

Phil Steele has Predicted 35 of 64 NFL First Place Division Winners

Will the same teams repeat this year?

PROBABLY NOT!

By Phil Steele

In the inaugural *Phil Steele's Pro Football Preview*, I made a forecast for each division and I am very pleased to announce that I correctly forecasted 7 of the 8! Mine was also the ONLY major magazine to pick the eventual Super Bowl Champion New Orleans Saints to win the NFC South. We followed that performance up over the last 7 years by picking 35 of 64 division winners (55%).

The NFL is certainly a league of parity. In fact, going back to 1998, only 31% of the time had a team repeated as a division winner through 2013. In 2002 the NFL went to four divisions of four teams each, making it much easier to repeat. From 2003-2013, only 34 of the 88 division winners, or 39%, repeated. In 2014 it went against that mold and 7 of the 8 teams repeated. This past year only New England and Houston repeated.

Since 2002 there have been 120 division winners but ONLY 16 of the NFL's 32 teams have been consistent enough to bag back-to-back division titles. New England has repeated an amazing 11 times, including 7 straight, while Indianapolis has done it 6 times, Green Bay has done it 5 times. Denver and Seattle have done it 4 times.

Last year the Broncos (5 straight), Bengals (3 straight) and Panthers (3 straight) saw their recent division dominance end while the NFC East now has the longest streak with 12 seasons without a repeat.

The charts below also show that no division winner from the NFC North has won a Super Bowl since the 2002 realignment. In 2013, Seattle became the 1st NFC West division winner to accomplish that feat. You will also see that 12 of the last 15 Super Bowl winners have been division winners and all 15 Super Bowl losers won their division.

Make sure to check out my Projected Playoff Bracket Blog on July 26th to see who I forecasted to win each division and see below for the division winners since 2003 as well as how they did in the postseason.

AFC EAST

2016	New England	WON SB
2015	New England	Lost CF
2014	New England	WON SB
2013	New England	Lost CF
2012	New England	Lost CF
2011	New England	Lost SB
2010	New England	Lost CSF
2009	New England	Lost WC
2008	Miami	Lost WC
2007	New England	Lost SB
2006	New England	Lost CF
2005	New England	Lost CSF
2004	New England	WON SB
2003	New England	WON SB

AFC NORTH

2016	Pittsburgh	Lost CF
2015	Cincinnati	Lost WC
2014	Cincinnati	Lost WC
2013	Cincinnati	Lost WC
2012	Baltimore	WON SB
2011	Baltimore	Lost CF
2010	Pittsburgh	Lost SB
2009	Cincinnati	Lost WC
2008	Pittsburgh	WON SB
2007	Pittsburgh	Lost WC
2006	Baltimore	Lost CSF
2005	Cincinnati	Lost WC
2004	Pittsburgh	Lost CF
2003	Baltimore	Lost WC

AFC SOUTH

2016	Houston	Lost CSF
2015	Houston	Lost WC
2014	Indianapolis	Lost CF
2013	Indianapolis	Lost CSF
2012	Houston	Lost CSF
2011	Houston	Lost CSF
2010	Indianapolis	Lost WC
2009	Indianapolis	Lost SB
2008	Tennessee	Lost CSF
2007	Indianapolis	Lost CSF
2006	Indianapolis	WON SB
2005	Indianapolis	Lost CSF
2004	Indianapolis	Lost CSF
2003	Indianapolis	Lost CF

AFC WEST

2016	Kansas City	Lost CSF
2015	Denver	WON SB
2014	Denver	Lost CSF
2013	Denver	Lost SB
2012	Denver	Lost CSF
2011	Denver	Lost CSF
2010	Kansas City	Lost WC
2009	San Diego	Lost CSF
2008	San Diego	Lost CSF
2007	San Diego	Lost CF
2006	San Diego	Lost CSF
2005	Denver	Lost CF
2004	San Diego	Lost WC
2003	Kansas City	Lost CSF

NFC EAST

2016	Dallas	Lost CSF
2015	Washington	Lost WC
2014	Dallas	Lost CSF
2013	Philadelphia	Lost WC
2012	Washington	Lost WC
2011	NY Giants	WON SB
2010	Philadelphia	Lost WC
2009	Dallas	Lost CSF
2008	NY Giants	Lost CSF
2007	Dallas	Lost CSF
2006	Philadelphia	Lost CSF
2005	NY Giants	Lost WC
2004	Philadelphia	Lost SB
2003	Philadelphia	Lost CF

NFC NORTH

2016	Green Bay	Lost CF
2015	Minnesota	Lost WC
2014	Green Bay	Lost CF
2013	Green Bay	Lost WC
2012	Green Bay	Lost CSF
2011	Green Bay	Lost CSF
2010	Chicago	Lost WC
2009	Minnesota	Lost CF
2008	Minnesota	Lost WC
2007	Green Bay	Lost CF
2006	Chicago	Lost SB
2005	Chicago	Lost CSF
2004	Green Bay	Lost WC
2003	Green Bay	Lost CSF

NFC SOUTH

2016	Atlanta	Lost SB
2015	Carolina	Lost SB
2014	Carolina	Lost WC
2013	Carolina	Lost CSF
2012	Atlanta	Lost CF
2011	New Orleans	Lost CSF
2010	Atlanta	Lost CSF
2009	New Orleans	WON SB
2008	Carolina	Lost CSF
2007	Tampa Bay	Lost WC
2006	New Orleans	Lost CF
2005	Tampa Bay	Lost WC
2004	Atlanta	Lost CF
2003	Carolina	Lost SB

NFC WEST

2016	Seattle	Lost CSF
2015	Arizona	Lost CF
2014	Seattle	Lost SB
2013	Seattle	WON SB
2012	San Francisco	Lost SB
2011	San Francisco	Lost CF
2010	Seattle	Lost CSF
2009	Arizona	Lost CSF
2008	Arizona	Lost SB
2007	Seattle	Lost CSF
2006	Seattle	Lost CSF
2005	Seattle	Lost SB
2004	Seattle	Lost WC
2003	St. Louis	Lost CSF



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