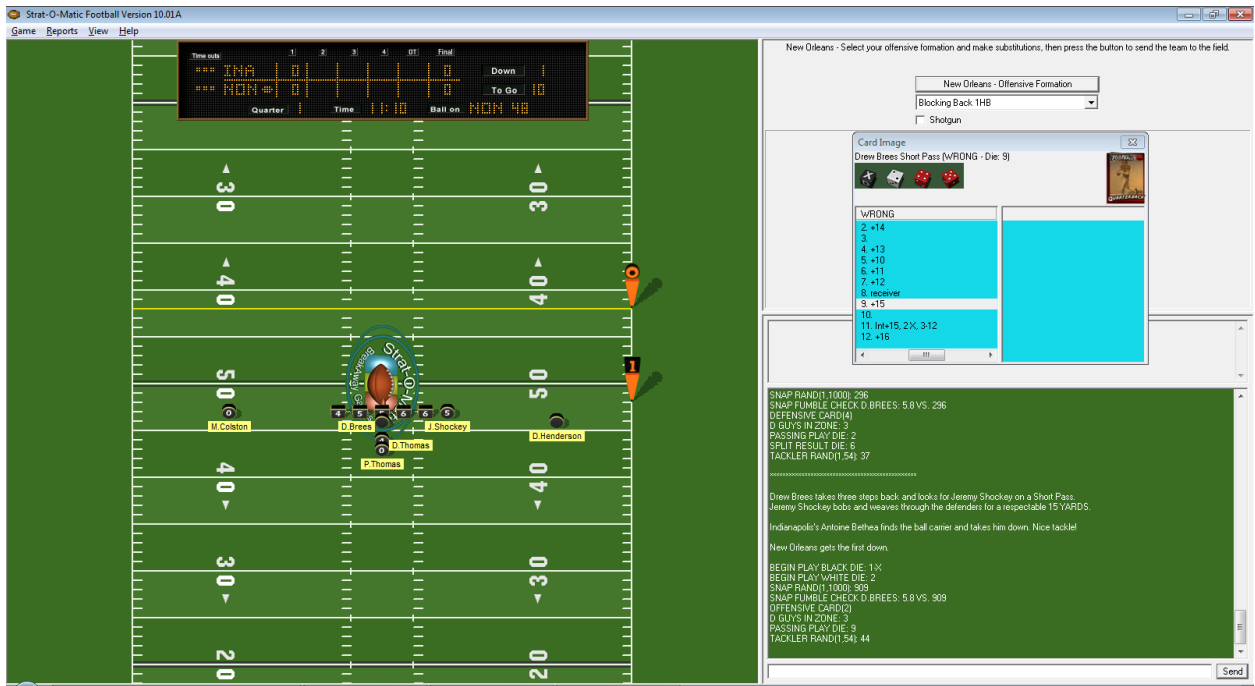


# STRAT-O-MATIC FOOTBALL

## QUICK START GUIDE



Note that the screen shot above includes the Card Image option which is available at an additional cost (however it is not available for the Lite game).

## **PRE-GAME INTRODUCTIONS**

Thank you for purchasing Strat-O-Matic Football. The Strat-O-Matic Game Company has been producing exciting sports games for 50 years. We are proud of our latest game and we are happy to count you as one of our customers. Let's go – Game On!

## **HOW TO USE THIS QUICKSTART MANUAL**

This manual is designed as a tutorial that will guide you through starting a game, playing some football, and using the other major functions of the program. As you follow along you will be instructed to reference the help file in a number of instances. As you will see, the help file is extensive and covers the entire functionality of the program. While this manual provides a good starting point to using the program, the help file is much more comprehensive and will be invaluable in teaching you to maximize your use of the program.

There are two sections of the Strat-O-Matic Football program: the League Manager and the game itself. In this document we will begin by covering how to play a game and later we will go over using the League Manager.

## **LITE VERSION**

Strat-O-Matic Football comes in two varieties: a Lite Game and a Regular Game. The games are very similar; however, the Lite Game includes fewer features and is geared towards ease of play. In this document we will cover procedures for the Regular Game although some of these features will also apply to the Lite Game.

If you have purchased the Lite Game then:

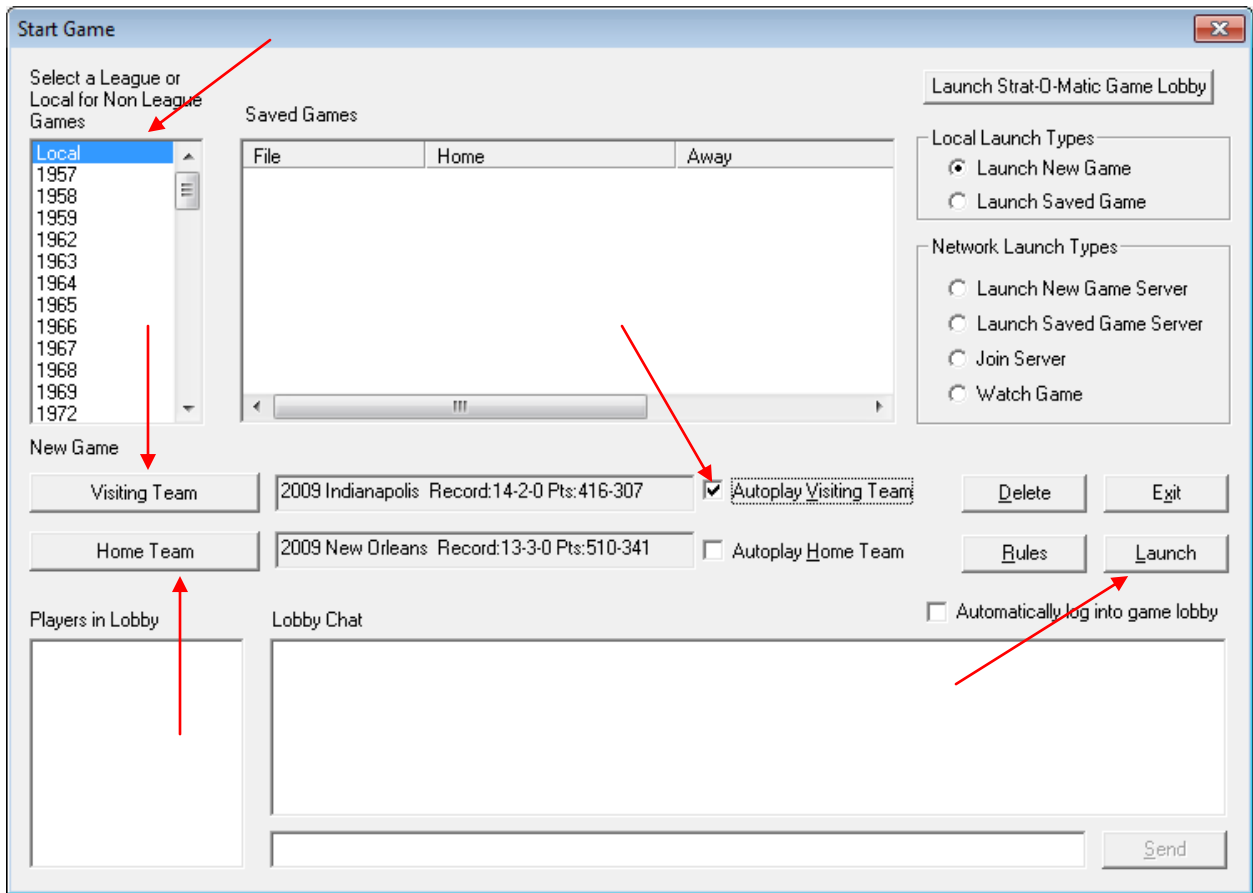
- Only Easy Mode is supported
- A fixed set of rules and options have been chosen for the Lite Game that is compatible with Easy Mode play
- No Card Image option is available
- No e-mail league support (exporting & importing of files) is included
- No tournament support is included
- No Model League Support is included
- No Yearbook support is included

Please visit our [website](#) if you are interested in learning more about the Regular Game.

## **PLAYING A GAME – EASY MODE**

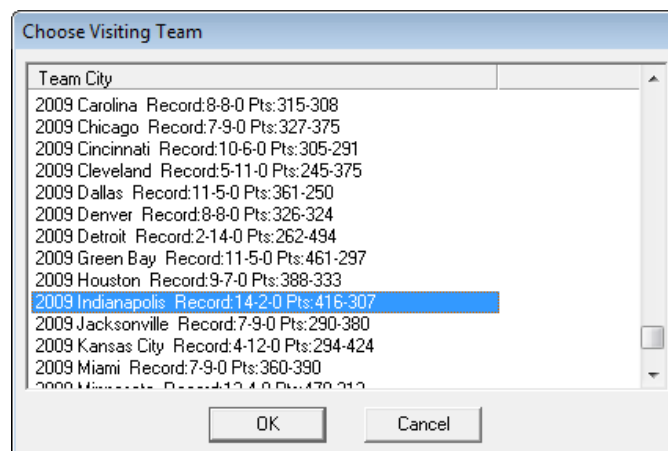
In this section we will go over how to play a game with the default “Easy Mode”. In later sections we will go over different options you may want to choose depending upon the era of teams and personal preferences.

As soon as the game loads, you are presented with the Game Setup screen.



*GAME SETUP SCREEN*

With Local highlighted in the upper-left corner, the middle of the Game Setup screen lists the two teams participating in the game. To choose the teams you want click on the Visiting Team and Home Team buttons and choose the teams from the list which is presented to you (note that only teams from years which you have purchased and installed on your hard drive will show up on this list).

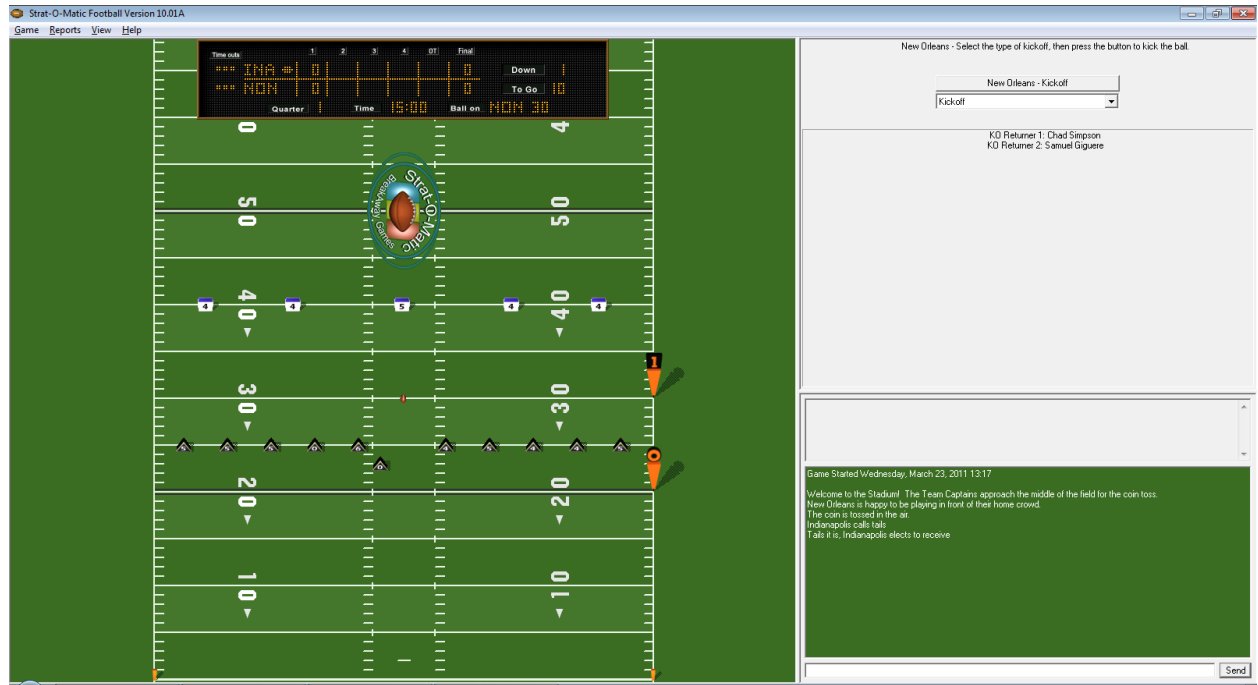


*TEAM CHOICE SCREEN*

Back on the Game Setup screen, select one of the teams to be controlled by the computer manager by clicking on either “Autoplay Visiting Team” or “Autoplay Home Team” near the middle of the screen. Ensure that “Launch New Game” is selected in the upper-right corner of the screen and then click on the

“Launch” button in the lower-right corner. Before clicking on Launch you may click on the Rules button or you may accept the default rules which are optimized for teams in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we will go over the rules options later in this document.

