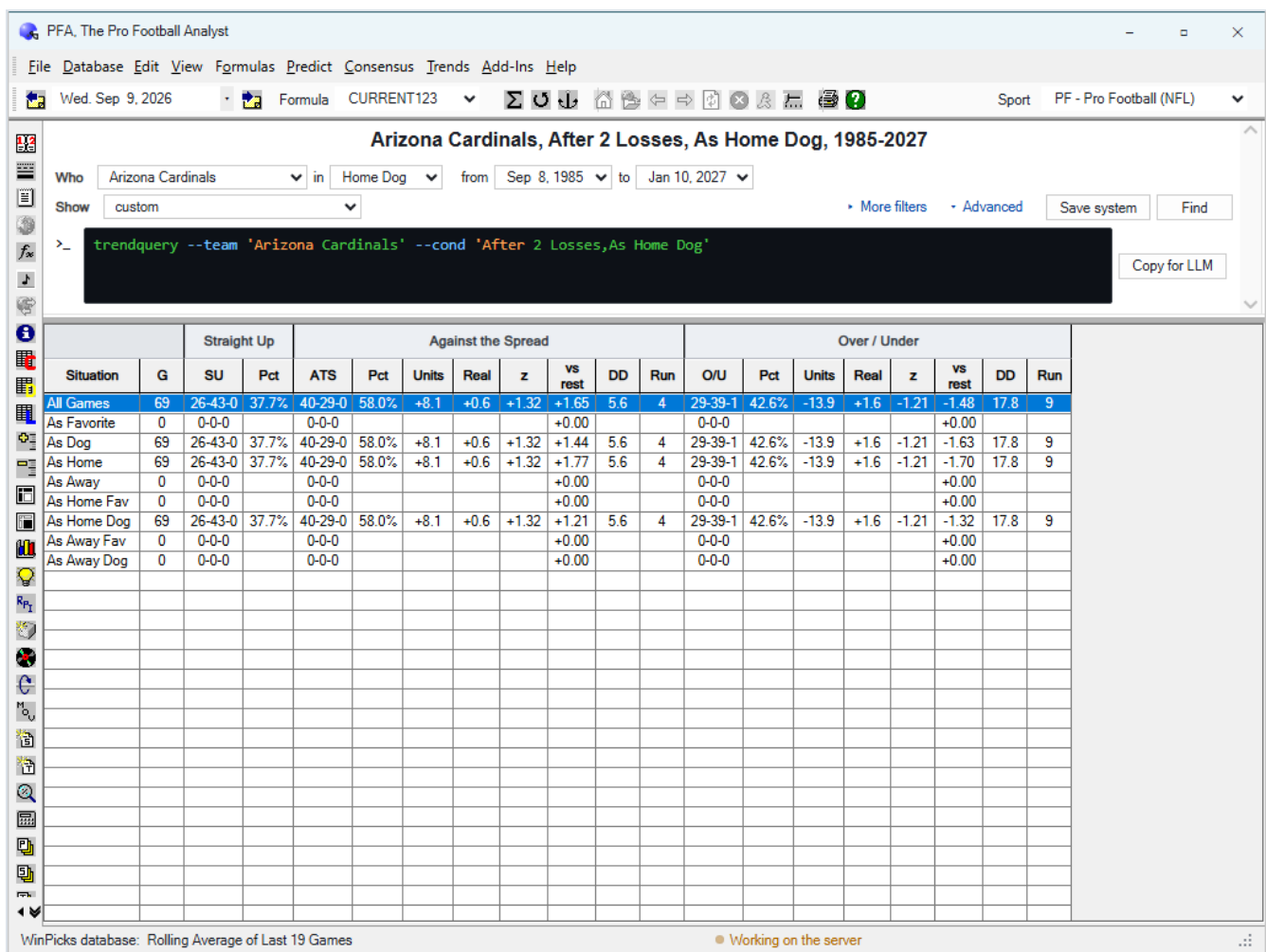


Figure 9.37 - A Question and Its Answer (PFA)

Everything on the screen now reflects the question. The title reads "Arizona Cardinals, After 2 Losses, As Home Dog, 1985-2027"; Who and the situation list have followed; Show reads "custom"; and the command box carries the rewritten flags: `trendquery --team 'Arizona Cardinals' --cond 'After 2 Losses,As Home Dog'`.

Now read the All Games row the way the columns are meant to be read. **G** 69: this has happened 69 times in four decades. **SU** 26-43, 37.7%: they usually lost the game itself - they were home *dogs*. **ATS** 40-29, 58.0%: against the spread they covered well. **Units** +8.1 at a flat -110; **Real** +0.6 - at the prices actually on offer, most of that profit was never there. **z** +1.32: a 58% record over 69 games sits within reach of a coin. **vs rest** +1.65: better than the same games unfiltered, but still short of significance. **DD** 5.6 and **Run** 4: even this record once sat 5.6 units under its own high-water mark and lost 4 straight. The rows below repeat the same 69 games under As Dog, As Home and As Home Dog - the situations the question implies - and 0-0-0 everywhere it cannot apply.

That is the screen teaching its own lesson: a headline record (58% ATS!) that neither the prices, the z-score nor the baseline comparison will vouch for. The columns exist so you find that out here, rather than at a betting window.

More questions, one per filter family. Each of these is a question worth asking, the command that asks it, and the column that decides the answer.

Streaks - does the edge grow with the cause?

```
trendquery --team Chicago --cond 'After 1 Losses' --sweep streak
```

The sweep answers the same question at streak lengths 1 through 6. Judge it the way the Weather Lab judges a curve: a real streak effect deepens as the streak lengthens - a gradient - while an "edge" that exists only at exactly 3 losses, with nothing at 2 or 4, is the noise that one bracket happened to catch. Read G at each length too: by 5-game streaks the sample is usually too thin to say anything.

Line bins - is it one fact or several?

```
trendquery --cond 'As Home Dog' --bin 3
```

Home dogs of 10 to 13.5 points are a different animal from home dogs of 3 - the first is a team the market has given up on. Ask the brackets separately (or ask `--cube` for all of them at once) and read **vs rest** in each: the bracket has to beat the *same games unfiltered*, not a coin, before the bracket itself means anything.

Rest - measured, not assumed.

```
trendquery --cond 'As Away Dog' --rest-more 7
```

Road dogs off a bye and more. Rest is the most theorised factor in handicapping and the least often measured; here the record is one command away. The honest reading is the pair of z columns: off-the-bye teams play in particular weeks and eras, so a fat record with a thin **vs rest** is the schedule talking, not the rest.

Opponent - the December division road favourite.

```
trendquery --cond 'As Away Fav' --opp division --month 12
```

Division games in December are the games with standings on the line, and a road favourite there is a specific claim about class. Stack filters like this and watch **G** collapse - three filters can turn twenty seasons into sixty games, and sixty games prove almost nothing on their own. That is not a reason to skip the question; it is the reason the grid prints G first.

Margin - the letdown, quantified.

```
trendquery --team Denver --cond 'After 1 Wins' --after-pts 14
```

The letdown spot: off a blowout win. The subtler versions ask the question against the market instead of the scoreboard - `--after-pts-ats 14` for "beat the *number* by two touchdowns", which is a different team from one that merely won big as a big favourite.

Weather - and what the columns did to a famous one.

```
trendquery --cond 'As Home Fav' --wind-more 10
```

Weather filters read effective conditions (domes neutralised, retractables excluded). Before trusting any weather record, re-read the measured example in The Weather Board and the Weather Lab, section 7: wind over 10 posted z -5.30 against a coin on 2021-23 totals, -4.08 against its own baseline, and -0.66 held out. The columns on this screen are how you run that same audit on any trend in a minute.

The ride - because Units is only where it ended.

The program's own measured illustration: New England after 2 ATS wins stood at +31.8 units - and along the way sat 17.3 units under its own high-water mark, with 6 consecutive losses inside it. **DD** and **Run** are what holding the system would actually have felt like; a record you would have abandoned in the drawdown is a record you would never have collected. You can even filter on the ride directly: `--having 'ats.units > 20 and ats.dd < 12'` (the full `--having` grammar is in Appendix C).

Saving. Press **Save system** and the query is stored, with today's date, in My Systems - where from now on it is graded only on games played after the save. See My Systems, the next section.

Availability. Trend Finder works in all five packages. Filters that read a box score statistic - rushing yards, time of possession - are offered in Pro Football Analyst only, because it is the only package whose database carries them. Filters reading weather, and the stadium filter, are likewise Pro Football Analyst only. Every other filter reads a score, a line or a date, which every package has.

A cookbook of worked commands - the question in words, the command, and how to read what comes back - is Appendix C, Trend Query Command Examples.

My Systems

A system is a Trend Finder query you have decided to follow. Choose Trends > My Systems to see yours. The screen is shown in Figure 9.38.

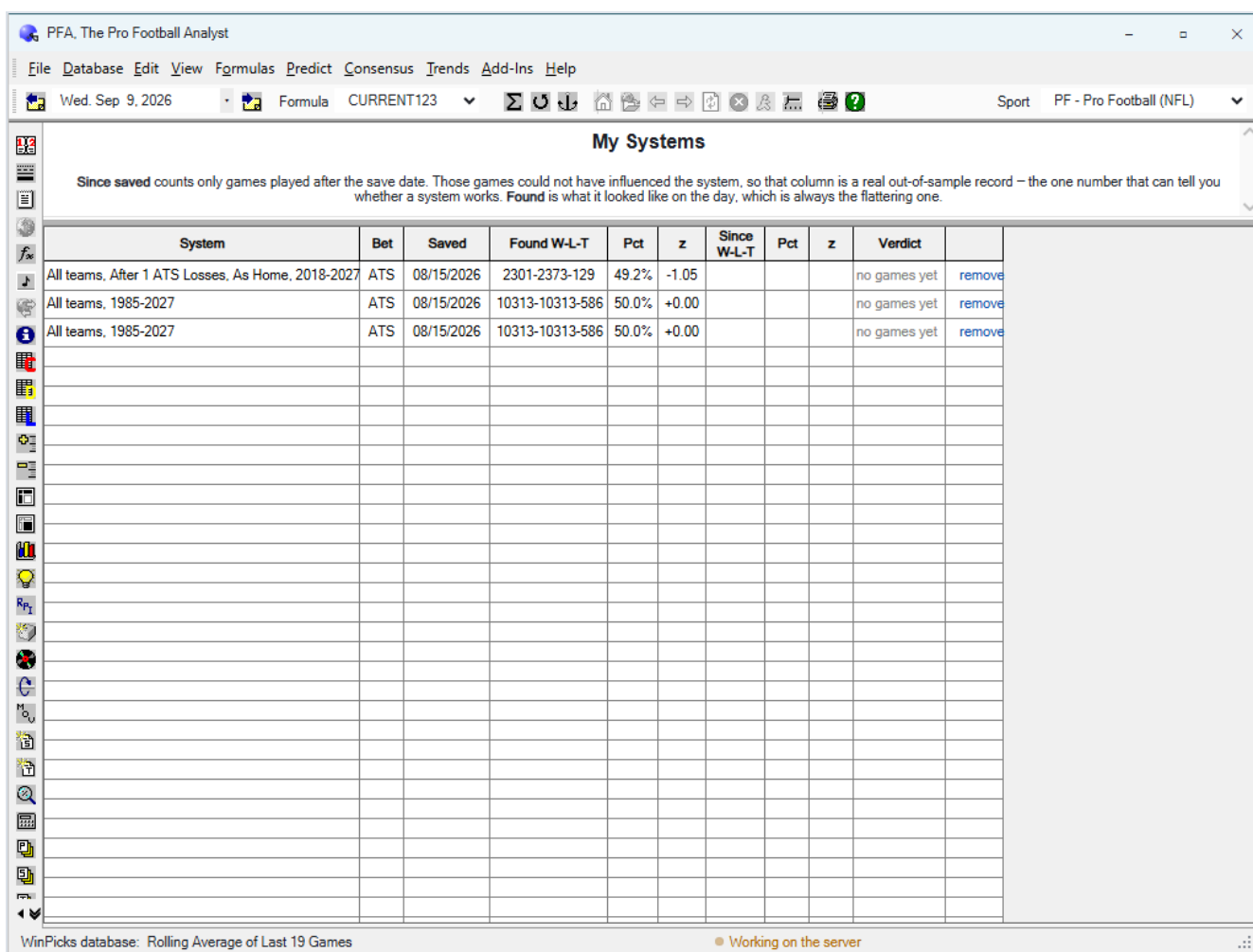


Figure 9.38 - The My Systems Screen (PFA)

To save one, build a query in the Trend Finder, press Find, then press **Save system**. The query is stored under your account with the date you saved it - and that date is the point of the whole screen. The note across the top of Figure 9.38 states the rule the columns follow.

