

NFL Predictions: New York Giants NFC East Preview

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Most pundits felt that the Giants would be a solid team in 2007, but not quite good enough to survive a top heavy NFC East. New York met their slightly above average expectations for much of the season with occasional displays of excellence. The playoffs woke the Giants up though, and they went on to shock the football world with their stunning Super Bowl victory over the Patriots. NFL Betting odds at Sportsbook.com are giving the Giants +1500 odds to retain the Lombardi Trophy in 2009.

Nobody had Eli Manning pegged as a championship quarterback last season. His 73.9 passer rating and 23 touchdowns were pedestrian at best. The Giants offensive numbers were not that astounding either; they ranked 14th in scoring (23.3 points per game) and 16th in total yardage at 331.5 yards per game. However, in the post season Manning produced a 95.7 passer rating and the Giants made several big plays in clutch moments.

It is hard to tell if last year's playoff magic was lightning in a bottle or if the club just matured into a big play offense by the season's end. Reality is probably somewhere in between and the offense will probably verify that in 2008. They will be capable certainly, but unless Manning can maintain his post season form, they will not be dominant. Manning will still have Plaxico Burress to throw the ball to, but with Shockey gone the offense will need another receiving threat to step up. Amani Toomer is a good player but he is entering his 13th year in the league.

Head Coach Tom Choughlin will make the running game the focal point of the offense again this year. Last season Brandon Jacobs and the offensive line manufactured the league's fourth best rushing attack.

Much of the media attention usually goes to the Super Bowl winning quarterback and Manning got his fair share, but everyone knows that the Giants beat the Patriots with the amazing play of their defense. This group was good all year long, but in the playoffs they turned things up a notch. They held the league's highest powered offenses to a 16.3 point per game average and they allowed just 74 yards rushing per game.

With Michael Strahan retiring and linebacker Kawika Mitchell and safety Gibril Wilson leaving via free agency, they may be down a little bit this year. However, they should still be a major force with Justin Tuck and Osi Umenyiora anchoring things upfront. The team also took five defensive players in the draft and some of those players will be immediate contributors (i.e. former Hurricane safety Kenny Phillips).

NFL Betting odds at Sportsbook.com have New York at +600 odds to win the NFC Championship and +300 odds to win the NFC East. The team's win total is set at 8.5 with the over a -165.

Prediction: 4th Place NFC East. (Bold Indeed)