Once you click on Launch, the game field will load. If your team won the coin toss then the other team will kickoff right away or if your team lost the coin toss then you will be presented with the kickoff button as in the screen shot below.

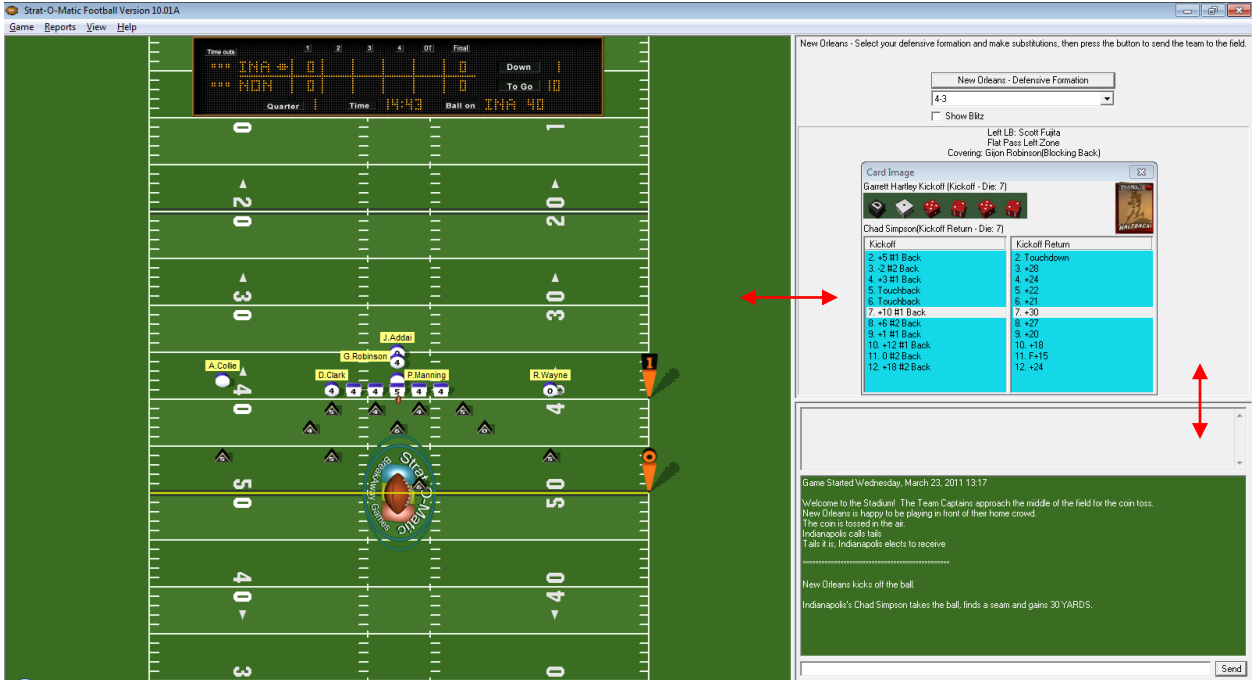


GAME SCREEN

Take a moment to notice several features of the game screen. At the top of the screen is the scoreboard and to the left of that are a few menus including the Help menu. In the upper-right corner of the screen is the play selection field in which you may choose your formation and your play-call. In the lower-right corner of the screen is the play-by-play text which signifies details of the most recently-completed play.

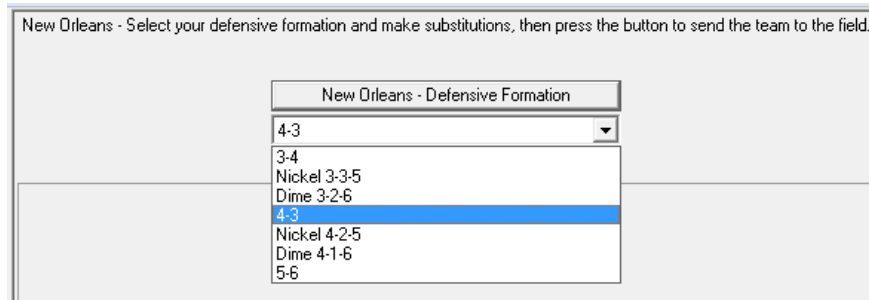
In Strat-O-Matic Football play results are determined from readings of virtual cards representing each player and team. Depending upon your personal preference and whether or not you purchased the Card Image Option (**optional feature** available at additional cost) with the game, you may want to view the cards during the game and, if so, then in the upper-left corner of the Game Screen click on View and click on Card Image. This will bring up the card image screen which you may drag-and-drop to anywhere which would not block the field or other information you may want to see. In addition, you may resize windows within the game screen such as dragging-and-moving left and right the large vertical line near the middle of the screen separating the field from the play-by-play text.

Below is a screen shot of one example of the card image location (if you purchased the Card Image Option) and window sizes. Feel free to try out different configurations for what suits your preferences.



*GAME SCREEN*

Now let's play some football. As you can see in the above screen the computer is controlling Indianapolis and has chosen a BB formation on this 1<sup>st</sup> and 10 play. In the upper-right corner of the screen let's choose for our team New Orleans a base 4-3 defense (without showing blitz) and then click on the "Defensive Formation" button above that to lock in our selection.



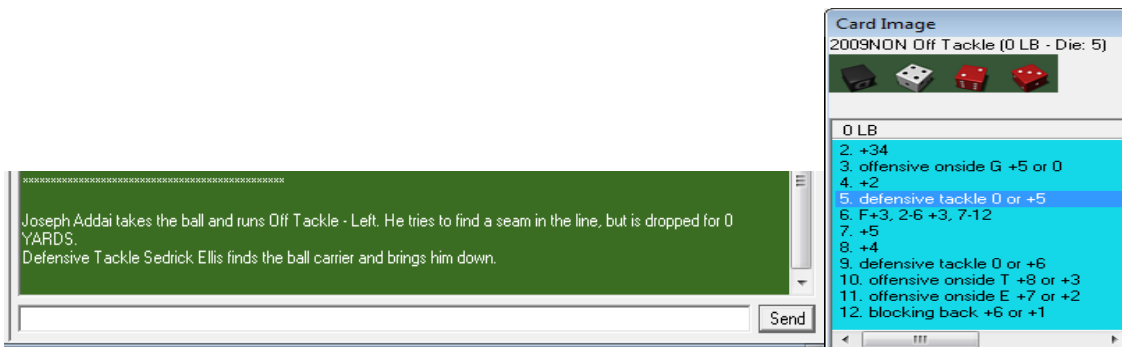
*DEFENSIVE FORMATION SELECTION*

The computer then quickly chooses its offensive play and we are presented with options for our defense.



*DEFENSIVE PLAY SELECTION SCREEN*

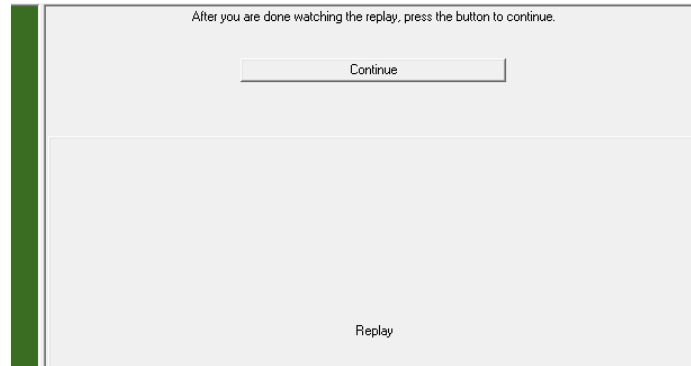
On the left side of the defensive play selection screen we have several options. For this play let's click on Run and then click on Ok in the upper-right corner of the screen. The game field will then animate the players to show the result of the play, the play-by-play text and the card image (if you purchased the Card Image option and if it is turned on) will also show the yardage gained or lost.



In this case, as we can see from the card image (if you purchased the Card Image option), this result was dependent upon the Defensive Tackle's run defense rating and he was just good enough to stop the play for 0 yards. The computer handles all of the dice rolls and card and rating resolutions.

You may click on the large Replay button on the right side of the screen if you would like to see an animated replay of the play. Note that the word "Replay" may be obscured by the Card Image if you

moved the card image over it. Click on the Continue button in the upper-right corner to proceed to the next play.



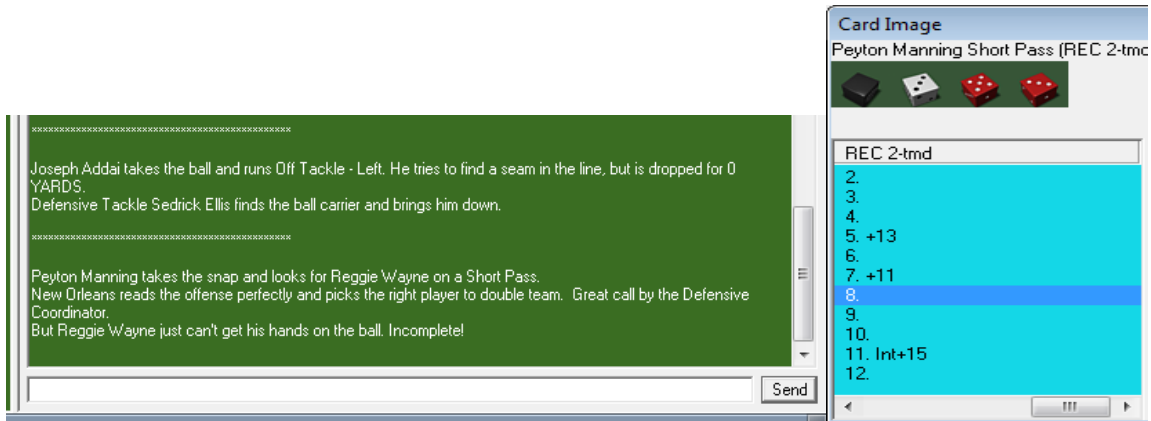
*REPLAY BUTTON*

On 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10 let's still use a 4-3 defense but call Pass and double-team the Split End. To do this, on the left side of the defensive play selection screen choose "Pass-Double Team" and near the bottom of the screen click on Split End. Click on Ok in the upper-right corner to lock in the selection.



*DEFENSIVE PLAY SELECTION SCREEN*

The game field will then animate and the result of the play will be displayed.

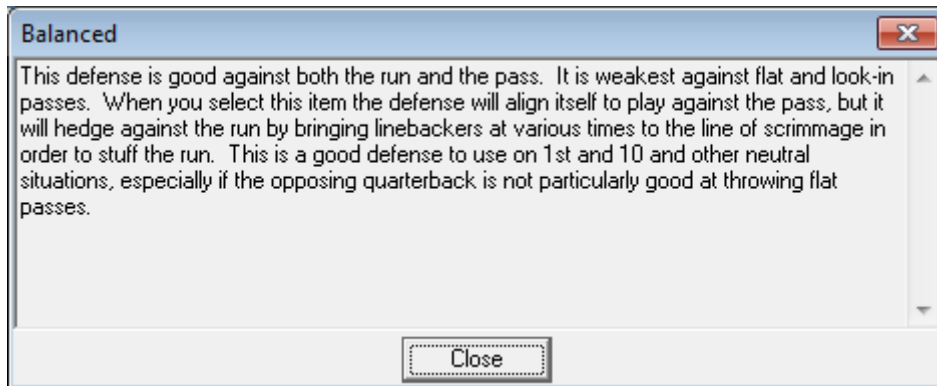


In this case the offense tried a short pass to the Split End and, partly because of the successful double-team, the pass was incomplete on the Quarterback’s card as we can see from the card image (if you purchased the Card Image option).