The columns. *System* is the query, written the way the Finder's title line wrote it. *Bet* is the market it is graded on. *Saved* is the date the clock started. Then two records: *Found W-L-T* with its Pct and z - the record the query had on the day you saved it, always the flattering one, because you saved it for looking good - and *Since W-L-T* with its Pct and z, counting only games played after the save date. Those games could not have influenced what you saved, so the *Since* column is a true out-of-sample record: the one number that can tell you whether a system works, and the closest thing Win Picks has to a verdict. In Figure 9.38 the systems were saved in the off-season, so *Since* is empty and the *Verdict* column says "no games yet" - the screen would rather say that than judge early.

The verdict column reads the two together. A system whose Since record is winning units in the direction it was saved for shows *holding*; one that has gone the other way shows *not holding*; and until twenty games have been played it says there are too few games to judge, rather than judging early.

Removing a system deletes its saved date with it, and re-saving the same query later restarts the clock from that day. The screen warns you before removal, because an out-of-sample record is only meaningful

while its start date stands.

The old Trend Seeker watch lists kept thousands of machine-found trends with no record of when each one was chosen, which is why they could never be checked honestly afterwards. My Systems is the repair: a few systems, chosen by you, each with its save date preserved and its later record measured against it.

Viewing Trends using the Trend Seeker Watch List or My Trends

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.4. Viewing Trends using the Trend Seeker Watch List or My Trends

WinPicks allows the trend handicapper to easily keep track and view trends they have uncovered using Trend Seeker, or trends saved to the *My Trends* list. Trends can be saved to *My Trends* using Team History, or by right clicking on any trend displayed by the *Trend Seeker*.

Viewing Trends using the Trend Seeker Watch List

The "Trend Seeker Watch Lists" display the most recent results from running the *Trend Seeker*. It can be used to check the results from the *Trend Seeker*, or to verify the most recent list is current.

After you select TREND SEEKER WATCH LISTS from the TRENDS menu, a window will ask which list you want to view. WinPicks always saves the last ten results of running the *Trend Seeker* in a list. This allows you to check trends from multiple watch lists without having to run the *Trend Seeker* again. The selection window is shown below:

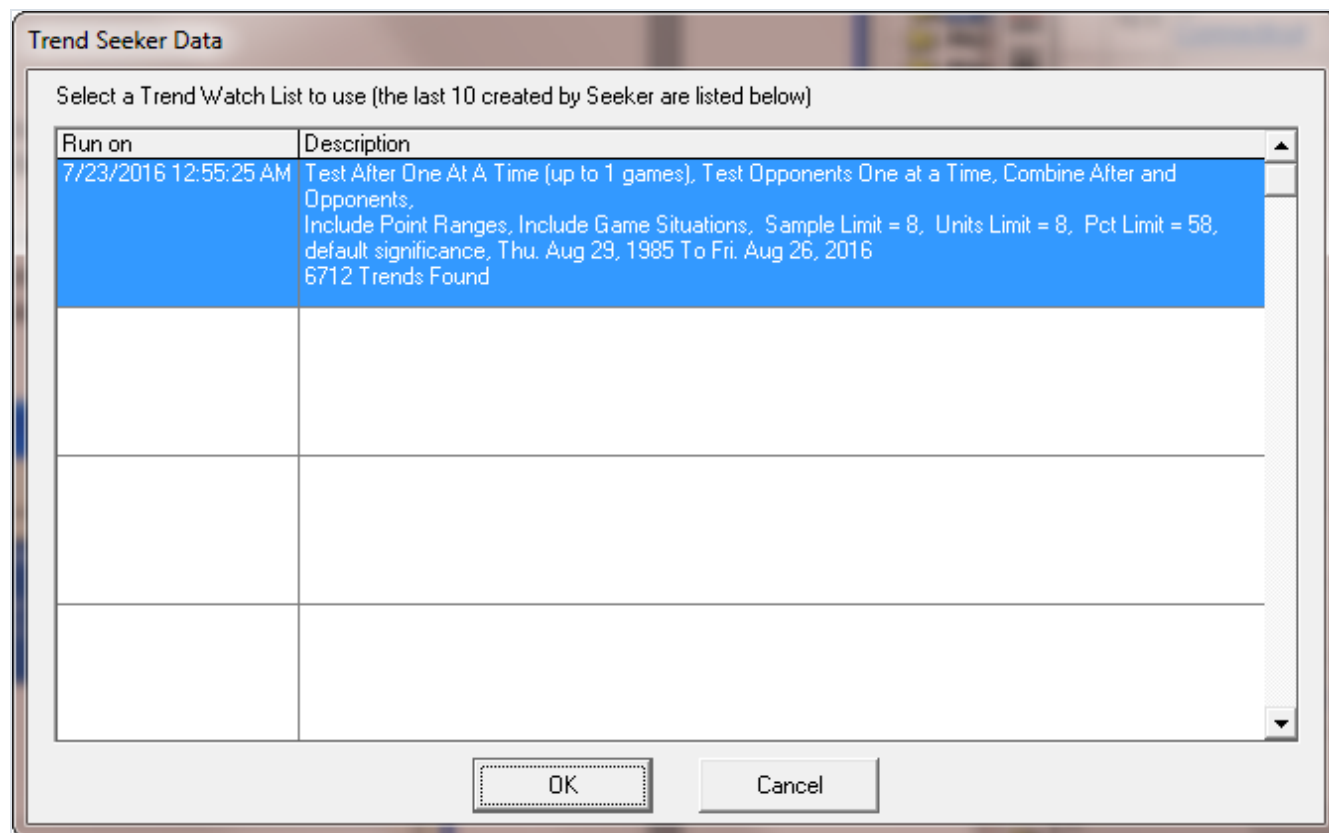


Figure 9.40 - The Trend Seeker Database Window (CFA)

Select a *Trend Seeker* database to view, and the "Watch List" window will be displayed next:

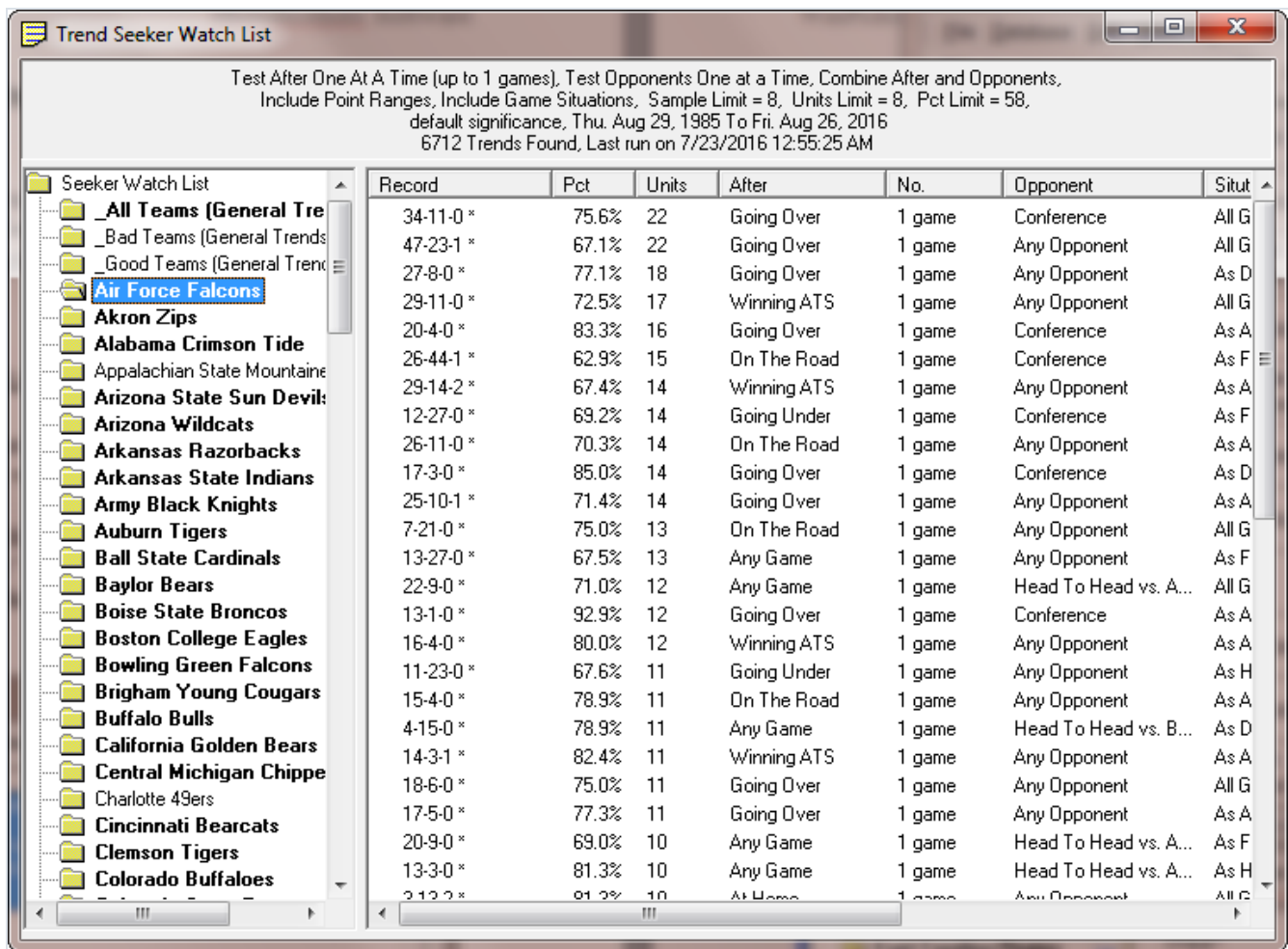


Figure 9.41 - The Watch List Window (CFA)

At the top of the "Watch List" window, the status of the most recent search is displayed. This is useful, since it indicates the last time that *Trend Seeker* was run, and the selections that were used.

Below the status information is a two-pane folder-and-list interface that lets you view the significant trend information in the watch list. The left pane of the interface allows you to display the trends found on a team by team basis, or the trends found for all teams. When you click on any of the folders in the left pane, the right pane will display the significant trends that were found.

The columns in the right pane include:

Column Heading	Description
----------------	-------------

After

The "After" playing condition that matches the trend.

No.

The number of games (1-10) associated with the "After" condition.

Opponent

The "Opponent" condition that matches the trend.

Situation

The situation associated with this trend. Situations include "All Games", "As Home", "As Home", "As Favorite", "As Dog", "As Home Fav", "As Home Dog", "As Away Fav", and "As Away Dog."

