



Now that November is here, a lot will be made about weather, fatigue, and travel in the betting market. One of the biggest keys to staying in the black as it pertains to betting is to avoid overreaction. Weather, fatigue, and travel are all examples of things that bettors overreact to. Determining fact from fiction and knowing how these elements are built into the line is something that takes a lot of practice and a lot of understanding.

First, we'll look at weather. Snow will start flying, temperatures will start getting colder, making the ball harder, giving the muscles less explosion, and cold rain will make the ball very difficult to grip. A big newsflash about weather? It's already built into the line. More often than not, adding additional emphasis to weather can get a bettor in trouble. The line, specifically the total, tends to already reflect projected or actual weather conditions. Keep in mind that a changing number for a total may not have anything to do with where the money is being bet, but rather, a change in the forecast.

A lot of people automatically assume that bad weather leads to fewer points. However, keep in mind that the offense knows where plays are supposed to be run while the defense requires quick changes of direction and agile moves. Certainly, really awful, windy, wet conditions can hamper the ability to throw the ball, dictate fourth down decisions, and cause fumbles that can keep points from being scored. It's important to know the teams that you are betting on and understand what schemes they like to run. Are they a blitzing defense reliant on man-to-man coverage on the outside? Defensive backs may spend more time falling down than in coverage. Are they a pass attack offense that struggles to run block? Bad weather may hurt them more than other teams.

Weather should not be looked at as a detriment to offense. Weather should be viewed on a case-by-case basis, with the understanding that the oddsmakers have already incorporated the difficult conditions into the line. Along those same lines, warm weather or dome teams entering cold environments have already been accounted for.

Fatigue and travel are two elements that go hand-in-hand. As teams get deeper into the season, they may have to play more away games to compensate for the number of home games that they had early in the season, or vice versa. Changing time zones, going into different elevations, and having their weekly routines thrown off are all things that can affect players in a negative way. Athletes, and adults in general, tend to be creatures of habit. Travel, different start times, all of these things can throw off their equilibrium. Keep that in mind as well with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays on the horizon for the NFL. Most of these guys have families and pretty of other obligations along with their job.

The human body gets tired. Look at the year-to-date workloads of the quarterback, running backs, and injury situations. Look for the sandwich/letdown spots that have been discussed in other columns. All of these things tend to be built into the line, but exploring every possible angle is what leads to winning bets. Often times, the biggest mistakes we make as bettors are by not informing ourselves enough. Bad bounces and bad luck happen, but missing a key injury or a weather report is something that should not happen.

By now, the oddsmakers have a tremendous read on all of the teams. Unlike early in the season, you will not see a lot of drastic line movement. The Texas A&M-Mississippi State game opened -1.5 at the Wynn in Las Vegas on Sunday and it's up to -6.5 or -7 most everywhere. That's an extreme rarity in late October/early November. The books are past making reactionary judgments based on one week and, as a bettor, you should be too.

As you're making bets this late into the season, keep in mind that the numbers are getting a lot tighter. Reading situational spots correctly is one of the few remaining advantages available to bettors.

Good luck and pick winners.