If during play selection you would like more information about a particular choice you may click on the choice and then click on the “Click here for more info” button.

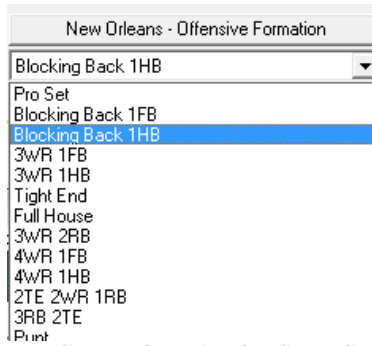


Here is an example of more information for the “Balanced” defensive choice.



*BALANCED DEFENSE INFORMATION*

Next, let’s go over offensive formation and play selection. When your team has the ball you are presented with several choices of offensive formation in the upper-right corner of the screen.



*OFFENSIVE FORMATION SELECTION*

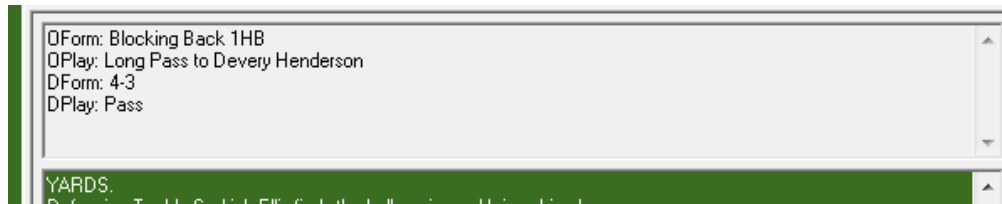
For this 1<sup>st</sup> down choose Blocking Back 1HB and click on the Offensive Formation button above the formation selection field to lock in your selection. The computer will then quickly choose its defensive formation and you will be presented with the Offensive Formation Selection screen.



*OFFENSIVE PLAY SELECTION*

Let's choose Long Pass on the left side of the screen. Notice at the bottom of the screen some of the receivers will be grayed out signifying that they are not eligible receivers of a long pass. In this case choose the Flanker and then click on Ok in the upper-right corner.

At this point the computer will reveal its play selection on the right side of the screen.



*PLAY SELECTIONS ARE REVEALED*

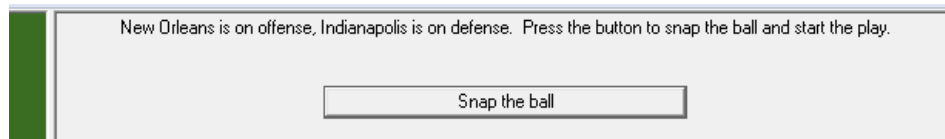
In this case the computer chose to call Pass defense. You may also see the player movement and double-teams (if any) chosen by the computer by looking at the players on the field.



*GAME SCREEN*

In this case notice that no defensive players have moved from their original positions in a 4-3 formation so the defense has not moved or double-teamed anyone on this play.

To resolve the play, click on the “Snap the ball” button in the upper-right corner of the game screen.



The game field will then animate the players to show the result of the play.

The game continues with each play resolved in the same way:

1. The offense chooses its formation such as Blocking Back 1HB or Pro Set;
2. The defense chooses its formation such as 4-3 or 3-4;
3. The offense chooses its play such as Flat Pass or End Run and chooses the target for the play (the ball carrier for a running play or the receiver for a pass play);
4. The defense chooses its play such as Pass or Run; and
5. The computer resolves the result based upon the player and team cards (representing the player and team talent), the strategies used on the play, and the luck of the virtual dice.

At any time from the Game Screen you may view the box score of the game by clicking on Reports in the upper-left corner of the screen and then clicking on Box Score. This will show you a detailed report of the statistics and scoring plays in the game.

Box Scores

### 2009 Indianapolis 6, 2009 New Orleans 7

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	Total
2009 Indianapolis	0	6				6
2009 New Orleans	7	0				7

#### Scoring Plays

Qtr	Clock	Poss	Scoring Description(Extra Point)	Score
1	5:19	2009 New Orleans	D.Thomas 6 yd. pass from D.Brees (G.Hartley kick)	7-0 NON
2	14:26	2009 Indianapolis	M.Stover 41 yd. field goal	7-3 NON
2	12:42	2009 Indianapolis	M.Stover 38 yd. field goal	7-6 NON

#### Team Statistics

	2009 Indianapolis	2009 New Orleans
First Downs by Rush-Pass-Pen-Total	2-4-0-6	1-3-0-4
Third Down Efficiency	2-7-29%	0-2-0%
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0-0%	0-0-0%
Red Zone Efficiency (pts-poss-pct)	0-0-0%	7-7-100%
Total Offense-Plays-Avg Yards Per Play	88-28-3.1	82-12-6.8
Total Net Yards Rushing	44	31
Total Rushes	9	3
Average Per Rush	4.9	10.3

Prev Next 2009INA\_AT\_2009NON.HTML Print to Blog Print Preview Print Close

## PLAYING A GAME – REGULAR MODE

So far we have presented calling plays via “Easy Mode” which is designed for beginners to become accustomed to the game. We recommend playing at least one or two full games before turning off Easy Mode. If you find that the game is more enjoyable with Easy Mode turned on, then by all means keep it on.

If you would like to turn off Easy Mode then on the Game Field screen click on Game in the upper-left corner and click on Options.

**General**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brief play by play	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do not animate scoreboard
<input type="checkbox"/> No play animation	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not show in-play decisions (not Multi)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Auto Save after Each Play	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not allow CM subs for human players
<input type="checkbox"/> Scroll play by play text output	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not show formation selection screens
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do not allow play animation replay	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use Strat-O-Matic terminology for plays
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not show player names on field	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not show players pictures on field
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show "Other Highlights" on boxscore	<input type="checkbox"/> Show "So Far Today" Box
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show board game details	<input type="checkbox"/> Manual Dice Entry (no email or online)
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not play game sounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Use Easy Mode to select offensive plays
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not play crowd sounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Use Easy Mode to select defensive plays
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not play break sounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not animate Dice on Card Images

<p>Field Surface (Display Only)</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Astro Turf</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Grass</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Snow</p>	<p>Autoplay</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Autoplay Visiting Team</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Autoplay Home Team</p>
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Animation Speed: <-- slower faster -->

Skin: NONE

OK Cancel

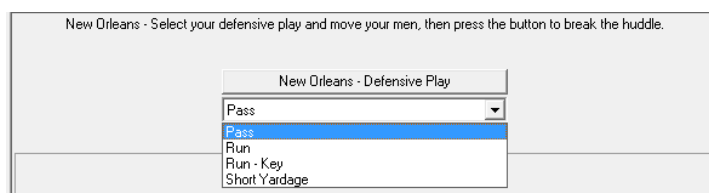
## GAME OPTIONS SCREEN

On the Game Options screen are several options based upon personal preference. To turn off Easy Mode click to remove the check marks next to the two “Use Easy Mode” options and then click on Ok.

Note also the “Autoplay” section in the lower-right corner of the Game Options screen in case you would like to take control of the other team during a game. In addition, we strongly recommend turning on “Auto Save After Each Play” in case a problem occurs during a game, such as a power outage (to load a saved game you may click on Load Save Game on the initial Game Setup screen. To learn more about the choices on the Game Options screen, click on Help in the upper-left corner of the main Game Screen, on the menu which comes up click on Help to bring up the help file, and within the help file click on Options.

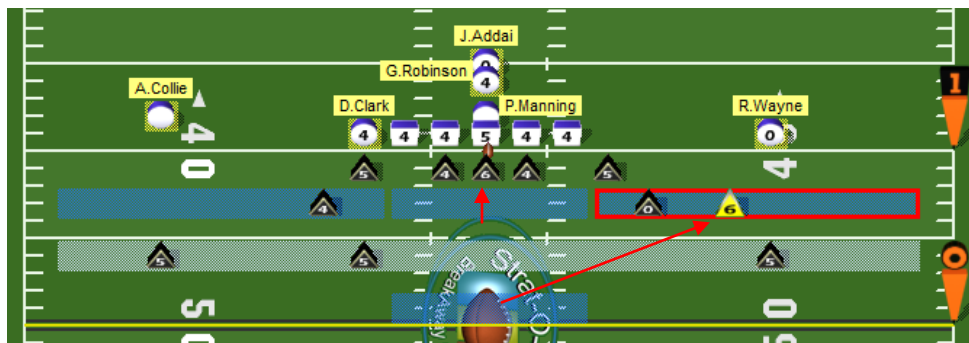
The play selection process works similar to Easy Mode except that you now have many more choices, especially with individual player movement. Let’s start our game again this time with Easy Mode off.

On defense you first select your formation such as 4-3. The computer then quickly chooses its offensive play and we are presented with options for our defense: in the upper-right corner of the screen we may click in the drop-down box to call Pass, Run, Run-Key, or Short Yardage.



*DEFENSIVE PLAY-CALL CHOICES*

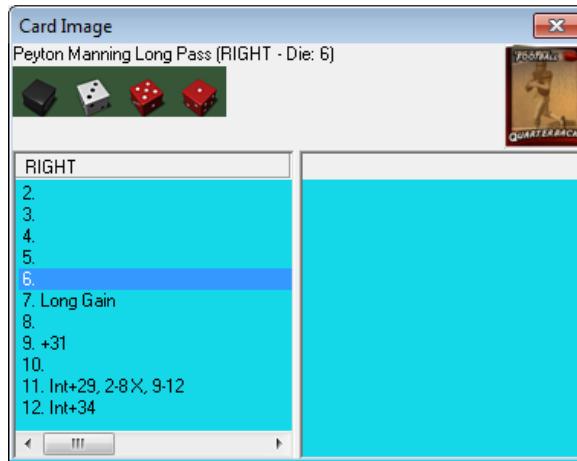
Just as important as the play-call, we have options for moving players to strengthen our defense in certain zones while weakening our defense in other zones. In this case let’s call Pass defense and, seeing that our Right Outside Linebacker has a 0 rating which is very poor, let’s move our great 6-rated Free Safety out of the long pass zone and into the Right Flat zone to strengthen our defense against passes into that flat zone (while simultaneously weakening our defense in the now open Long Pass zone) – to do this simply click on the Free Safety and click on the Right Flat zone to move him there. In addition, let’s blitz our great 6-rated Middle Linebacker in the Lineback zone to add a bit of extra pass rush and strengthen our defense against a Lineback run (while simultaneously weakening our defense in the now open lookin zone) – simply click on the Middle Linebacker and then click on the Lineback zone on the line of scrimmage.



*PLAYER MOVEMENT*

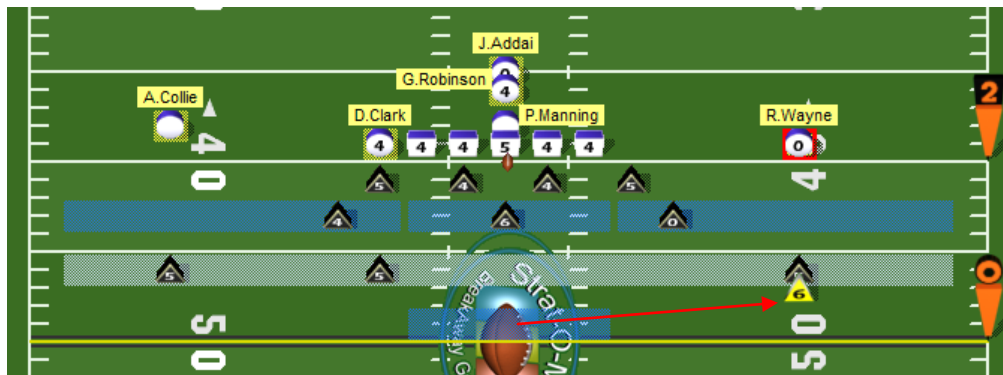
Once you are satisfied with the player movement (if any) which you have selected, click on the Defensive Play button in the upper-right corner of the screen to begin the play.