Pt. Range

The point range the Vegas line was at for this trend. This can include "All Lines", or specific point range values that are unique to each sport.

ATS/OU

The type of trend found is displayed as ATS (against the spread, for sides) or OU (over/under, for totals).

Record

Displays the record for the significant trend that was found. ATS trend records are shown in this order: Won-Loss-Push. OU trend records are shown in this order: Over-Under-Push.

Pct

The winning percentage for this trend. The percentage is calculated using the side the trend favors.

Net Units

The net units for this trend. Net units are calculated using the side the trend favors, and using the standard method ($\text{Units} = \text{Wins} - 1.1 \times \text{Losses}$). Trends with the most Net Units are initially displayed at the top of the list.

All columns in the watch list can be sorted. Click the button at the top of any column to sort the data based on that column. Click the button again to reverse the sort order.

After viewing the significant trends in the "Watch List", the window can be closed by clicking the "X" in the upper right hand corner.

Viewing Trends using My Trends

Select MY TRENDS from the TRENDS menu to view all of the trends you have saved. Trends that pertain to a team's conference are marked with a "(c)" next to the won-loss record. You can recalculate all your saved trends by clicking on the "Recalc" button, or right click on a trend to view the trend details or to remove the trend from the list (Figure 9.42).

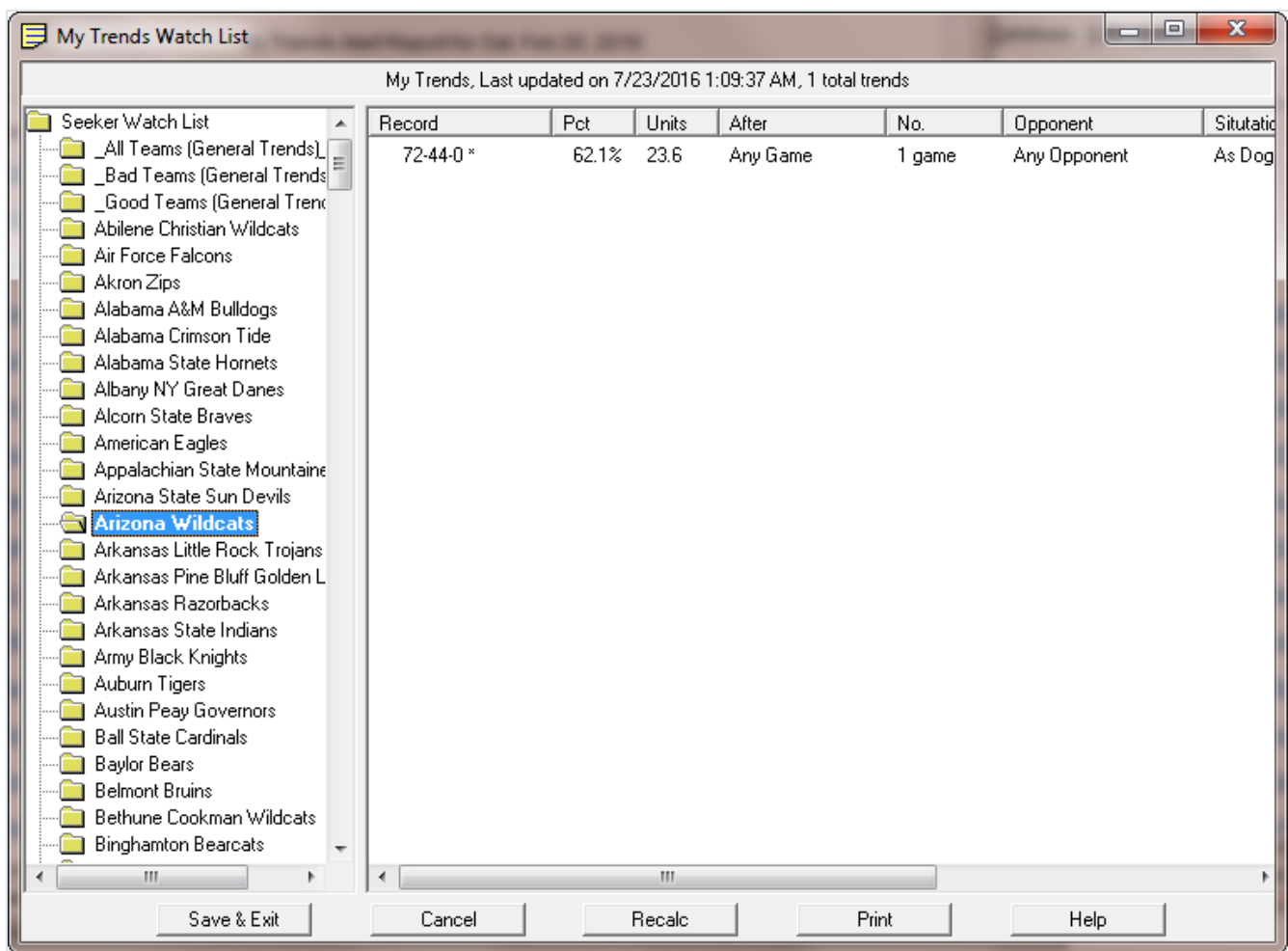


Figure 9.42 - The My Trends Watch List (CBA)

Using Trends to Generate Alerts

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.5. Using Trends to Generate Alerts

WinPicks allows you to generate alerts from trends you have uncovered using Trend Seeker, or from trends saved to the My Trends list. Trends can be saved to My Trends using Team History, or by right clicking on any trend displayed by the Trend Seeker.

Show Trend Seeker Alerts

Once a Watch List has been created with Trend Seeker, you can quickly see what games on the upcoming schedule match the trends. To do this, select SHOW TREND SEEKER ALERTS from the TRENDS menu. This feature will scan every game being played on the schedule against every trend in the watch list. If a match occurs, it will display the information.

After you select SHOW TREND SEEKER ALERTS, a window will appear asking you which Watch List you want to use. WinPicks always saves the last ten results of running Seeker in a list, letting you check trends from multiple Watch Lists without having to run Seeker again.

The Alerts report shows all games for the current date, similar to the screen below:

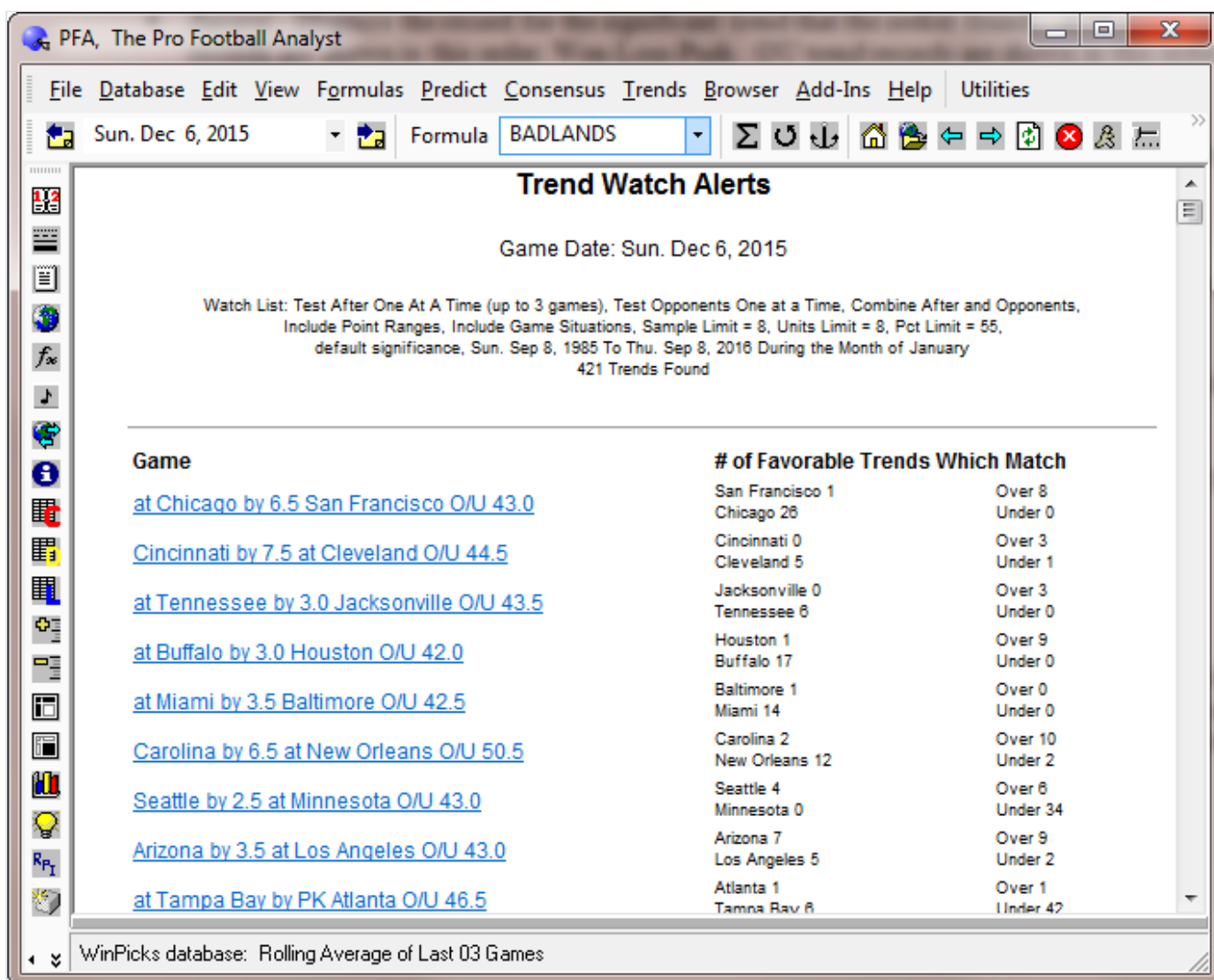


Figure 9.50 - The Trend Alert Report (PFA)

The "Trend Alerts" information is formatted as a web page. The top of the report contains summary information for each game on the schedule. The number of favorable trends that match each team (and over/under) summarized, with links to detailed trend information further down the page. You can also use the "Back To Top", "Previous", and "Next" links to move from game to game on the page.

How to Read the Trend Alert Report

Each game on the report is divided into two sections.

The first section is titled "Individual Team Trends Which Match." This section shows all of the matching trends found using specific team trends. For instance, suppose Baltimore is playing at home against Cincinnati. If Baltimore is 10-0 ATS at home after winning 2 games, and Baltimore has just won their last 2 games, the trend will be reported here.

The second section is titled "General (Any Team) Trends Which Match." This section shows trends found by Seeker when searching for general situations using all teams in the league. For instance, suppose all teams in the league are also winning significantly ATS at home after winning 2 games. Baltimore would also show up in the second section, since they match the general trend.

The team that matches a significant trend is always highlighted using **Green** or **Red** text for ATS trends. If the trend is favorable to the team, the name is displayed in **Green** text. If the trend is not favorable to the team, the trend is displayed in **Red** text.

For OU trends, the words Over and Under are highlighted in **Green** and **Red** to indicate what side the trend favors. For instance, if the word Over is shown in **Green**, it indicates the game is expected to go over.

At the top of the report, each game is summarized with the total number of favorable trends for each team, and for the over and under.

Trends that pertain to a team's conference are marked with a "(c)" next to the won-loss record.

Show My Trends Alerts

You can view the alerts for trends saved in your MY TRENDS list by selecting SHOW MY TRENDS ALERTS from the TRENDS menu. A screen similar to Figure 9.50 (above) will appear, listing all games on the schedule that match your stored trends.

