

### Notes on the Contest and Analyses

There are 17 weeks in the NFL football season. The prediction contest started in Week 2, and hence consisted of only 16 weeks (weeks 2-17).

Las Vegas oddsmakers will often refrain from setting point spreads on games associated with a major uncertainty, such as whether or not a partially injured star player is going to play in the game. In Vegas, this has the consequence of taking the game “off the board,” which means that gamblers cannot bet on these games. However, in our prediction contest, which was administered using Yahoo.com’s fantasy sports website, these games were counted and the point spreads were set to zero (and thus contestants just had to predict the winner of these games). This occurred for 4 of the games in the sample. I removed those games before performing any of the analyses shown here, and thus these analyses are based on predictions of the remaining 235 games.

When the point spread is an integer, it is possible for predictions against the spread to end in a tie. This happened for 5 games in our sample. These games are excluded from the “% correct” analyses.

Even though all of the contestants had the option to predict 239 game outcomes, sometimes people neglected to make a prediction (or even neglected predicting an entire week of games), and thus there is missing data for those games. The following table shows the number of actual games predicted. Note that the “% correct” figures shown in the blog post ignore games that went unpredicted; I did **not** count missing predictions as incorrect predictions, even though they counted as incorrect in the contest.

	<u>Games Predicted</u>
Me (Massey-Peabody)	237
Accounting	236
The Wharton Journal	238
Marketing	238
Student Life	205
Management	220
Academic Affairs	238
Legal Studies	128

Note that the few games predicted by Legal Studies accounts for the larger error bars associated with Legal Studies’s predictions. Why Legal Studies predicted so few games is unclear, but it probably had something to do with hopelessness.