As it turns out, our opponent attempted a long pass to its best receiver, the long pass zone was open but the play was “guessed right” (since we called Pass defense) so we weren’t totally off base in our play call and, fortunately for us, the play animation and also the card image showed us that the pass was incomplete.



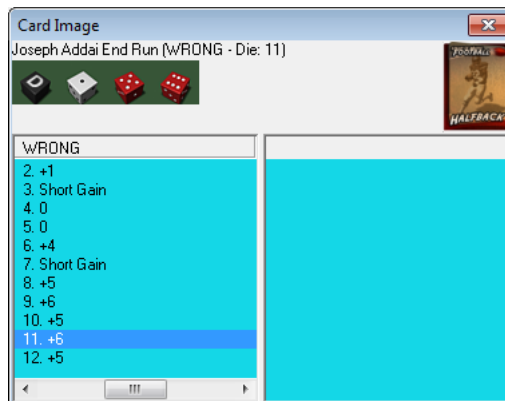
CARD IMAGE

On the next play let's use a 4-3 defense and call Pass defense again except this time let's double-team the best receiver with our Free Safety. After locking in our selection of the 4-3 defensive formation click on our Free Safety and then click on our opponent's best receiver to lock in a double-team.



DOUBLETEAM

In this case our opponent ran the ball and gained 6 yards on the play. The play was “guessed wrong” since we called Pass defense and we did not strengthen our defense against that off tackle run.

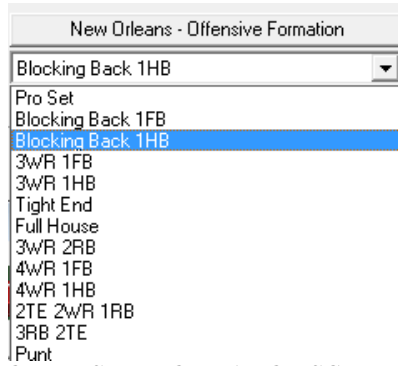


CARD IMAGE

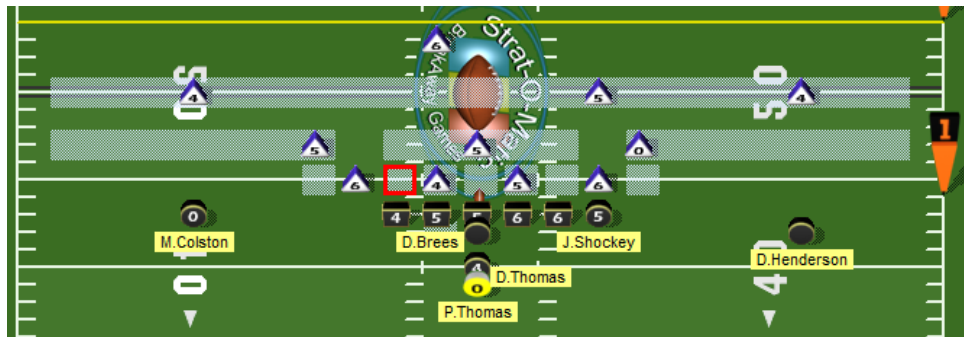
In addition to the choices shown above, you have other options including using a nickel or dime formation, executing other double-teams with your Free Safety or your any of your Linebackers, and executing a key

on a Running Back. Each decision you make (or don't make) has benefits and disadvantages. Experiment with different strategies to see what you feel comfortable with. Many Strat-O-Matic football coaches prefer a gambling style of defense while many others prefer a more conservative approach. If you are interested in details of the benefits and disadvantages for different strategies check out the "Football Rules.htm" file in the Strat-O-Matic Football folder on your hard drive.

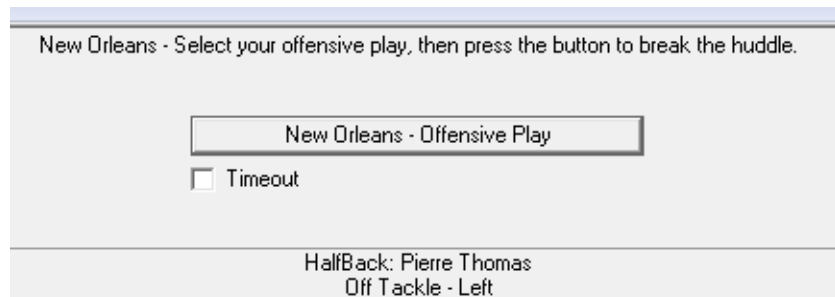
Let's go over offensive play-calling. When our team has the ball, in the upper-right corner of the screen we will be presented with several offensive formations to choose from.



Let's choose Blocking Back 1HB and click on the Offensive Formation button to lock in our choice. The defense will quickly make its choice of formation. At this point, to choose the offensive play you do not choose from a menu; instead, you click on the intended target of the play (the rusher for a running play or the receiver for a pass play) and then click on the zone representing the play you want to run. In this case let's run off tackle left with our Halfback – click on the Halfback to highlight him and then click on the Off Tackle left zone.



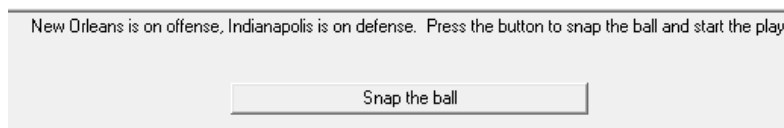
To verify the play we have called view the upper-right corner of the screen, in this case it indicates Halfback Off Tackle - Left.



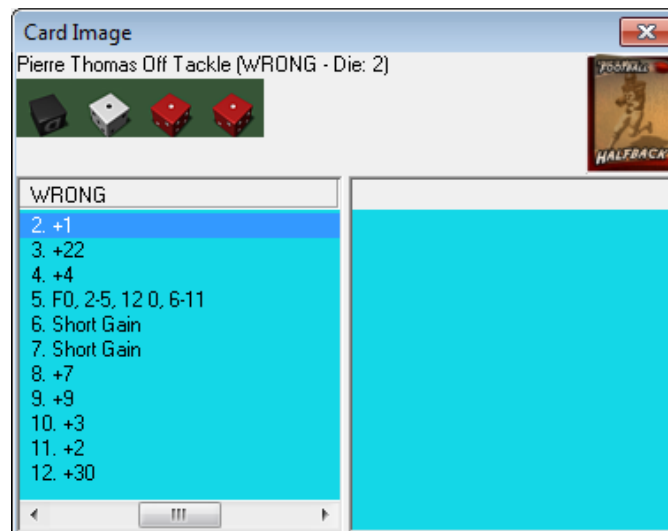
Once you are satisfied with the play you have called, click on the Offensive Play button to lock in your selection and then on the right side of the screen just above the green play-by-play section you will see not only your play-call but also the defense's play-call and on the field you will see the player movement and double-teams your opponent chose.



Click on the "Snap the Ball" button in the upper-right corner to resolve the play.

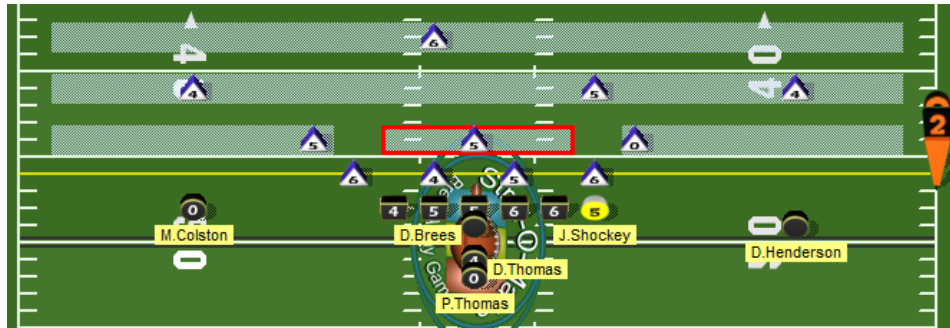


The play animation will run and the card image (if you purchased the Card Image Option and have turned it on) will update the result. In this case the result was a bad roll for the offense for only 1 yard on the Halfback's card.



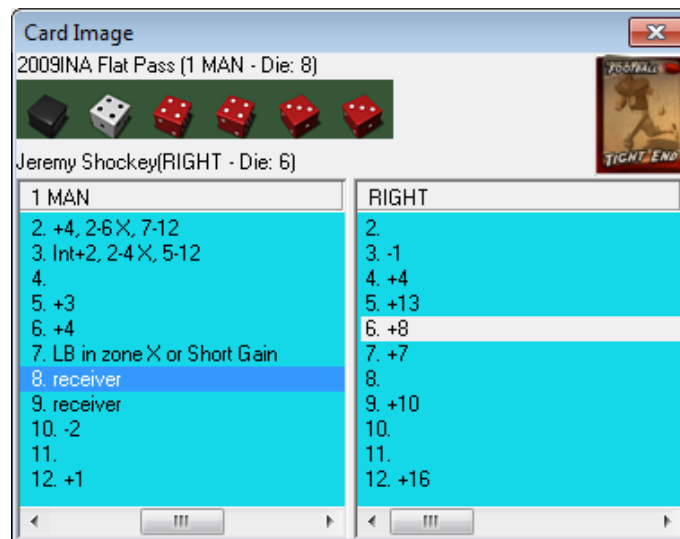
CARD IMAGE

Let's choose a pass play. After locking in the choice of formation click on any of the five eligible receivers and then click on the target zone. In this case let's click on our Tight End and then click on the look-in zone.



*OFFENSIVE PLAY SELECTION*

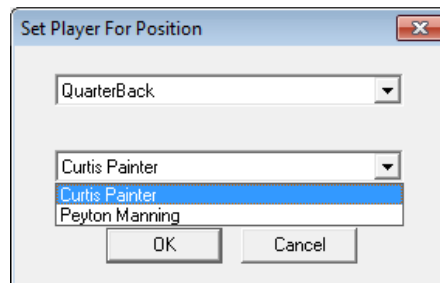
In this case the result was an 8 yard gain initially on the flat pass 1 man in zone defensive card which called for a roll on the receiver's card.



*DEFENSIVE AND RECEIVER CARD IMAGE*

If you would like to make a player substitution for the next play whether on offense or defense, on the formation selection screen before you lock in your formation double-click on any player on the field, this will present a list of available players at the position for you to choose from.

If you would like to substitute a player for the remainder of the game then you may go into the depth chart. To do this, on the main Game Screen click on View in the upper-left corner and then click on Computer Manager. This brings up one of the formations on the offensive depth chart. To make the substitution for all depth charts click on the Replace button, choose the position you would like the substitute to play, and then choose the player to put into the game. For example, to put in the backup QB click on Quarterback and then choose the backup QB.



*DEPTH CHART SUBSTITUTION*

## GAME STRATEGY

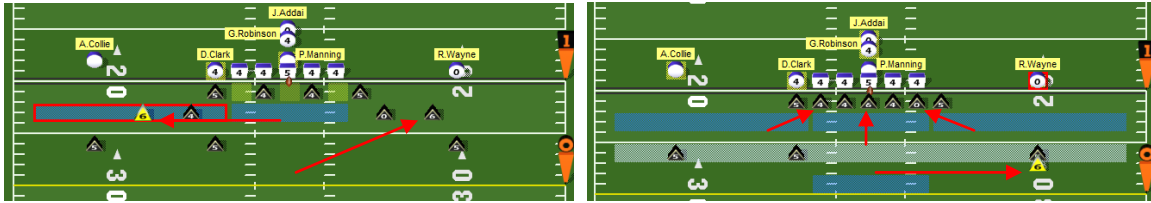
Based upon what we have discussed so far, strategy of the game may seem simple with only a handful of options on defense such as calling Pass or Run. However, there is a great deal of depth in the player movement and double-team choices and the difference between winning and losing is often based upon the timing of when you use these options.