Situation Analysis

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.6. Situation Analysis

SITUATION ANALYSIS summarizes many of the important trends that relate to a specific game. When you select SITUATION ANALYSIS from the toolbar, a list is displayed of all games scheduled on the current date. When you select a game from this list, a screen appears (Figure 9.60) showing how the two teams have performed in this situation in past games. Statistically significant trends are marked with an asterisk (*).

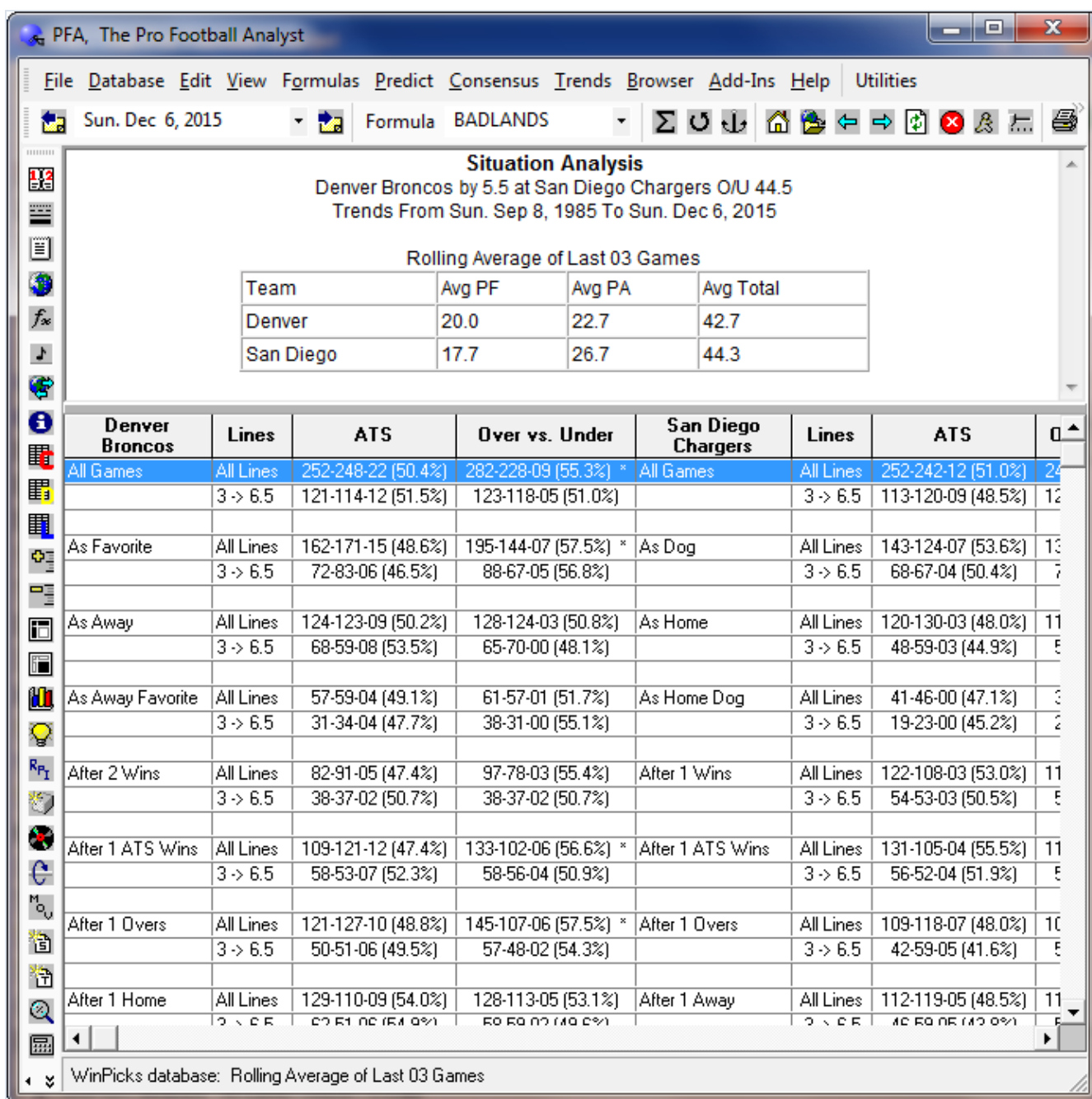


Figure 9.60 - The Situation Analysis Screen (PFA)

The Key Trends Report

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.7. The Key Trends Report

Once we know what a statistically significant trend is, wouldn't it be nice to quickly extract all of them from today's schedule? The KEY TRENDS feature - its button is on the toolbar - does exactly that, it lists all of the statistically significant trends for the currently selected date.

The KEY TRENDS feature lets you select the date range to scan when looking for trends. You can scan the entire database or just a portion of the database. The report then lists every game on the schedule for the current date. The number of statistically significant trends will vary widely from game to game, but it is

always worth looking at this report. Most handicappers agree that "the trend is their friend" and find the KEY TRENDS report to be a useful handicapping tool.

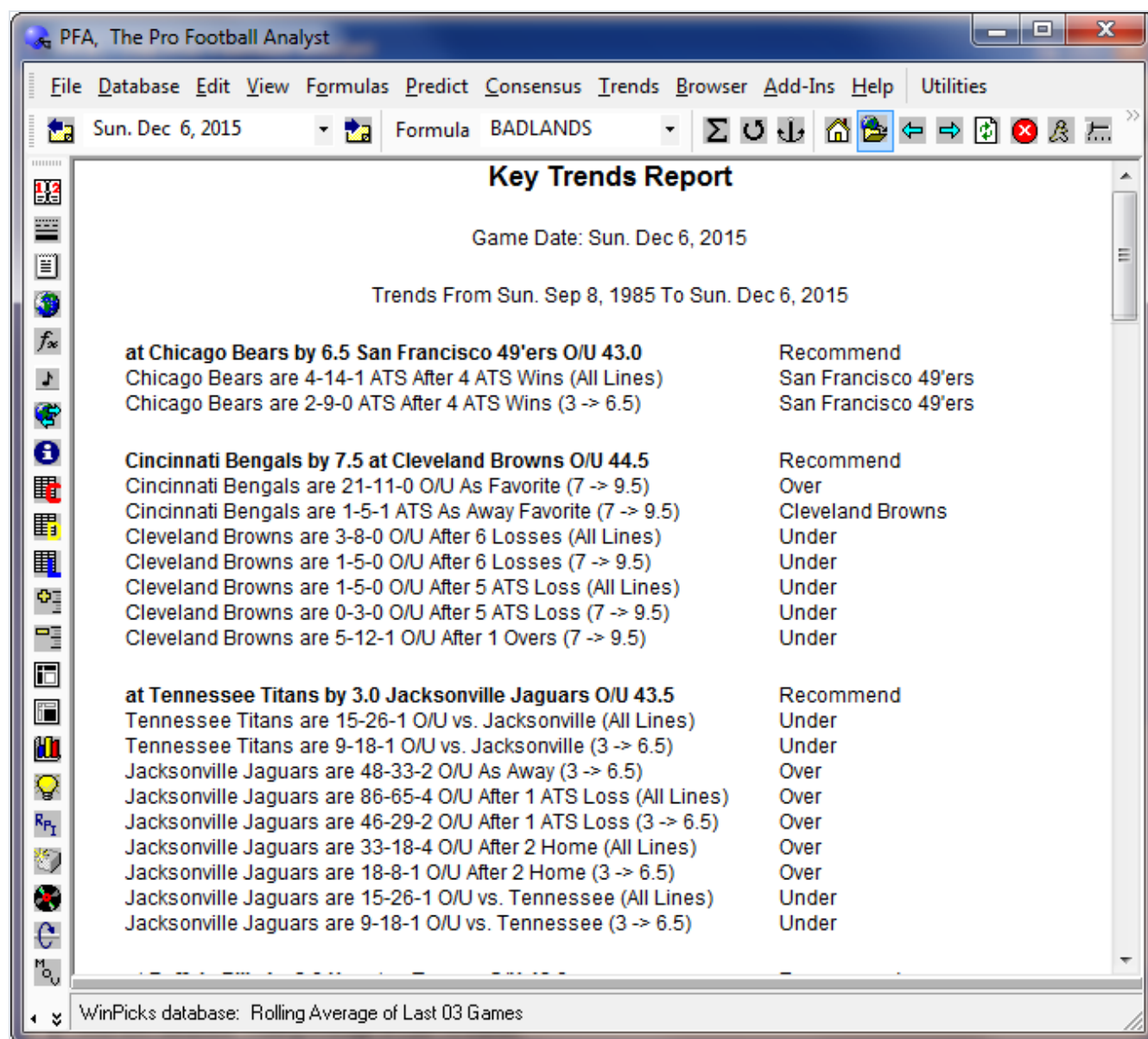


Figure 9.70 - The Key Trends Report (PFA)

Set Trend Options

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 9.8. Set Trend Options

When you use TEAM HISTORY or any of the other trend features in WinPicks, you may notice that some trends are marked with an asterisk (*). When you see an asterisk, it means that the team in question has done much better (or much worse) than average in this situation, and therefore this trend is considered to be statistically significant.

By default, WinPicks identifies trends that are more than two standard deviations from the mean as statistically significant. However, you can vary the number of standard deviations from 1 to 4 by choosing

TREND SETTINGS from the TRENDS menu (Figure 9.80); the window it opens is titled Set Trend Options. This feature also allows you to change the settings that determine good and bad teams. By default, good teams are defined as having won more than 66.7 percent of their games over a period equal to about one season, and bad teams are defined as having won fewer than 33.3% of their games over the same interval. However, you can change the parameters to anything you wish.

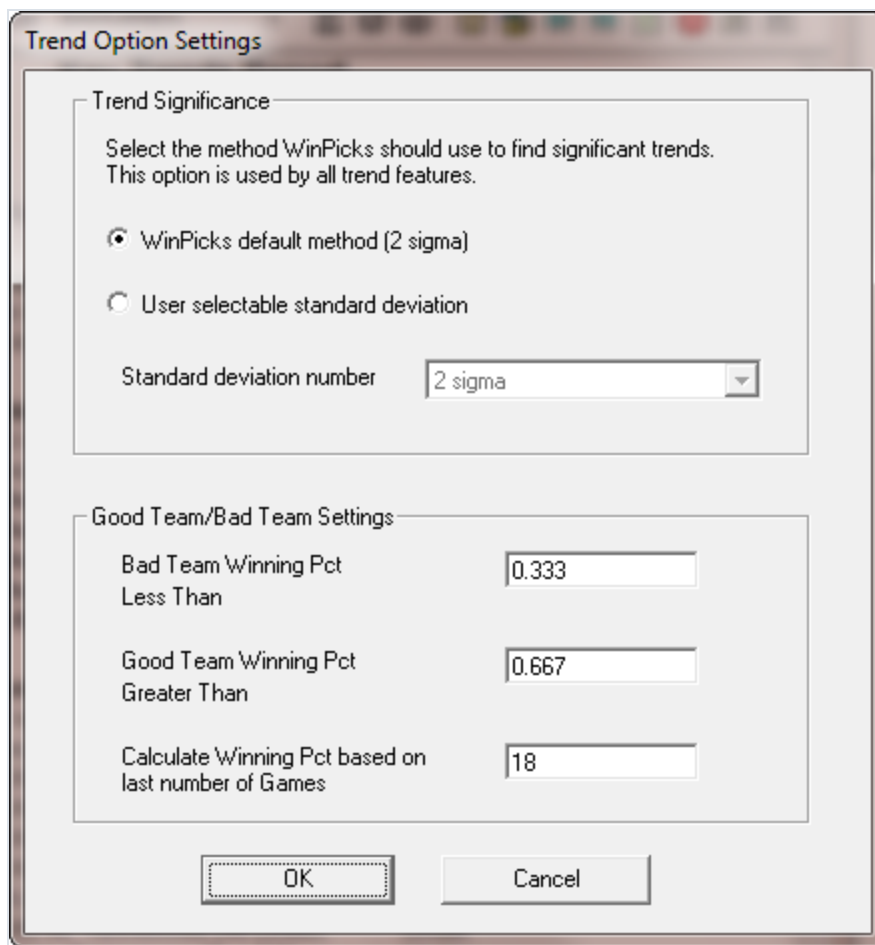


Figure 9.80 - The Set Trend Options Window

If you want to learn more about standard deviation, nearly any book on statistics will explain how to calculate it. However, one simple way to illustrate standard deviation is to empty a box of toothpicks onto a flat surface. When the toothpicks come to rest, most will remain clustered near the spot where they landed. This spot represents the average or mean. You'll probably see toothpicks spread out around the mean in a fairly consistent fashion. Statisticians call this normal distribution. As you get further and further from the mean, you'll see fewer and fewer toothpicks. If you recorded the final resting position of each toothpick and used the numbers to calculate standard deviation (distance from the mean), you would find that there is a high probability (about 68%) that a given toothpick will come to rest within one standard deviation of the mean. If you used two standard deviations (double the distance from the mean), you would find that there is a 95% probability that a toothpick will land within this range, or only a 5% probability that a toothpick will land outside this range.

