

NFL Predictions 2008 New Orleans Saints

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The Saints failed to make the playoffs in 2007 after reaching the NFC Championship game the previous year. They know the way to get back is to improve on the defensive side of the ball, where they ranked 26th last season. Online sportsbook BodogLife.com has the New Orleans Saints 24 to 1 odds to win Super Bowl XLIII. Find out if the Saints can make the necessary improvements in Expert Football Handicapper Jimmy Boyd's 2008 New Orleans Saints NFL Predictions and season preview for Point-Spreads.com.

Offense - The NFL's fourth ranked offense should be ready to roll again. QB Drew Brees had another monster year, setting franchise records for passing yards, touchdowns, attempts, completions, and completion percentage. His 440 completions were also an NFL record. Brees got off to a slow start, throwing just one touchdown and nine interceptions in his first four games. He then kicked things in high gear, throwing 24 touchdown strikes and just six picks in the next 10 games. The Saints can not afford him to get off to another slow start.

With four-time 1,000-yard gainer Deuce McAllister coming off double knee surgery, the running back spot becomes a bit of a question mark. Whether he can return to form after his second ACL operation in less than two years is the question. When McAllister went down in week 3, Reggie Bush became a marked man. Defenses stacked the line to stop him and the result was the Saints ranking 28th in the league in rushing. So it appears that McAllister's health is also vital to the success of Bush.

Second year receiver Marques Colston proved not to be a one-year wonder. Colston has 1,202 yards and 11 scores and ranked second in the NFC with 98 grabs. His 168 career receptions are the most by any player in their first two years in the league. Veteran David Patten, Robert Meachem are two more solid options.

The Saints have the best pass-protection unit in the league, allowing a league-low 16 sacks in 2007. It makes it easy to sit back and pick defenses apart when you don't have to worry about being hit.

Defense - The defensive line was strong against the run in 2007, allowing just 102.9 yards per game, but the pass rush needs to continue to improve. Defensive ends Will Smith and Charles Grant combined for just 9.5 sacks. That's just not going to get the job done. Adding veteran pass rusher Bobby McCray to the list will help out as will top draft choice Sedrick Ellis.

The Saints have been missing a playmaker in the linebacker spot so they traded for middle linebacker Jonathan Vilma. The former Defensive Rookie of the Year will have to overcome a knee injury, but if he does, the Saints will have landed a steal.

The secondary is by far the weakest link on the defensive side of the football. The Saints ranked 30th in passing yards allowed and they gave up 32 passing touchdowns to tie for the most in the league. The Saints have turned to the draft and the free agent market to try to fix their problems in the defensive backfield. Free-agent corners Randall Gay and Aaron Glenn and rookie Tracy Porter should bring improvement with them.

Special Teams - Martin Gramatica replaced the injured Olindo Mare and made all five of his field goal attempts. Now, the veteran kicker has himself another gig. Pierre Thomas averaged 24 yards per kickoff return and is a legit threat to take it all the way.

NFL Predictions 2008 New Orleans Saints – 1st NFC South

We don't expect the Saints to get off to a 0-4 start again and the result will be a league title. The defense is going to make mistakes, but it will be an improved unit with several key additions. The offense is as explosive as there is in the league.

BodogLife.com has posted football betting odds on various 2008 NFL Predictions to win the Super Bowl XLIII:

Arizona Cardinals: 50/1

Atlanta Falcons: 150/1

Baltimore Ravens: 75/1

Buffalo Bills: 45/1

Carolina Panthers: 40/1

Chicago Bears: 35/1

Cincinnati Bengals: 60/1

Cleveland Browns: 25/1

Dallas Cowboys: 6/1

Denver Broncos: 50/1

Detroit Lions: 80/1

Green Bay Packers: 25/1

Houston Texans: 60/1

Indianapolis Colts: 15/2

Jacksonville Jaguars: 12/1

Kansas City Chiefs: 100/1

Miami Dolphins: 100/1

Minnesota Vikings: 17/1

New England Patriots: 7/2

New Orleans Saints: 24/1

New York Giants: 16/1

New York Jets: 35/1

Oakland Raiders: 50/1

Philadelphia Eagles: 20/1

Pittsburgh Steelers: 16/1

San Diego Chargers: 7/1

San Francisco 49ers: 80/1

Seattle Seahawks: 25/1

St. Louis Rams: 75/1

Tampa Bay Buccaneers: 30/1

Tennessee Titans: 40/1

Washington Redskins: 40/1