That time in the third quarter when you successfully double-teamed the opposing receiver may have resulted in an interception to turn the tide of the game or changed a long gain completion into an incompletion saving a touchdown. In the first half when you found an empty zone with your flat pass on 3<sup>rd</sup> and short, it kept a drive alive leading to a touchdown instead of a field goal attempt or punt and also made your opponent hesitant about selling out to stop the run on 3<sup>rd</sup> and short later in the game.

Or even deeper than that, for the first couple of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10 plays you called Pass defense making your opponent think that you are not willing to call Run defense in that situation, that is the time you can try calling Run defense or even Run-Key for an important stop. Early in the game you have been frequently leaving the long pass zone open tempting your opponent to throw deep only to find your great 6-rated Free Safety in the zone.

The cat-and-mouse aspect of calling plays is one of the most fun parts of the game. However, this sort of strategy can also backfire if your opponent is able to adjust or if you are calling unsound plays in an attempt simply to out-guess your opponent. One example of this is getting burned by a long pass completion on that time you tried to call Run-Key defense on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10.

Even without the cat-and-mouse aspect of the game there are a good number of player movement and player double-team options. Here are screen shots for just a couple of gambling type defensive options:



In the first of these screen shots I have moved my great 6-rated Free Safety out of the long pass zone and into the Flat Right zone and I have moved my great 6-rated Middle Linebacker out of the Look-In zone into the Flat Left zone. If my opponent throws a Flat Pass left or right then he is throwing into a very well-covered zone. On the other hand, if the play is a Look-In or a Long Pass then the zone is open.

In the second of these screen shots I have blitzed all of my Linebackers into the Off Tackle and Lineback run zones and I have double-teamed my opponent's best receiver. Double-teams may only be chosen when the defense calls Pass. If my opponent runs Off Tackle left or right or Lineback then the run is guessed wrong (since I called Pass defense) but the zone is strengthened making it tougher to gain yardage. If my opponent throws any pass to his best receiver then the play is double-teamed which makes it very tough to complete. If my opponent throws a Flat, Look-In, or Long Pass to any other receiver then while the zone is open presenting an opportunity for the offense, the play is guessed right which limits the chances for a completion and I have a significantly higher sack chance due to the extra blitzers. If my opponent runs an End Run left or right then the play is guessed wrong and there is no extra run support but that's the risk in using a gambling defense! You probably will not want to gamble on defense every play and you certainly do not want to be predictable or else your opponent may quickly figure out what you are doing and take advantage, but by mixing in some gambling defense you can make a big stop which can help turn the game around.

## COMPUTER MANAGER

So far in the sections on playing a game we have discussed playing against the computer. When choosing a play and player movement, the computer manager has a large set of choices and takes into account the following factors:

- a) The game situation – score, down, distance, yard line, time remaining, and so on; the computer manager is very detailed in taking all of these factors into account to decide what play it will call
- b) The personnel – as examples, the computer will call significantly more run defense against a great running back than against a poor running back, the computer will throw significantly fewer long passes with a Quarterback who has a weak arm, the computer will almost never run End Runs with a running back whose strength is in Off Tackle and Lineback runs, the computer on defense will more frequently double-team the receiver who is guarded by a poor defender, and so on
- c) The tendencies of the offensive coach – as a game goes on the computer will adjust its play-calling based upon what the offense has been doing; as examples, the computer will double-team more often a receiver who has been targeted frequently during the game, the computer will call Run defense more frequently if the offense has been running the ball more often; the computer will more often strengthen pass or run zones which have been targeted more frequently than other zones; and so on

Each choice has a random factor associated with it so just because it ran the ball last time on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2 has no bearing on whether or not it will run again in that situation. When you are controlling a team and thinking about the formation and play-call the default selection is what the computer has selected for you; in other words, if you simply click to accept the formation and play-call every play that would be the same as allowing the computer to control your team.

In addition, the offensive computer manager is individually customized for each and every team in each and every season available. For example, Pittsburgh from the early 2000s will focus on pounding the ball on inside runs while Indianapolis throughout the 2000s will focus on the pass and mixing in runs to keep the defense honest; St. Louis in the late 1990s and early 2000s will spread its offense out with 3 and 4 Wide Receivers; Miami through most of the 1980s and 1990s will have a great passing game but will struggle most years on the ground while Green Bay throughout most of the 1960s will have success on the ground and in the air. Since each team in every season is represented by its own customized computer manager, the personality of the team will be reflected in the game including substitution of backup skill position players.

With that said, the true cat-and-mouse aspect of the game is brought to the forefront in head-to-head play against another live coach.

## PLAYING A GAME – HEAD-TO-HEAD

When playing a game against a human opponent, one coach's PC must serve as the "host" of the game (also known as the "server") while the other PC is the "client." In order to play over the internet, the host PC must be configured to allow the connection:

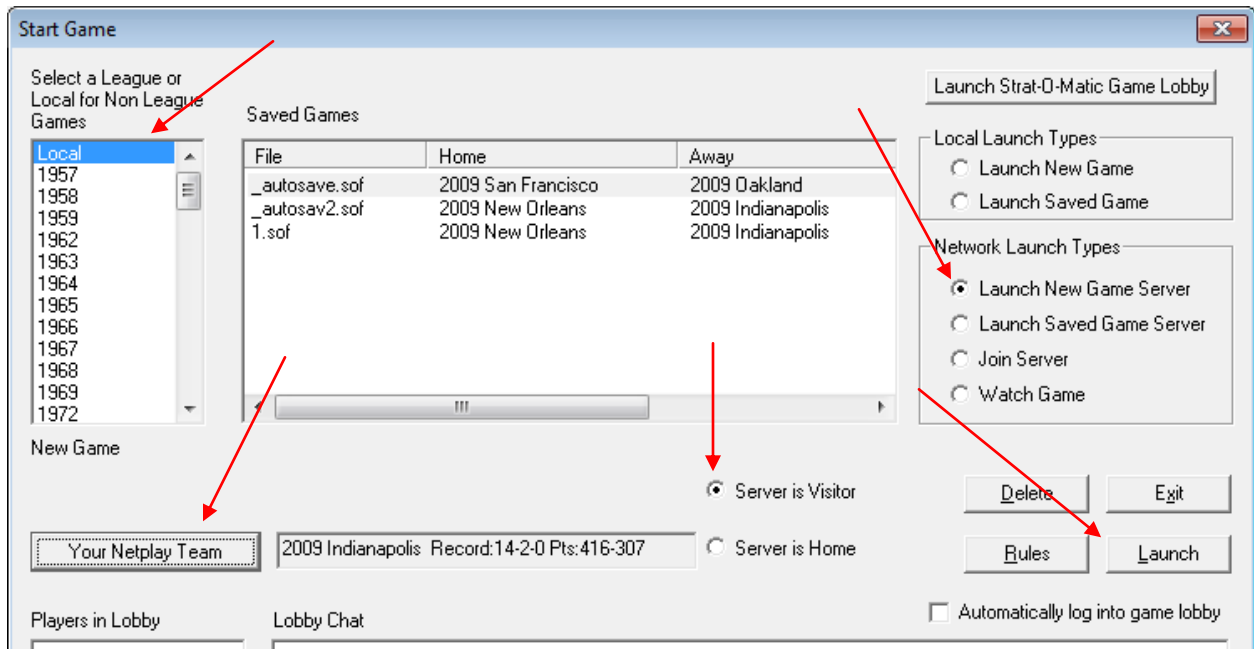
- 1) If the host PC uses a firewall, then port 6501 must be un-blocked; a different port may be chosen in which case that port must be un-blocked; and
- 2) If the host PC is using a router then port 6501 must be forwarded for both TCP and UDP; a different port may be chosen in which case that port must be forwarded.

For more details consult the Help file within the game, click on Index, and double-click on Internet Play. Once a PC is configured to be able to host then it should be able to host against any opponent. The client PC does not need any special configuration to allow it to connect.

The coach who is using the host PC must tell the coach of the client PC the IP address being used by the host. There are many ways for the host coach to determine the PC's IP address, one way is to open an internet browser and go to <http://www.whatismyip.com>. To notify the coach of the client PC of the IP address you may use Instant Messaging, E-mail, or any other method of communication, this should be done shortly before the game since IP addresses of some PCs change when the PC is powered on or regains its connection to the internet. Please note that an IP address beginning with 192.168.1 is not a valid IP address the client would be able to use, if the method used by the host to obtain the IP address comes up with 192.168.1 then use a different method for obtaining the IP address.

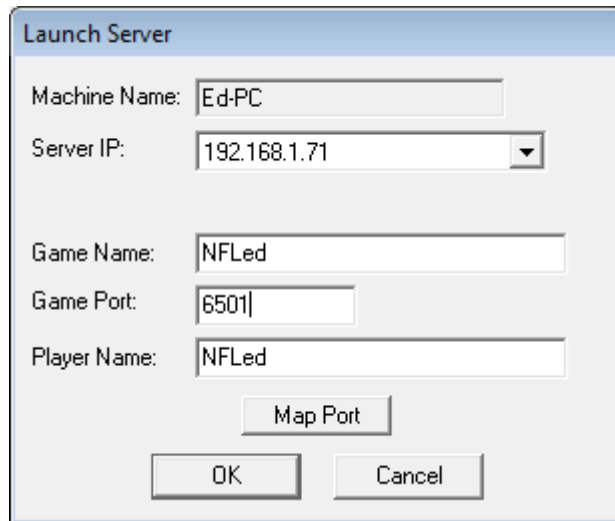
One comment about Game Options during an online game: remember that your opponent is waiting for you to decide on what plays to call, it is best to modify your game options to avoid your opponent from having to also wait for your computer to catch up with slower animations. For this reason, during online games we recommend either turning off Play Animation or setting its slider to the maximum speed, turning off "Scroll play by play text output" (this option really slows games down), and turning on "Do not allow play animation replay." In addition, we recommend turning on "Do not allow CM subs for human players" unless you want the computer to make player substitutions for your team on its own. To access the Game Options screen within a game click on Game and click on Options.

**For the host PC:** On the initial Game Setup screen, for a non-league game choose Local in the upper-left corner, click on Launch New Server, choose whether the team you control (the "server") is the Visitor or Home team, and click on the Your Netplay Team button to bring up a list of teams. After choosing the team you will control click on the Launch button. We will cover league games in another section of this document.



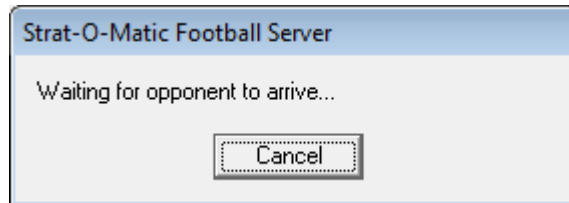
*GAME SETUP SCREEN*

On the Launch Server screen, for Game Name and Player Name type in something to identify you and in the Game Port field choose 6501 unless you and your opponent have agreed to use a different port.



*LAUNCH SERVER SCREEN*

After clicking Ok on the Launch Server screen wait for the client PC to connect.