The trends marked with an asterisk are just like the toothpicks that defied the odds and landed far away from the mean. They represent situations that are out of the ordinary, and thus deserve the attention of

every handicapper.

Utilities

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 10. Utilities

This section discusses some features that were included to make WinPicks as versatile as possible. These features cover the Data Sources window, getting help, and exporting the WinPicks database so it can be used by other applications. To copy any report to the clipboard, choose Edit > Copy to Clipboard; for large amounts of data, use the Export features below.

This section covers the following topics:

- 10.2 - Changing the Data Directory
- 10.4 - Getting Help
- 10.5 - Exporting Data to Microsoft Excel

Changing the Data Directory

The original program stored its database in a folder on your computer and let you point it somewhere else - a second drive, or a shared folder on a network. WinPicks 2.0 keeps the database on the server. Your formulas, your saved trends, your tuner settings and your price basis are stored with your account, and reach you on any machine you sign in from. There is no folder to choose and nothing to back up.

The menu item remains, and now opens a small window called **Data Sources**. It reports where the server keeps each sport's formulas, how many are stored, and whether every screen is reading the same copies - and if two copies of a formula ever disagree, it says so and offers the repair. Most customers will never need it; it exists so that the answer to "where is my work, exactly?" is a screen rather than a support question.

Getting Help

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 10.4. Getting Help

WinPicks has an extensive help section that includes all the text from this reference manual. To use it, select CONTENTS from the HELP menu, or press F1.

The HELP menu also includes a TREND COMMAND REFERENCE, which documents the command grammar the Trend Finder accepts (see section 9), and SHOW ALL MESSAGES AGAIN, which brings back any explanatory messages you have dismissed with "don't show this again".

There is no CHECK FOR SOFTWARE UPDATES item any more, and nothing to check: WinPicks 2.0 is maintained on the server, so a fix or a new feature is simply there the next time you sign in.

If you have a question this manual does not answer, or you find a mistake in the program or in the data, choose MY ACCOUNT from the HELP menu and follow the Contact link on your account page. We respond to most questions within 24 hours.

Exporting Data to Microsoft Excel

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 10.5. Exporting Data to Microsoft Excel

Nearly all of the data in the WinPicks database can be exported. WinPicks generates comma-separated value (.csv) files, which Microsoft Excel opens directly - as does any other spreadsheet, database, or programming language.

The original program could also start Excel itself and fill in a worksheet. A browser cannot start programs on your machine, so that option is shown in the export window but disabled; choosing .csv gives you exactly the same data. The exported file arrives through your browser's normal download.

There are three different export features in WinPicks, and each is described below.

Export Current Report. Display any report on the screen, then select EXPORT CURRENT REPORT from the FILE menu. Whatever report is on screen is saved as a .csv file.

Export Games (Scores, Lines, Stats by Date). Select EXPORT GAMES from the FILE menu. The window shown in Figure 10.51 will appear, and you can export the entire database or a range of dates.

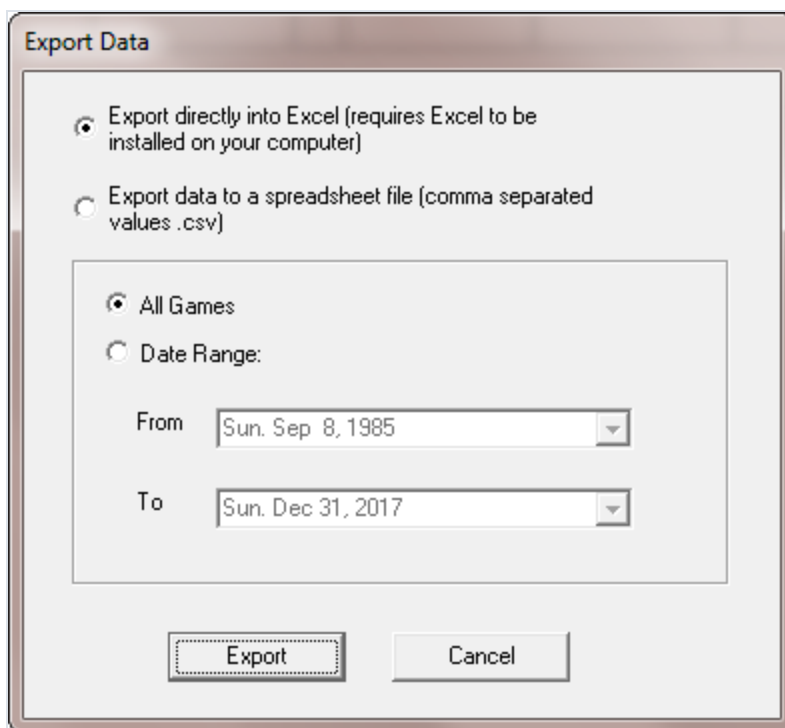


Figure 10.51 - The Export Data Window

When this option is used with *Pro Football Analyst (PFA)*, it exports the date, Nevada rotation number, score, pointspread, and totals (over/under) information, as well as all of the game statistics found in the boxscore. The other four packages export the date, rotation number, score, pointspread, and totals information. Rotation numbers are only included for games with odds, odds (particularly totals) are not included for some games, and rotation numbers are missing for CFA, PFA, and PBA games prior to 1997.

All packages contain all regular season and postseason games in their database, dating back to 1985 for the football versions, to 1990 for PBA, and to 2000 for CBA. Many thousands of games are exported if you

select all games with this feature.

Export Team Database (totals). Select EXPORT TEAM DATABASE from the FILE menu to export the information found in the database about each team, including won/loss records, against the spread (ATS) and totals records, and average margin of victory (AMOV) at home and on the road - plus, in *Pro Football Analyst*, the game statistics found in the boxscore. The amount of information exported depends upon the database method that is currently in use.

Using SureLock

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 11. Using SureLock

The *SureLock Formula Wizard* was an automatic formula designer included with *Pro Football Analyst*: you told it how many weeks of data to use and whether you wanted a Sides or a Totals formula, and it chose the statistics and computed the weights itself, using ridge regression to correlate each stat with actual game results.

WinPicks 2.0 replaces SureLock with **Forge**, found on the same ADD-INS menu. Forge does the same job - designing a complete formula rather than adjusting one that exists - and adds the safeguard SureLock lacked: it fits a formula on the earlier games and scores it on games the fit never saw, so the record it reports is not the record of the data it trained on. SureLock reported its record from the same games it was built on, which is why its formulas often looked better on the day they were made than they did the following week.

Forge is described in *Forge: Designing a Formula from a Question*, in section 8. A formula Forge produces is an ordinary formula file, analysed and tuned like any other.

Your Account and Subscription

WinPicks Reference Manual Section 12. Your Account and Subscription

The original program was bought by the season and installed on one machine at a time. WinPicks 2.0 replaces that arrangement with an account and a subscription: nothing is installed, and nothing ties your work to a particular computer.

Your account is your email address. It holds your formulas, your saved trends, your tuner settings and your price basis, and it reaches you from any machine you sign in from. Signing in on a second computer is expected, not something to be worked around.

Packages are bought per sport. A package you have not bought is still shown in the Sport list; choosing it explains what it includes rather than hiding it. Buying one takes effect immediately - there is nothing to download and no new licence to enter.

If a payment fails or a subscription lapses, your formulas and saved trends are kept. They are yours; access to the package resumes when the subscription does.

Changing your password is on the account screen, reached from Help. If you have forgotten it, the reset link on the sign-in page sends a message from the winpicks.net address.

Winning With WinPicks

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A. Winning With WinPicks

The WinPicks software is a powerful handicapping tool. When used for legal gambling, it can give you the winner's edge by providing you with a wealth of information that the average gambler simply doesn't have. But as with any tool, you need to know how to use WinPicks wisely. This section includes a tutorial on sports wagering and some handicapping tips, and will help you get the most out of WinPicks.

This section covers the following topics:

- A.1 - Wagering Against the Line
- A.2 - The Purpose of the Line
- A.3 - Wagering on the Total (Over/Unders)
- A.4 - Beating the Line
- A.5 - Pro Football Handicapping
- A.6 - College Football Handicapping
- A.7 - Pro Basketball Handicapping
- Pro Hockey Handicapping
- A.8 - How WinPicks Produces a Line
- A.9 - Measuring the Success of a Formula
- A.10 - Checking Trends
- A.11 - The Bottom Line

Wagering Against the Line

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.1. Wagering Against the Line

When you place a wager on a football or basketball game you have to consider the *line* (also called the *point spread* or *spread*). For example, let's look at a college football game between Notre Dame and Navy. If both teams have an equally good chance to win, you could take a piece of paper, write Notre Dame on one side and Navy on the other, and draw a line right down the middle. The paper might look like this:



Since the line is exactly in the middle of the paper, it means that the two teams are considered to be even and that each team has an equally good chance to win. This is called a *pick-em*. Of course, college football fans know that Notre Dame and Navy play each other nearly every season, and Notre Dame almost always wins (although Navy ended a 43 game losing streak against Notre Dame with a triple overtime win in

2008!). Due to the past history of the series, it seems highly probable that Notre Dame will win again this time. Therefore, if the game was a pick-em, everyone would take Notre Dame. The oddsmakers don't want that to happen. They want some people to take Navy even if they think Navy will lose, and so they compensate by moving the line towards Notre Dame and away from Navy:



In the above example, the line was moved 28 points to the left of center. This means that if you wager on Notre Dame, they need to win by more than 28 points in order for you to collect your money. The notation for this wager is Notre Dame (-28). Even if Notre Dame wins by 31-7, you lose. Why? Because when you take 28 points away from Notre Dame, the score becomes 7-3 in favor of Navy. The notation for a wager on Navy is Navy (+28). They need to win or lose by 27 points or less in order for you to win your wager. If the outcome of the game falls right on the line (Notre Dame wins by 28), the game is a *push* and the wager is off. Often, the line is set on a half-point (27.5, for example) to eliminate the possibility of a push.

The type of wager we have just described is the most common type of sports wager. Some gamblers refer to this type of wagering as playing *sides*, since you simply choose a side (either Notre Dame or Navy in our example). The 28 points in our example is called the *line*, *point spread*, or simply the *spread*. A pick-em has a point spread of 0. Notre Dame is the *favorite*, and Navy is the *underdog*, or *dog*. If you play the favorite you *lay* points, if you play the dog, you *take* points. If Notre Dame wins by more than 28, or if Navy loses by less than 28, you can say that they *covered* the point spread.