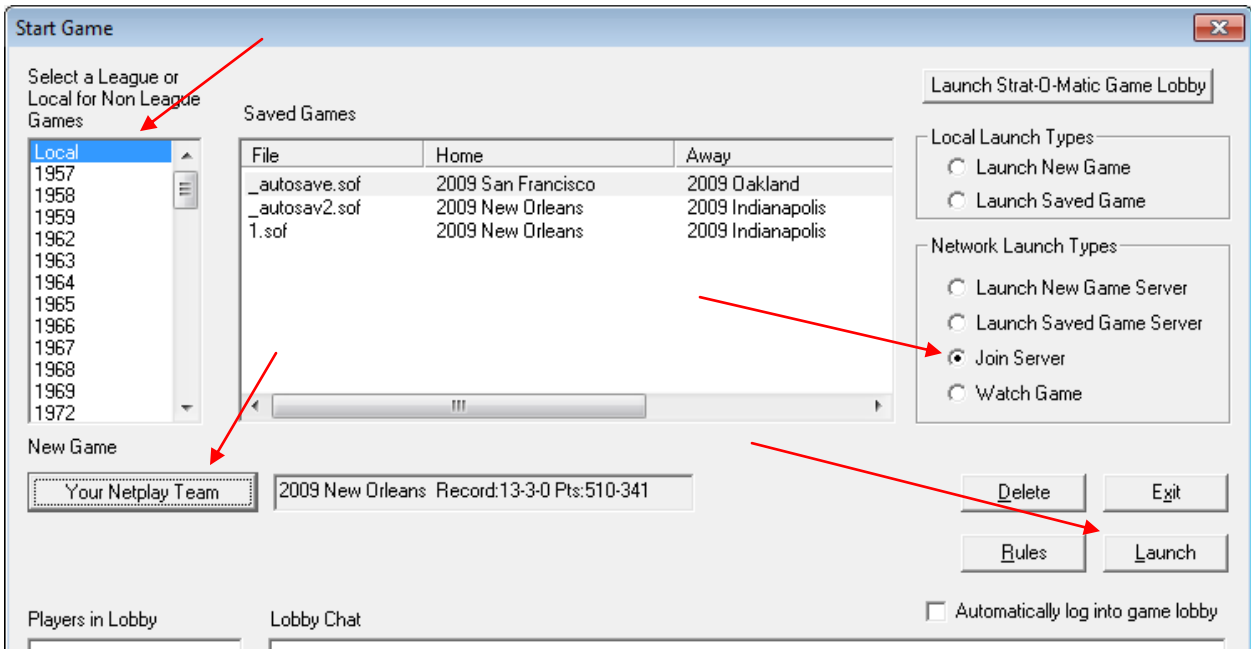
Once the client PC connects, you may chat with each other within the game by typing in the white box and clicking on Send in the far lower-right corner of the screen.



*CHAT SCREEN*

The game proceeds in the same way as a game against the computer although decisions will not be made as quickly by a human as a computer.

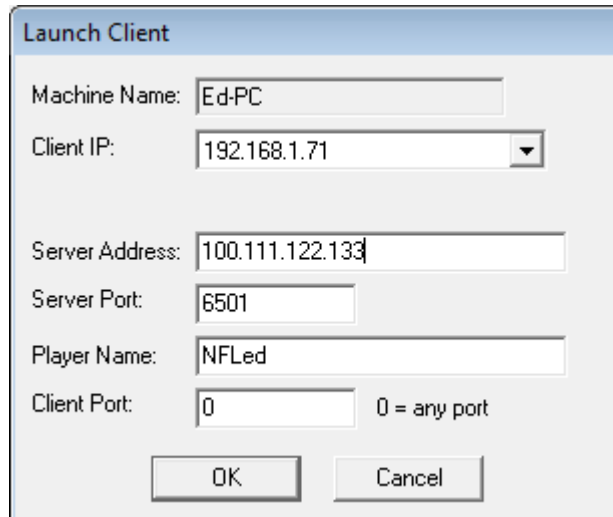
**For the client PC:** On the initial Game Setup screen, for a non-league game choose Local in the upper-left corner, click on Join Server, and click on the Your Netplay Team button to bring up a list of teams. After choosing the team you will control click on the Launch button.



*GAME SETUP SCREEN*

Incidentally, if you would like to watch a game between two other participants you would click on Watch Game instead of Join Server. To watch a game you would need the IP address of the host and, if the game was a league game (and not just two stock team opponents shown here), you would need a pregame file from the Commissioner (see League Manager section below for details on pregame files). When watching a game you do not have any control of the game other than viewing the results and reports.

Back to the client PC instructions: On the Launch Client screen in the Server Address field type in the IP address of the host PC, in the Server Port field enter 6501 (unless you and your opponent agreed to use a different port), in the Player Name field type in something to identify you, and in the Client Port field accept the default selection of 0 (zero).



*LAUNCH CLIENT SCREEN*

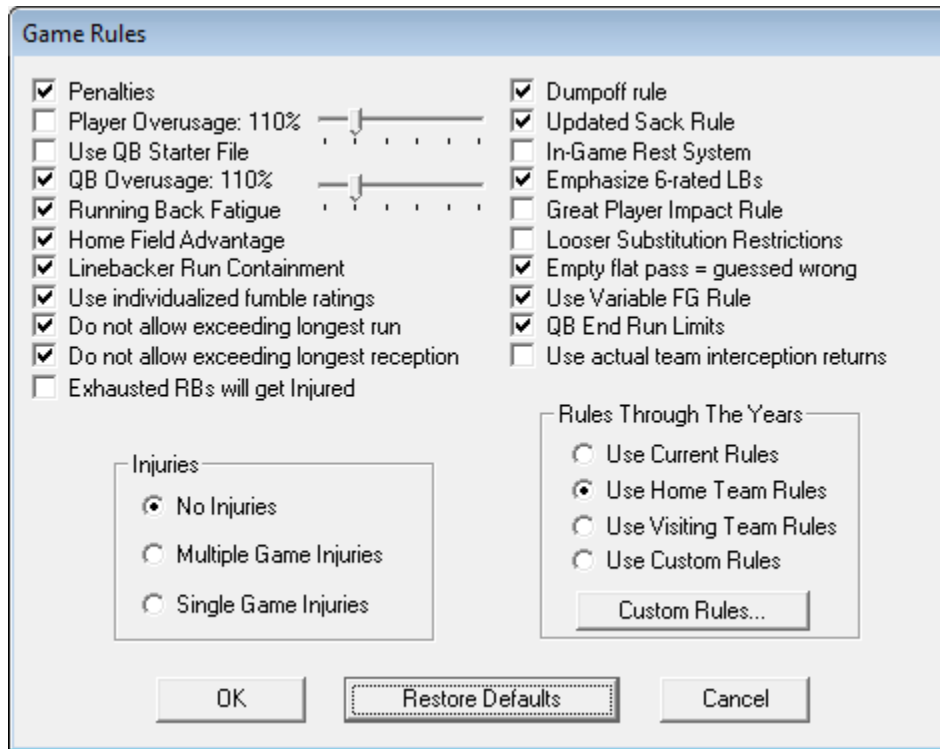
Once you click Ok on the Launch Client screen the game will connect and you will see the main Game Screen. Game on!

## GAME RULES

On the lower-right section of the initial Game Setup screen you may click on the Rules button to modify the game rules.



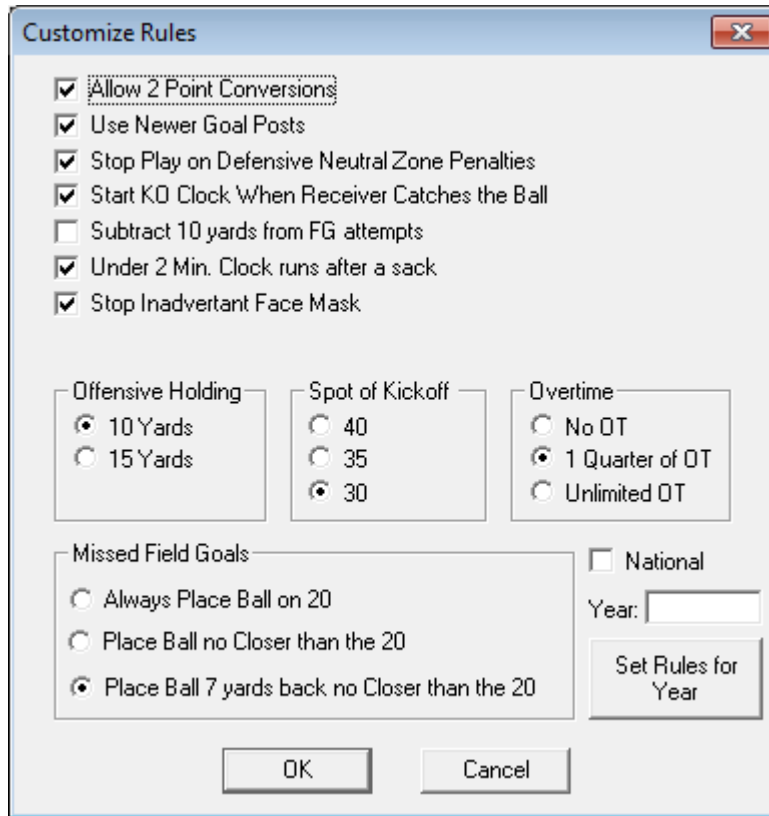
In some cases, using rules other than the default settings may lower the level of realism while many rules are a matter of personal preference.



*GAME RULES SCREEN*

The Player Overusage rule (which is off by default) is used in league games and will bench a Running Back or Receiver for an entire game if he has been overused during the season so far, we recommend leaving this off (and leaving off Multiple Game Injuries) when playing against the computer to avoid the computer manager having difficulties realistically managing the substitutes for the game. The QB Overusage and In-Game Rest System rules will also bench players at times although this will not cause difficulties for the computer manager.

In addition, you may click on the Custom Rules button to modify rules which have been changed over the years such as allowing 2-point conversions and the spot of the kickoff. If you choose “Use Home Team Rules” or “Use Visiting Team Rules” then the rules over the years will match the appropriate rules for the year of the team. For example, if the home team is 1990 Houston and you choose “Use Home Team Rules”, then 2-point conversions will not be allowed in the game.



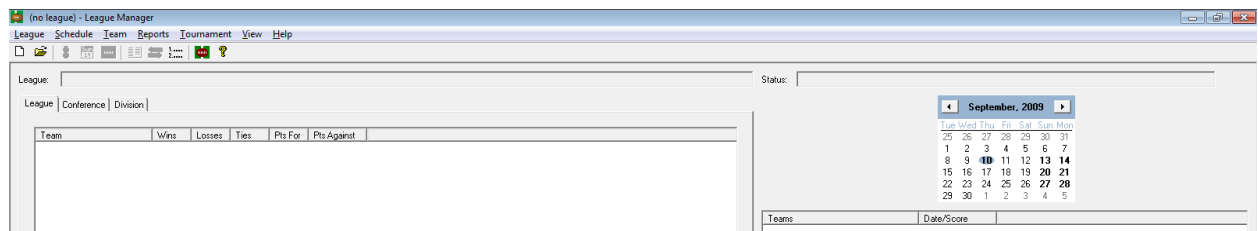
*CUSTOM RULES THROUGH THE YEARS*

For more explanation of the individual rules options feel free to consult the Help File within the game by clicking on Help, clicking on Contents, and clicking on Rules.

## LEAGUE MANAGER

You may use the League Manager to create and manage leagues containing stock teams (such as 2009 New Orleans or 1966 Green Bay) or draft teams in which teams consist of players from many different teams.

The first time you load the League Manager there will be no leagues selected since you have not yet created any leagues.



*INITIAL LEAGUE MANAGER SCREEN*

To create a league click on League in the upper-left corner and click on New.

**Create New League**

League Name: 2009

League Year: 2009 [Rules]  Email league?

Select type of league to create:

- Base on existing season
- Create custom league with stock teams
- Create custom league with free agent pool

**Custom League**

Number of teams: 2

Games in season: 4

Games per conference opponent: [ ]

Conference games: [ ]

Division games: [ ]

Games outside conference: [ ]

Single league (no conferences or divisions)  
 Divided league (2 conferences)  
 Subdivided league (conferences with divisions)

Conference Names

1 [ ]

2 [ ]

Division Names

1 [ ]

2 [ ]

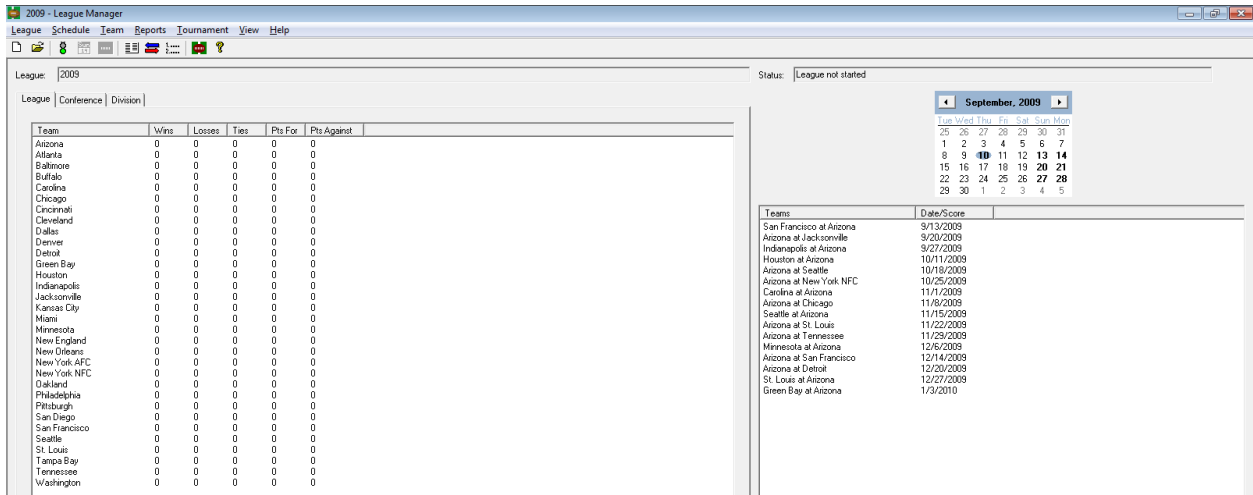
Number of divisions: [ ]

[OK] [Cancel]

*CREATE NEW LEAGUE SCREEN*

On the Create New League screen in the League Name field type in a name for the league, in the League Year field choose the year of the league (note that only years which you have purchased and installed on your hard drive will show up on this list), and in the Select Type of League to Create section choose “Base on existing season” to create a league matching the year you chose. You may also select “Create custom league with stock teams” (which still uses only stock teams) or “Create custom league with free agent pool” (which uses draft teams containing players from different teams or even different years) but we will cover leagues based upon an existing season. For more information on league types feel free to consult the Help File within the League Manager by clicking on Help, clicking on Contents, and clicking on “Stock Teams” or “Free Agents” in the section on Custom Leagues.

Also on the Create New League screen you may click on the Rules button to specify the rules the league will use. Please note that once you have begun playing games during the season the game rules may not be changed unless you restart the season so consider carefully the rules you want to use before beginning the season. On the Create New League screen is an option for setting up the league as and “Email League” – this is covered later in this document; to just play games on your own against the computer leave the Email League field empty. Click on Ok to lock in your selections on this screen.

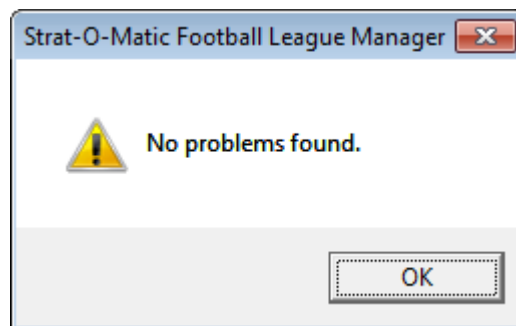


LEAGUE MANAGER SCREEN

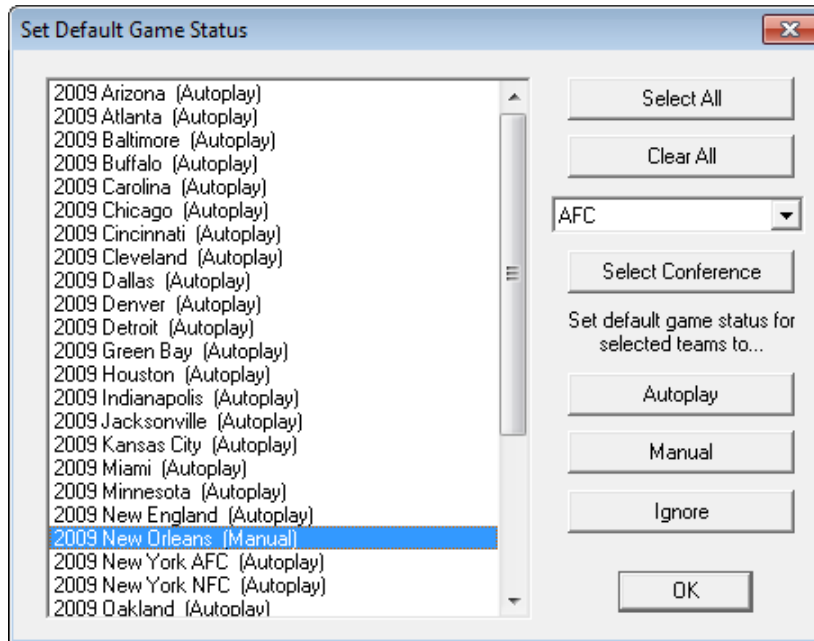
The League Manager will create all of the teams, a schedule to match the real-life schedule for that season, and implement all of the player depth charts and computer managers to their customized settings. At this point you are ready to play games without having to modify any further settings.

However, there are many settings you may modify if you want to. If you would like to modify any of the game rules (since you haven't yet begun the season) you may do that by clicking on League in the upper-left corner and clicking on Rules. If you would like to adjust the schedule you may do that by clicking on Schedule in the upper-left corner. If you would like to modify any team depth charts or computer managers you may do that by clicking on Team and clicking on Computer Manager or Manage Team. You may even trade with other teams in the league by clicking on Team and clicking on Manage League Rosters. For more information feel free to consult the Help File by clicking on Help, clicking on Contents, clicking on Index, and double-clicking on any of the Computer Manager choices (such as Computer Manager Depth Charts) or on Manage League Rosters for information on trades.

To begin the season, click on Schedule in the upper-left corner and click on Start Season. The League Manager will validate the roster of every team in the league and if it finds an error (which might only occur if team rosters or depth charts were modified) then it would notify you to fix it before proceeding. If no problems are found then you may proceed with the beginning of the season.

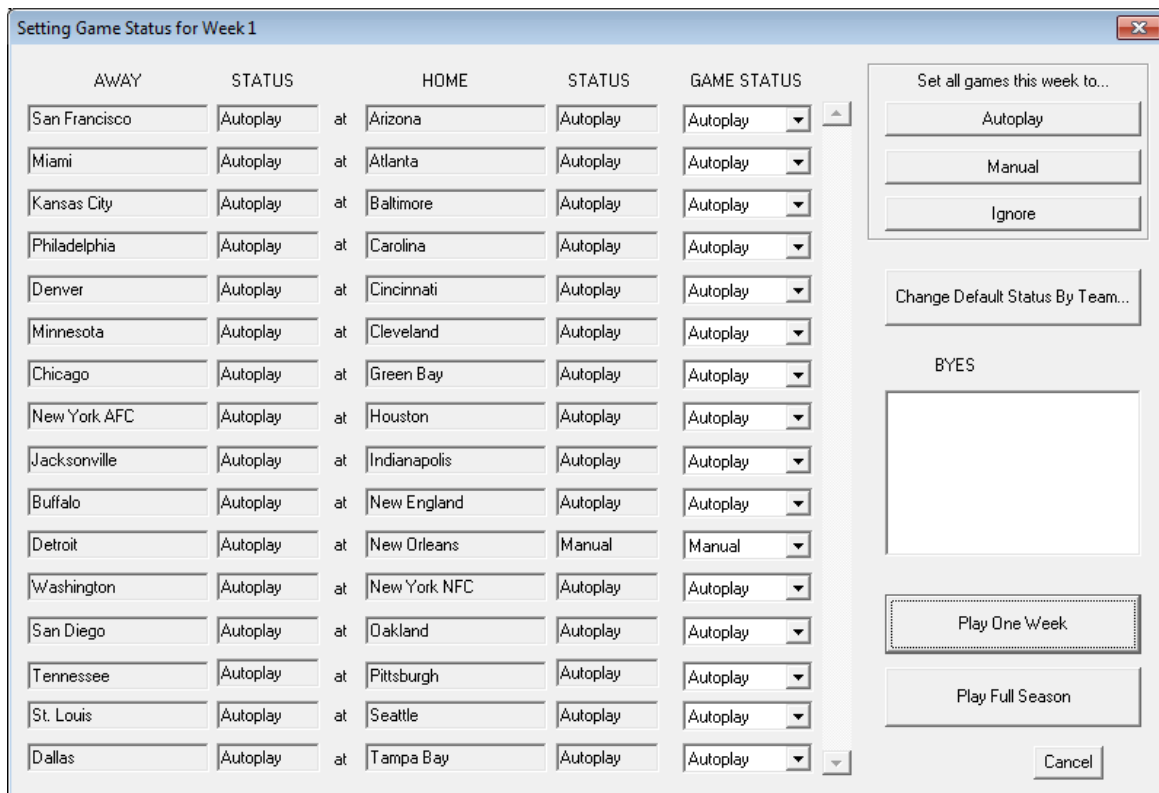


The next screen gives you options for how each team in the league will be controlled. The default is "Autoplay" which is for the computer to control every team. To take control of a team click to highlight it and click on the Manual button.



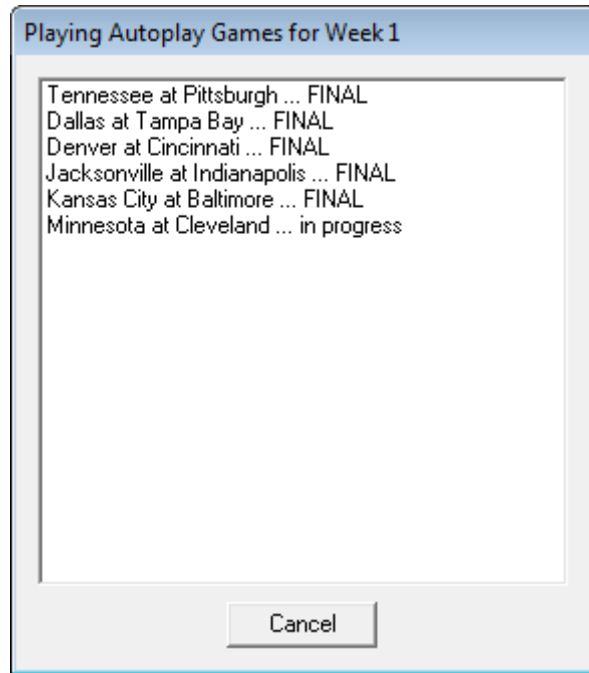
You may also set some teams' status to Ignore in which case the computer will not play any games involving two teams set to Ignore. Click on Ok to lock in your selections. Before you begin each week of the season you may modify your selections on this screen.

This will bring up the Week 1 Status screen on which you may modify any or all of the individual games to Autoplay, Manual, or Ignore.