The Purpose of the Line

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.2. The Purpose of the Line

The purpose of the line is to make both teams look equally attractive to the gambling public. Perhaps no one would take Navy as a pick-em against Notre Dame, but Navy might look attractive to many bettors if they get Navy plus 28 points. The opening line is set by oddsmakers who try to gauge the public's opinion of the game and who want to make both sides look equally attractive. They want to balance their book, or in other words, make sure that they receive an equal amount of money on both sides of the line. The reason for this is simple -- oddsmakers don't like to gamble! If their book is balanced, they can't lose since they get to keep about 4.5% of the total amount of money wagered. If their book isn't balanced, they're gambling just like the public, and there is a good chance they could lose.

If too much money is wagered on one side of the line, the oddsmaker moves the line to encourage gamblers to take the other side. For example, if too few gamblers take Navy at +28, the line might move to +29 to make Navy look more attractive. Money moves the line. If the line is moving further and further away from Navy, you'll know that most of the money is being wagered on Notre Dame. During the week before a game, the line might constantly move. For example, it may go from 28 to 29, back to 28.5, and so on. However, the opening line seldom differs from the closing line by more than 2 or 3 points.

Sometimes it cannot be avoided, but oddsmakers try to avoid moving the line too far in the same direction. If they do, they may be *muddled*, which means they'll have to pay out money on both sides of the line. To illustrate this, let's look at a hypothetical situation where the line on the Notre Dame-Navy game opens at

Notre Dame (-27). The majority of the gambling public feels that Notre Dame will win by more than 27 points, so nearly all of the money is being wagered on Notre Dame. To entice gamblers to put money on Navy, the line keeps moving away from Navy. By kickoff, the line is Notre Dame (-32), meaning that the opening line moved by a full 5 points. Notre Dame winds up winning by a score of 40-10. This puts the sportsbook in the unenviable position of having to pay all of the gamblers who took Notre Dame and laid from 27 to 29.5 points earlier in the week, and to also to pay the gamblers who took Navy plus 30.5 to 32 points later in the week. Some gamblers may have wagered on Notre Dame early in the week and Navy later in the week and *won both wagers*. This is what it means to be middled. Normally a sportsbook only has to pay the people on one side of the line. In this case, they have to pay out money on both sides of the line. To avoid this situation, oddsmakers try to make the opening line as *sharp*, or accurate, as possible so that line movement can be kept to a minimum.

In some cases, large sums of money will unexpectedly show up on one side of the line. This isn't supposed to happen, because the oddsmakers have a lot of experience and they have set a line that (in their opinion) makes each team look equally attractive to the gambling public. Therefore, when nearly all of the money is being wagered on the same team it is sometimes referred to as *unnatural money*. When a sportsbook detects the presence of unnatural money, they may elect to investigate (or at least ask around) and see where the money is coming from. While they investigate, they may take the game *off the board* and refuse to accept further wagers. In other cases, injuries to key players or an unusual situation surrounding a team will force a game to go temporarily off the board.

As it turns out, the sportsbook industry has years of experience setting lines, and have developed an excellent feel for how the public will wager. To most people the line seems like it's about right. Normally, about half of the gamblers will like one team, and about half will like the other team. The money will usually start to fall fairly evenly on both sides of the line, which is exactly what the sportsbooks want. If the oddsmakers have done a good job of gauging the public opinion of a game and have set a good line, everything else takes care of itself. Not much line movement is necessary, the book stays balanced, and the sportsbook collects about 4.5% of the action regardless of who wins or loses. Although sports gambling has more favorable odds than almost all other forms of gambling, the odds are still against the player.

Knowing that the odds are against you, can you still beat the line? Sure. Many gamblers routinely beat the line. The key is learning as much as you can about the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two competing teams. Respect the public's perception of a game, but don't assume that it is always accurate. Do your homework and form your own opinions. The single most important thing to remember about handicapping is:

The line is based on the public's perception of the game, and not on the relative strength of the two teams.

Wagering on the Total (Over/Unders)

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.3. Wagering on the Total (Over/Unders)

Another popular type of wager is called an *over/under*. Interestingly enough, the over/under player isn't concerned about the point spread or with who is expected to win the game. None of that matters. Instead, this type of wager is based on predicting the total number of points to be scored in a game by both teams. The line on such a wager is called the *totals* line.

To illustrate how the totals line works, let's go back to our Notre Dame-Navy example and state that the totals line is 47 points. You can wager on either the *over* or the *under*. If you play the under, you are expecting the teams to score a combined total of more than 47 points. If the combined score goes above 47, you'll win. For example, if the score is 49-0, 38-21, or 28-27, the over players win. If the combined score is 46 points or less, the under players win. If it lands on 47 (27-20, for example) the game is a push and the wager is off. Like the point spread, the totals line is often set on a half point (47.5, for example) to eliminate the possibility of a push.

Beating the Line

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.4. Beating the Line

One of the first questions asked by prospective gamblers is "How often do you have to win to make money?" Well, as we mentioned earlier, the book gets a percentage of every wager. This percentage is called the *vig* (short for vigorish) or the *juice*. The vig is usually 10%. All gamblers have to pay the vig, but the winners get it back. To illustrate this, consider that anyone who makes a \$10 wager has to give \$11 to the book. Winners are paid \$21. This \$21 consists of the return of the original \$10 wager, the return of the \$1 vig, and the \$10 that the winner just won. In contrast, if you lose you're out \$11, since the book keeps the \$10 wager and the \$1 vig. If the number of winners and losers are equal, the book keeps \$1 out of every \$22 wagered, or the 4.5% that we mentioned earlier.

Every sports bettor should know that, due to the vig, you need to win more than 50% of the time to break even. For example, if you made a hundred \$10 wagers, and won half of them you would lose \$50. You would win only \$500 (50 x 10) and lose \$550 (50 x 11). The winning percentage you need to break even is 52.4%, which happens to be 11 out of 21.

Beating the line more than 52.4% of the time is harder than it sounds. You have probably seen advertisements or web sites where tout services claim an against the spread (ATS) record of 70% or higher. Many thousands of customers have fallen for these exaggerated claims. Don't believe it. Every gambler has a hot streak once in a while, but experienced handicappers know that a 70% winning percentage is impossible to maintain over long periods of time. If you consistently hit in the 55% to 60% range, you'll outperform nearly all of the tout services. Every year, the organizations that monitor touts services report that many hit less than 50%, or worse than they would do by flipping a coin. Far less than half of the tout services reach the 52.4% required to break even. And these services can be expensive, some touts charge thousands of dollars per season for their selections! When you factor in their fees, turning a profit becomes even less likely.

The plain truth is that the oddsmakers know their business. They normally set a sharp, accurate line, and beating it consistently requires a lot of work. However, WinPicks can greatly improve your chances since it does nearly all of the work for you. The majority of WinPicks customers routinely beat the point spread. In the following sections we'll discuss how to tap the power of WinPicks when wagering on pro football, college football, pro basketball, college basketball, and pro hockey.

Pro Football Handicapping

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.5. Pro Football Handicapping

WinPicks is versatile enough to implement almost any NFL handicapping method. Developing a method requires two things: deciding how many weeks of stats to use, and deciding which prediction formula to use.

Pro football handicappers often debate about the number of weeks of data to use. It's tempting to go back as far as possible (particularly to look for trends), but it is not always wise. Teams go up and down from season to season. Part of this is because the NFL gives last year's division winners the most difficult schedules the following season. This makes it difficult for them to repeat as champions. Teams that finish last in their division are usually given an easier schedule, which often means they turn things around the following season. Another key factor is free agency. It has become common for a team to change from 30% to 50% of their players between seasons. Some say that this makes it more difficult to be a fan, and it obviously makes it more difficult to be a handicapper.

To accurately handicap the NFL, you need to use a sample of games that reflects the way a team is playing now. For this reason, WinPicks lets you use a rolling average that only looks at a team's most recent games. Most handicappers use a rolling average from the last 3 to 8 games, or else use the season-to-date totals.

Before choosing a prediction formula, we hope you try to create your own. We supply several formulas with WinPicks that have worked well in past seasons, but your own formulas might do better. The ANALYZE option lets you instantly test any formula to see how well it works. When you create a formula, you should put most of the emphasis on the major stats like points scored, points per 100 yards, total yards, winning percentage, and so on. Stats like field goal percentage and yards per punt are usually less important. If you use them at all, assign them a low weight.

If you use Forge, the formula designer on the ADD-INS menu, it does the formula design work for you. It automatically builds a complete formula by selecting the stats to use, and then computing the optimum percentage weights to assign to each stat. Another outstanding feature of WinPicks is the Formula Tuner, which can fine tune your formulas to produce the very best results.

College Football Handicapping

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.6. College Football Handicapping

College football handicapping with WinPicks is similar in many respects to pro football handicapping. As with pro football, you need to decide how many weeks of stats to use, and which prediction formula to use. However, since college football is a different game than pro football, the size of the database you use may be different, and the contents of prediction formulas are very different.

When choosing a database, remember that the turnover rate among college players is high. Most teams lose about half of their starters from the previous season to graduation. For this reason, many college handicappers prefer a season-to-date database that uses games from the current season only. This type of database might not work well early in the season, but generally improves as the season goes on. Other handicappers prefer a rolling average of 4 to 8 games, to accurately reflect how a team is playing now.

Before choosing a prediction formula, try creating your own. We supply several formulas that have worked well in past seasons, but your own formulas might do better. The ANALYZE option lets you instantly test any formula to see how well it works. Unlike pro football formulas which are based on actual game

statistics, college football formulas are based on home field advantage, margin of victory, and the relative strength of the conferences.

Having a good understanding of the relative strength of the conferences is the key to successful college football handicapping. Although people talk about parity in college football, it doesn't really exist. There is actually a large disparity between the strengths of the various conferences and teams. The large number of teams makes this disparity statistically unavoidable. With about four times as many NCAA Division-1 teams as NFL or NBA teams, there is a huge top-to-bottom difference in the quality of teams that doesn't exist in pro sports. In pro football, a 40 point victory over any team probably means a team is pretty good. In college football, a 40 point victory over a Big 10 team is meaningful, but a 40 point victory over a Sunbelt Conference team may not mean anything at all to a team from a major conference. In fact, many a Division-1 team has scored a 30 or 40 point victory in non-conference play, and went on to win only 2 or 3 games all season.

When creating college football formulas, it is often wise to use the first week or two of the season to get a good feel for how the conferences are stacking up so you can assign an accurate value to each conference. You'll probably find that the SEC, Big 10, Big 12, and PAC-12 are going to be much stronger than the Sunbelt, Conference USA, and MAC. It's also wise to use the Formula Tuner to optimize your formulas so that they produce the best possible results.

You should also be aware that college lines can be much larger than pro lines. Pro football lines of larger than 17 points are extremely rare. On the other hand, Nebraska was favored by more than 30 points 54 times from 1985-1999. On four occasions, they were favored by more than 50 points! For many handicappers, the big lines represent a real opportunity. When the oddsmakers have to set lines ranging from 0 to 50 points, instead of 0 to 17 points, they are more likely to make a mistake. This is one reason why many gamblers believe that college football is easier to "beat" than pro football.

Pro Basketball Handicapping

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.7. Pro Basketball Handicapping

Pro basketball handicapping also requires deciding how many games of stats to use, and which prediction formula to use. The number of games you use should be large enough to include a good mixture of road and home games, but small enough to reflect how well teams are playing now. Many handicappers prefer a rolling average of from 10 to 15 games. Since the 82-game NBA schedule is so long and grueling, you can divide the season of many teams into several "mini-seasons" where the quality of their play varies considerably. The intensity level of a team varies, and since the teams are only allowed to have 12 players on their active roster, injuries influence the NBA results far more than they do in football. A 10 to 15 game roll seems to capture the essence of these "mini-seasons" well. Using a balanced rolling average (based on a equal number of home and road games) often seems to improve the results.

As with our football products, we supply three pro basketball prediction formulas that have worked well in past seasons. However, we suggest that you try creating your own formulas and testing them with the ANALYZE option to see how well they work. The pro basketball prediction formulas are based on rest and weariness factors. NBA teams travel extensively, and the home team has a distinct advantage. Teams that have been playing at home for several games often play extremely well, whereas teams may start to falter

towards the end of a long road trip. The WinPicks formulas allow you to add or subtract points from a team's power ranking, based on the number of consecutive home or road games a team has played. We suggest using the Formula Tuner to optimize the formulas that you create so that they produce the best possible results.

As everyone knows, the home team has a distinct advantage in the NBA, perhaps more so than in any other sport. In some instances, it seems nearly impossible for the weaker teams in the NBA to win on the road, or for the top teams to lose at home. Since the gambling public is aware of this fact, however, a strong home court advantage is already factored into the line. In fact, the line often exaggerates the dominance of the home team. You'll find that bad teams often cover on the road, even if they seldom win. For this reason, you'll get the best results with formulas that show respect for the home court advantage, without giving it undue emphasis.

Pro Hockey Handicapping

Pro Hockey Analyst is the newest member of the WinPicks family, and hockey differs from the other four sports in ways that matter to a handicapper.

The puck line is not a point spread. Almost every game is priced at 1.5 goals, so the spread carries very little information and the money line carries nearly all of it. Where in football you would ask whether a team covers, in hockey you are usually asking whether it wins outright at a price. Pro Hockey Analyst's straight-up record is therefore the number to watch, and its net units figure matters more than its percentage: winning 45% of your bets at plus money is a good season.

Scoring is low and variance is high. A hockey game turns on two or three goals. A run of results that would take half a football season to accumulate can happen in a fortnight, which makes a small sample even less trustworthy here than elsewhere. Insist on more games before believing a record, and lean on the drawdown and run columns in Trend Finder rather than the headline.

Rest and travel are real. Back-to-back games, and the second night of one in particular, are worth more in hockey than in any other sport WinPicks covers - a tired goaltender is a different team. The rest filter in Trend Finder is the tool for measuring this on your own data rather than taking it on faith.

Home ice is worth less than home field. The home advantage parameter in a hockey formula is smaller than its football equivalent, and tuning will generally find that for you. If a hockey formula wants a large home advantage, be suspicious of it.

A newer engine, on by default. Pro Hockey Analyst is the first package to run WinPicks' second-generation engine. Rather than weighting statistics into a projected spread, it models goal scoring directly and produces a win probability for each game, so its native market is the money line, and its formulas carry three values rather than thirty-six weights (see Creating Formulas with Pro Hockey Analyst, in section 8.2). You use it exactly as you use the others: the Predict screens, Analyze and the Tuner all read it.

Data coverage. Pro Hockey Analyst carries scores, lines, totals and money lines with per-bookmaker prices, on the same terms as the other four packages. It does not carry a box score: the twenty statistical categories described in section 7.3 are Pro Football Analyst only.

How WinPicks Produces a Line

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.8. How WinPicks Produces a Line

After you select a database and a formula, WinPicks produces its own line based on the relative strength of the two teams. As we mentioned earlier, the actual line is based on public perception of the game. The key to successful handicapping is to find meaningful differences between the public perception of the game, and the actual strength of the teams involved in the game. In other words, if you can out think the public, you can beat the line.

You can look for these differences by adjusting a formula's betting window. For example, if you set the window from 1 to 7 points, the formula recommends picks when the actual line differs from the WinPicks line by 1 to 7 points. If you increase the size of the window, the formula recommends more picks. If you decrease the size of the window, the formula recommends fewer picks.

WinPicks might do a poor job picking games if the difference between the actual line and the WinPicks line is too large. If a formula disagrees with the oddsmakers by a large amount, it might be overlooking some non-statistical factor that is influencing the line. Or, it might be relying too much on unimportant statistics. The best picks are often close to the actual line, but still provide the slight edge needed to win.

Measuring the Success of a Formula

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.9. Measuring the Success of a Formula

There are two ways to measure the success of a formula. The first way is to track its straight-up record (SUR). The SUR is the percentage of winners a formula picks without considering the point spread. Over the course of a season, an SUR of 65% to 70% or higher is very good for either pro football or pro basketball. In college football and college basketball, where one-sided games are common, many formulas will have an SUR of 70% to 75%, because just picking the winner is often not difficult. A high SUR (65% to 70% for pro football or basketball, 70% to 75% for college football or basketball) should make you competitive in nearly any contest you enter. Formulas with a high SUR are great for football contests, office pools, and parlay cards.

Of course, gamblers are more interested in a formula's winning percentage against the spread (ATS). It's important to remember that formulas with a high SUR often don't do well ATS, and vice versa. The ATS rules are the same for football and basketball, and the same for sides or totals. Break-even at -110 is 52.4%, so the gap between a losing formula and a winning one is far narrower than it looks, and a couple of points either side of that line is the whole game. Judge a formula on its **out-of-sample** record rather than the record it posted on the games it was fitted to - a training figure always flatters, and the holdout column beside it is the one that has to stand up.

Even the best formulas have bad weeks (and the bad ones have good weeks), so don't get too depressed or excited about a bad or good week. Always stay focused on turning a profit, and look for formulas that beat the line over long periods of time.

Checking Trends

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.10. Checking Trends

After you find a successful formula, you may want to use SITUATION ANALYSIS or TEAM HISTORY to check the recommended picks. For example, your formula might pick a certain team to cover as a road underdog against a divisional opponent. When you check the team's history, you might find that they seldom cover the line in this situation. Or, your formula might pick a team that is clearly superior "on paper", but has a history of playing poorly against this week's opponent. To make you aware of these situations, routinely checking trends is often a good idea. You can then qualify your formula's picks by checking to see if they agree with the trends.

A pick based on sound statistical information that agrees with the trends is usually a solid play. Of course, it won't always be right. However, in the long run you can usually do quite well by combining a good formula with some trend analysis.

Finding trends is a popular pastime among handicappers, perhaps the most popular pastime of all. Many handicappers, perhaps the majority, base all of their selections on trends. If you choose to go this route, the WinPicks software is probably the most powerful tool you can buy, since it includes a trend engine that lets you study a game from nearly every conceivable angle. There are also dozens of articles published each year that uncover "hidden" trends with incredibly high winning percentages, and trend information is routinely discussed by radio and television talk show hosts and play-by-play announcers. While it is certainly possible to profit from staying on top of existing trends, it is usually not wise to handicap using only trend information. Here are several reasons why:

Few pro teams have a distinct personality - Pro football and basketball are big business, and this means that there is high turnover among the players and coaches. Owners are always trying to shake up the team to win more games or save more money, and even the ownership is subject to change. A team may still have only a few (if any) of the players that played for them three years ago, in fact, entire NBA rosters have changed in one year. Also, many head coaches only last from one to three years before getting fired. Why should any organization with this much change follow trends? Our experience shows that college football teams seems to follow trends more closely even though their players can only play for four years. The reason is that many college football teams have a distinct personality imprinted on them by their coach and the amount of emphasis placed on football by the university. Also, there are many well-known rivalries in college football that the schools, players, and fans take very seriously. As college fans know, the atmosphere at these games is very similar from year to year. Few such rivalries exist in pro sports.

Once a trend is discovered, the oddsmakers will often prevent you from playing it - Since so many handicappers look for trends, the oddsmakers look for them, too. For example, one of the best known trends in pro football is to take Kansas City as a home dog (29-10-3 ATS, 74.4%, from 1985-2007). The trend was so strong from 1985-1991 that the oddsmakers decided not to let gamblers play it. Although they had many seasons without a strong team, the Chiefs were a home dog only 17 times, or about once per year on average, from 1992-2007 (going 8-7-2 ATS). Because so many people were waiting to take Kansas City as a home dog, the oddsmakers usually made them a home favorite instead, robbing this once strong trend of most of its value. By 2008, however, when the Chiefs had hit rock bottom, the oddsmakers no longer feared this trend, and the Chiefs were underdogs in seven of their eight home games. The Chiefs won only one of the seven games, and went 3-4 ATS.

Strong trends carry a high price, and the value goes away - Many gamblers refer to the line as the price, much as an investor refers to the price of a stock. And as stock players know, the stocks most likely to make money often have the highest price. The trick is knowing when something is overpriced, or too expensive to remain a good value. For example, during their Super Bowl years with Joe Montana, the San Francisco 49ers were an excellent road team that routinely covered the line. However, since the oddsmakers knew this, they kept raising the price, favoring them by more and more points every week until they were no longer a good value. During their championship years with Michael Jordan, the Chicago Bulls were considered so invincible that they were routinely a 15 to 18 point favorite and yet still covered over 60% of the time, often winning by 20 to 30 points. However, late in the year once they had clinched the division title and started "resting" for the playoffs, they were unable to meet the high expectations of the gambling public. There is always a point where the price is too high for the risk involved, and all trends eventually turn around and go the other way.

The key factor when doing trend handicapping is to try and find a trend before everyone else knows about it. Then, profit from it while it lasts. Remember, it doesn't help to know what everyone else knows, you have to know something that other gamblers don't. As we stated earlier, trends are best used as support for your statistical analysis. We recommend handicapping with formulas, and then checking each recommended pick to see if it agrees with the trends.

The Bottom Line

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix A.11. The Bottom Line

The WinPicks software includes a powerful set of handicapping tools that have been refined over a number of years. These tools can greatly improve your chances of being a winner, but they are not a substitute for common sense. Please remember that statistics and trends aren't the only factors involved when handicapping sports, and never forget that there is no such thing as a "lock". If you use WinPicks wisely, you'll find that sports handicapping is both an entertaining and a profitable pastime.

WinPicks Files

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix B. Where WinPicks 2.0 Keeps Things

The original program kept everything in a folder on your machine, and this appendix listed the file extensions so you could recognise them. WinPicks 2.0 keeps the same things, in the same shapes, on the server.

The database. One file per sport holding every game: date, teams, score, line, total, the game's round, and for Pro Football Analyst the twenty box score categories. This is shared by every customer and is not editable.

Formulas. One file per formula per sport, carrying the weights, the data method, the analysis window and the record the formula last posted. The extensions are unchanged - .PFF for Pro Football Analyst, .CFF, .PBF, .CBF and .PHF for the others - and a formula file from the original program can still be read. Formulas are stored against your account.

Prices. Two kinds. A consensus file per sport, holding the market's number for each game, and one file per bookmaker per sport holding what that book alone offered. The per-book files are what the "+ all books" panel and the Odds Compare screen read. All five sports carry the full set.

Your settings. Price basis, saved trends, tuner settings and toolbar state are kept per account, which is why they follow you between machines.

What is no longer on your computer. Nothing. There is no install directory, no data folder, no lines folder and no licence file. If your machine fails, you lose nothing but the session.

Trend Query Command Examples

WinPicks Reference Manual Appendix C. Trend Query Command Examples

The Trend Finder's command box (section 9) takes either **flags** or **plain English**. Whatever you type, the box is rewritten with the flags it understood, so you can always see - and correct - the interpretation. Nothing you type is ever sent to a shell: the text is parsed in the page against a fixed list of flags, and words it cannot place are listed back to you rather than ignored. The reference for everything below lives in the program itself, under Help > Trend Command Reference (Figure C.1). This appendix walks through it, example by example.

The Finder's command box takes either **flags** or **plain English**. Whatever you type, the box is rewritten with the flags it understood, so you can see and correct the interpretation. Nothing is ever sent to a shell - the text is parsed in the page against a fixed list of flags.

Examples

```
trendquery --team 'Arizona Cardinals' --cond 'After 2 Losses'
trendquery --team Buffalo --cond 'After 1 Overs,After 2 Losses'
trendquery --cond 'As Home Dog' --bin 3 --stadium 3
trendquery --team Denver --cond 'After 1 Wins' --after-pts 14
trendquery --team Miami --cond 'As Dog' --cube
trendquery --team Chicago --cond 'After 1 Losses' --sweep streak
trendquery --cond 'As Away Fav' --opp division --month 12
```

one team, one condition
two conditions, each with its OWN count - both must hold
every team: home dogs of 10-13.5 points, indoors
after winning by more than 14 - the letdown spot
break it down by line bin
the same question at every streak length 1-6
road favourites, division games, December

Plain English

Try `arizona after 2 losses as home dog` green bay after a win in december.
`dallas home underdogs on mondays` after 3 straight overs in a dome Words it cannot place are listed back to you rather than ignored.

Conditions (--cond, comma-separated, ALL must hold)

```
After N Wins After N Losses After N ATS Wins After N ATS Losses After N Overs
After N Unders After N Home After N Away After N Fav After N Dog
```

N is the count and each term may use a different one. `After 2 Losses` means 2 or more; add `--exact-streak` for exactly 2.

Situations (also valid as a --cond term)

```
As Favorite As Dog As Home As Away As Home Fav As Home Dog As Away Fav
As Away Dog
```

Line bins (--bin)

```
0 = PK -> 2.5 · 1 = 3 -> 6.5 · 2 = 7 -> 9.5 · 3 = 10 -> 13.5 · 4 = 14 -> 16.5 · 5 = 17 -> 19.5 · 6 = 20 +
· 7 = No Lines · 8 = All Lines
```

Other flags

```
--team ID|NAME id or name; a prefix is fine
--after-pts N previous game decided by MORE than N
--rest-less N / --rest-more N days since the last game
--month N / --dow N 1-12 / 1=Sunday..7=Saturday
--stadium N 0 open grass, 2 open turf, 3 dome, 4 retractable grass, 5 retractable turf
--opp TERM regular, post, division, conference, nonconf
--opp-team ID head-to-head
--teams A,B,C several teams as one group - a division, a conference, your own list
--opp-line N only games at exactly that line
--opp-conf N opponent from a given conference
--after-pts-ats N previous game beat the NUMBER by more than N - not the same spot as winning by N
```

Figure C.1 - The Trend Command Reference (PFA)

The general shape of a query is:

```
trendquery --team WHO --cond 'WHAT HAPPENED' ...more filters...
```

Every part is optional. No team means every team; no condition means every game. The answer always comes back as the nine-situation grid described in section 9, with the same columns.

One team, one condition.

```
trendquery --team 'Arizona Cardinals' --cond 'After 2 Losses'
```

The simplest question: one team, after two or more straight losses. Quote a name that contains spaces; a prefix is fine (`--team Ariz` works), and so is a team id. `After 2 Losses` means two *or more* - add `--exact-streak` for exactly two. Section 9's Figure 9.37 shows a question of this shape answered in full, column by column.

Two conditions, each with its own count.

```
trendquery --team Buffalo --cond 'After 1 Overs,After 2 Losses'
```

Conditions are comma-separated inside one `--cond`, and ALL of them must hold: Buffalo's previous game went over the total, and Buffalo has lost two or more straight. Each term carries its own N - the 1 and the 2 are independent.

Every team, a line bracket, a stadium type.

```
trendquery --cond 'As Home Dog' --bin 3 --stadium 3
```

No `--team`, so this is every home underdog in the database - narrowed to `--bin 3`, spreads of 10 to 13.5 points, indoors (`--stadium 3` is a dome). The pro football bin ladder runs: 0 is pick-em to 2.5, 1 is 3 to 6.5, 2 is 7 to 9.5, 3 is 10 to 13.5, 4 is 14 to 16.5, 5 is 17 to 19.5, 6 is 20 and up, 7 is games with no line, 8 is all lines. Stadium codes: 0 open grass, 2 open turf, 3 dome, 4 retractable grass, 5 retractable turf.

The letdown spot.

```
trendquery --team Denver --cond 'After 1 Wins' --after-pts 14
```

`--after-pts 14` keeps only games where the previous game was decided by MORE than 14 points - here, Denver coming off a blowout win. Two sharper variants exist: `--after-pts-ats N` asks whether the previous game beat the *number* by more than N (not the same spot as winning by N), and `--after-pts-ou N` asks whether the previous total missed the posted number by more than N.

Break the answer down by line size.

```
trendquery --team Miami --cond 'As Dog' --cube
```

`--cube` runs the same question once per line bin and returns a block per bracket, so you can see whether Miami as a small dog and Miami as a big dog are the same fact or two different ones.

The same question at every streak length.

```
trendquery --team Chicago --cond 'After 1 Losses' --sweep streak
```

`--sweep streak` re-runs the query at streak lengths 1 through 6. An edge that grows smoothly with the streak is a different thing from one that appears only at exactly 3 - the first looks like a fact about the team, the second like noise that got lucky once.

Several filters at once.

```
trendquery --cond 'As Away Fav' --opp division --month 12
```

Road favourites, in division games, in December. `--opp` takes regular, post, division, conference or nonconf; `--month` is 1-12 and `--dow` is 1 for Sunday through 7 for Saturday.

Plain English. All of the above can be typed as words: `arizona after 2 losses as home dog, green bay after a win in december, dallas home underdogs on mondays, after 3 straight overs in a dome`. The box rewrites what it understood into flags - which is also the fastest way to *learn* the flags.

The rest of the vocabulary. The conditions are After N Wins / Losses / ATS Wins / ATS Losses / Overs / Unders / Home / Away / Fav / Dog, and any situation (As Home Dog, As Away Fav, and so on) is also valid as a `--cond` term. The remaining flags:

Flag	What it does
<code>--team</code> ID or NAME	one team; a prefix is fine
<code>--teams</code> A,B,C	several teams as one group - a division, a conference, your own list
<code>--opp-team</code> ID	head-to-head against one opponent
<code>--opp-conf</code> N	opponent from a given conference
<code>--opp-line</code> N	only games at exactly that line
<code>--rest-less</code> N / <code>--rest-more</code> N	days since the last game
<code>--wind-more</code> N / <code>--wind-less</code> N	wind at kickoff, mph (domes neutralised, retractables excluded)
<code>--temp-more</code> N / <code>--temp-less</code> N	temperature at kickoff
<code>--gust-more</code> N / <code>--precip</code>	gusts, mph / rain or snow fell
<code>--stat</code> DIR:NAME	previous game beat or lost to the opponent on a stat
<code>--having</code> EXPR	keep only result rows matching a condition

Filtering the answer rather than the games. `--having` reads the result:

```
trendquery --cond 'As Home Dog' --having 'games >= 50 and ats.z > 2'
```

keeps only rows with fifty or more games and an ATS z-score above two. The fields are `games`, or `bet.metric`, where `bet` is `su`, `ats` or `ou` and the metric is `w l t n pct units z dd run` - so `ats.units > 20` and `ats.dd < 12` finds systems that made money without a brutal ride. Join terms with `and` and `or` (`and` binds tighter; there are no parentheses), and the screen reports how many rows it kept of how many tested.

Previous-game stats (*Pro Football Analyst* only). `--stat more:TotalYds,fewer:Turnovers` keeps games where the team beat its previous opponent on total yards while committing fewer turnovers - relative to the opponent, not an absolute threshold, and a tie counts as neither. A caution the reference itself prints: measured league-wide, no single stat predicts next-game ATS, so these are for combining with other filters - and the sample collapses fast when you do. Read the game count before the percentage.

Asking the question backwards. Typing `scan` instead of `trendquery` runs the reverse search - the Trend Seeker's question: given this scope, which combinations are strongest? Because it tries everything, multiple testing is the whole problem, so a scan always reports how many combinations it tested and how many chance alone would have thrown up. Its flags: `--min-games` (volume floor), `--min-z` (significance floor), `--min-units` (profit floor at -110), `--rank z|units|pct`, `--top N`, and `--situations / --bins / --pairs` to widen the space. The one that matters most is `--split MM/DD/YYYY:rank` on games before the date, then report what held up after it, judged in units. The reference's own measured example is worth repeating: ranked by units with a 150-game floor and split at 2014, two of twelve winners held up - and seven of the twelve were one fact, the Manning-era Denver overs, wearing different labels, which reversed from +30.4 units to -37.3. Treat an un-split scan as a hypothesis, never a finding.

Three scenarios, start to finish.

Find me a fade. A system does not have to win to be useful - a filter that loses reliably is a filter whose other side wins, minus the vig. Hunt for one directly by filtering the result for deep losers with volume behind them:

```
trendquery --cond 'As Away Fav' --having 'games >= 100 and ats.units < -20'
```

Any row that comes back lost twenty or more units over at least a hundred games. Before betting the opposite of anything, apply the full audit: the **vs rest** column (a loser that merely tracks its unfiltered baseline is the era losing, not the filter), and the same holdout discipline as any positive system - a fade saved to My Systems is graded out of sample like everything else.

How do these two teams actually play each other? Head-to-head is easiest asked in plain words - type

```
denver vs kansas city
```

and the box rewrites it to the flag form (`--team` and `--opp-team`, with the teams' ids filled in - the `--opp-team` flag itself takes an id, which is why you let the plain-English pass supply it). The nine-situation grid then reads as the history of one rivalry - Denver at home against this opponent, Denver as the dog against this opponent, and so on. This is the same information the Platinum Page's head-to-head method summarises (section 8), with the full honesty columns attached.

A season-scoped question. The from and to dates above the grid scope every query, typed or clicked - set them to one season's bounds and the command box asks its questions inside that season. Narrower time slices are flags: `--month 12` for Decembers across all seasons, `--dow 2` for Mondays. Keep the golden rule in view as the window narrows: **G** first, verdicts second. One season of one team's Decembers is a handful of games, and the grid will happily show you a 4-0 that means nothing.

When the box talks back. The command box never guesses silently:

- Words it cannot place are listed back to you, unparsed, rather than dropped - if you typed `arizona after 2 loses`, the stray word comes back and the streak filter was not applied.
- A `--having` filter reports how many rows it kept of how many tested, so an empty grid is distinguishable from an over-tight filter.
- A weather flag with no weather data synced for the range is refused outright - never quietly answered from nothing.
- Names with spaces need quotes (`--team 'Green Bay'`); a unique prefix needs none (`--team Green` is ambiguous, `--team Denv` is not).
- And the box always rewrites itself with what it understood - when in doubt, read the rewritten line before pressing Find. That line *is* the question that was asked.

Working with an assistant. The **Copy for LLM** button beside the command box copies three things as one block of text: your question, the full result grid, and the complete flag vocabulary. Paste that into any assistant you use and ask it, in your own words, for the query you actually want - "same thing but only December, and require fifty games" - and it can answer with a command, because the vocabulary travelled with the question. Paste the command back into the box. The box rewrites it into the flags it understood, exactly as it does with your own typing, so the assistant gets no power you do not have: whatever comes back is parsed against the same fixed list of flags, in the page, and shown to you before it runs.