WEEK 1 STATUS SCREEN

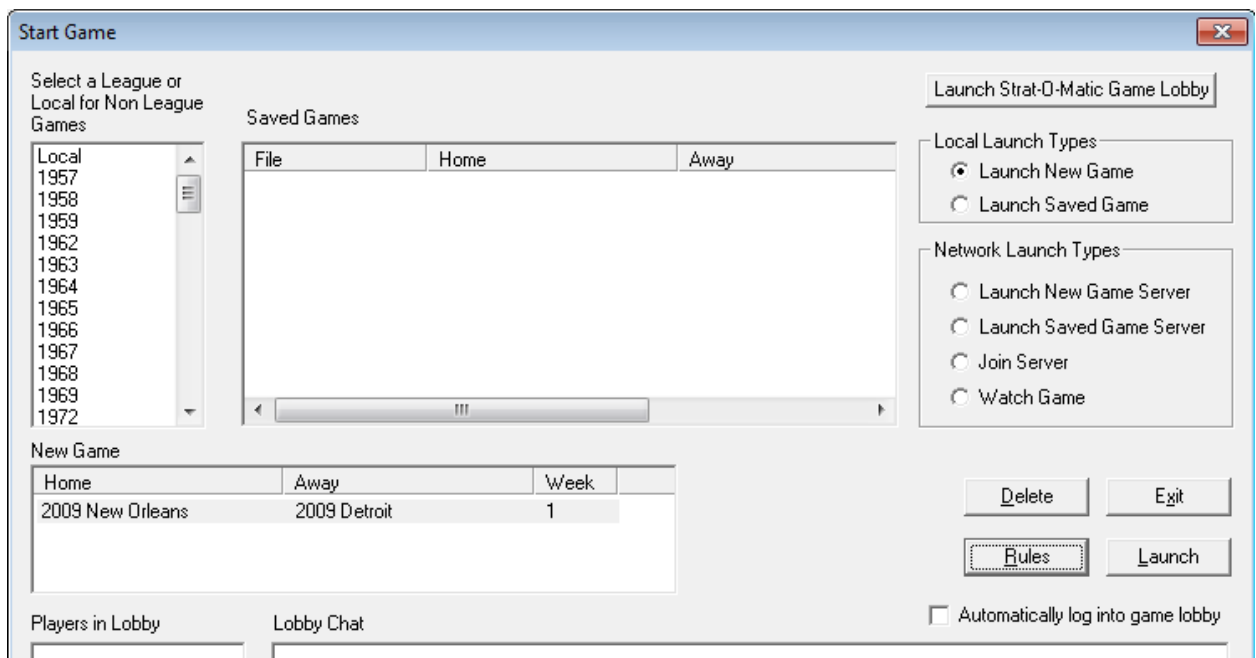
On the Week 1 Status screen click on Play One Week to begin week 1.



*COMPUTER AUTOPLAYING GAMES*

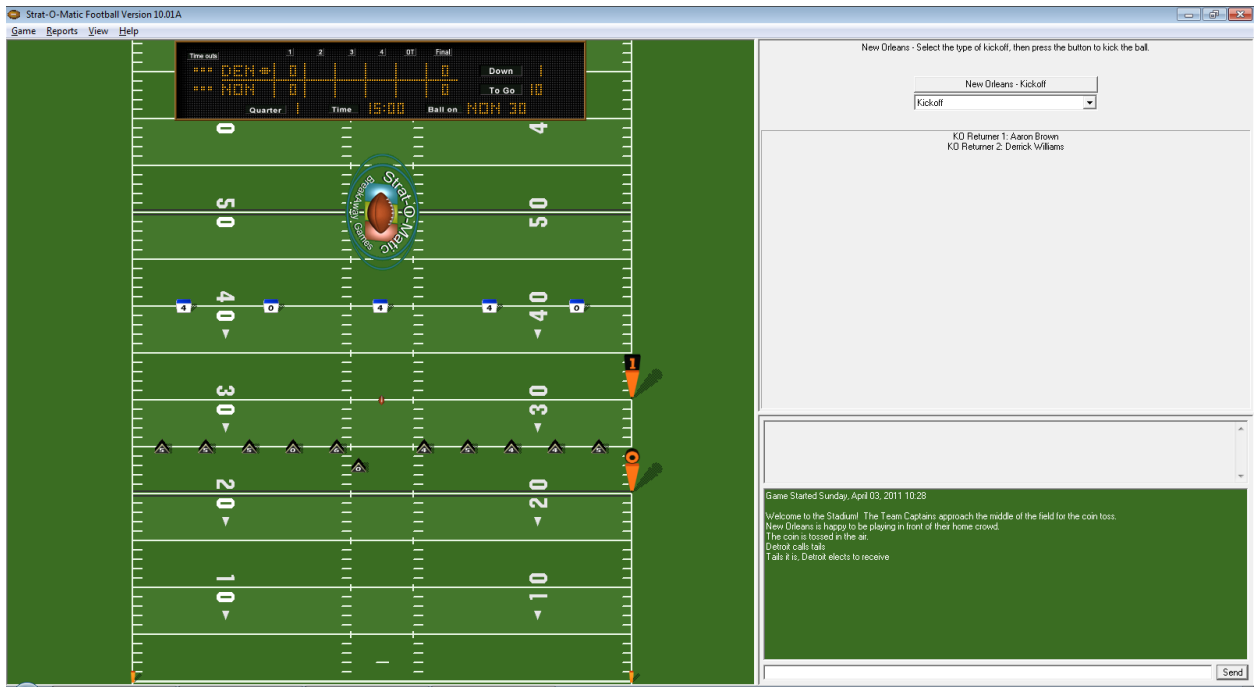
At this point the computer will quickly autoplay each of the week 1 games which are set to Autoplay. Even though the computer takes only seconds to autoplay a game, it runs through a full game with all of the computer manager choices for each team.

The game will then launch and list the Manual games for week 1.

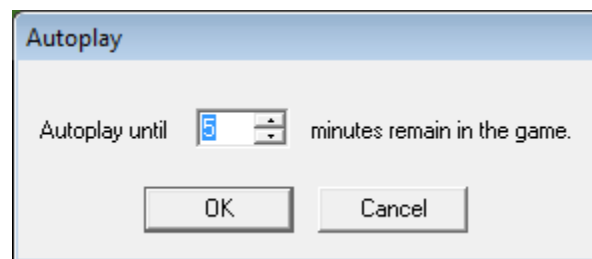


If you click on the Rules button you will see the Rules for the game but all options will be grayed out since the game rules have already been set before starting the season.

Click on the Launch button to start the game and play the game.

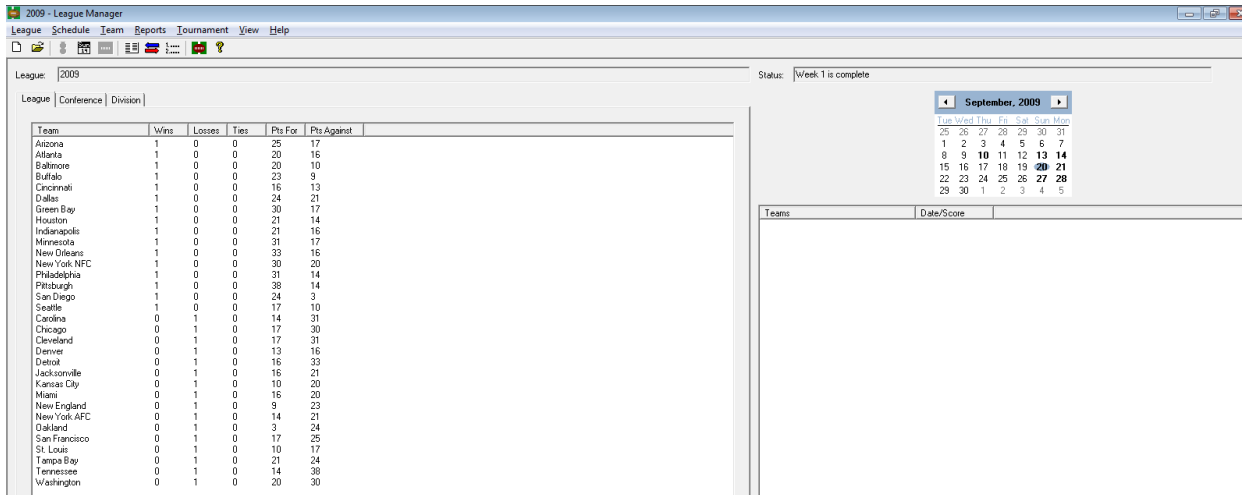


If at any time you want to take control of the other team you may click on Game in the upper-left corner, click on Options, and click in the Autoplay section. If you would like to allow the computer to take over both teams to autoplay the remainder of the game click on Game, click on Autoplay, and choose when you would like to resume control for the game.



Once the game has completed close it either by clicking on Game in the upper-left corner and clicking on Exit or by clicking on the X in the upper-right corner to close the game window.

The League Manager will automatically update with all of the week 1 results.



LEAGUE MANAGER SCREEN

To begin week 2 click on Schedule and click on Start Next Week to go through the same process.

The League Manager has dozens of different reports to view during or after a season.

To view the boxscore for a game click on either one of the teams or click on the date on the League Manager’s calendar for when the game was played, and then double-click on the game score on the right side of the screen.

To view a team’s overall statistics simply double-click on the team.

If you click on Reports at the top of the screen there are many more reports such as League Reports (including League Leaders and Record Book), Team Reports for the team you have highlighted (including Team Leaders and Offensive Tendency showing what plays the team has run in specific down and distance situations), and Player Reports for the team you have highlighted (including how many snaps the player has played, how many of each type of pass a receiver was targeted, and how many times their rating came up in a game).

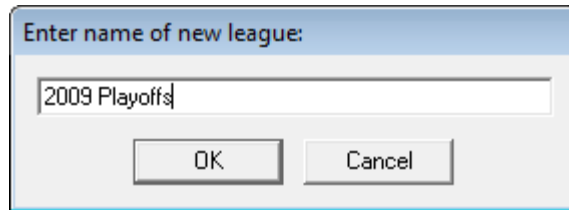
In addition, on the Reports menu is the Report Writer which allows you to create html or text files which may be customized and even posted on the internet for others to see.

Name	Team	Pass	PassC	Pass%	PassYds	PassYPC	PassTDs	PassINTs	PassSacks	PassSack%	PassSackYds	PassSackTDs	PassSackINTs	PassSackYdsINTs	PassSackTDsINTs	
Matt Ryan	ATN	20	12	60.0	177	8.9	14.8	2	10.0	38	0	0.0	1	10	167	122.3
Drew Brees	NON	27	18	66.7	171	6.3	9.5	3	11.1	31	0	0.0	1	8	163	121.1
Trent Edwards	BFA	23	18	78.3	178	7.7	9.9	1	4.3	48	0	0.0	1	8	170	113.4
Ben Roethlisberger	PIA	30	17	56.7	149	5.0	8.8	3	10.0	20	0	0.0	4	24	125	103.3
Eli Manning	NYN	23	13	56.5	170	7.4	13.1	3	13.0	35	1	4.3	3	28	142	101.4
Joe Flacco	BAA	29	21	72.4	269	9.3	12.8	1	3.4	51	1	3.4	1	5	264	98.2
Philip Rivers	SDA	29	15	51.7	166	5.7	11.1	2	6.9	31	0	0.0	3	22	144	92.0
Mark Brunell	NON	1	1	100.0	6	6.0	6.0	0	0.0	6	0	0.0	0	0	6	91.7
Brett Favre	MIN	30	17	56.7	196	6.5	11.5	1	3.3	34	0	0.0	4	28	168	87.6
Tony Romo	DAN	35	18	51.4	215	6.1	11.9	3	8.6	21	1	2.9	3	10	205	87.2

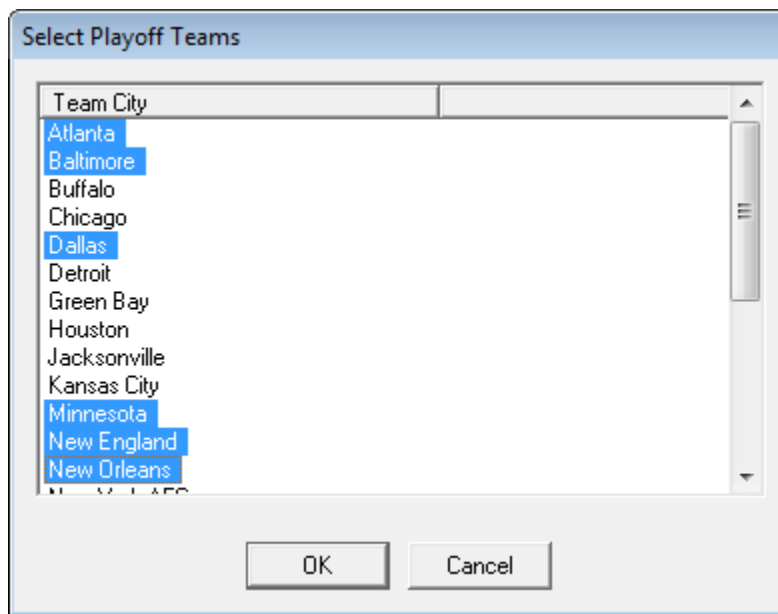
REPORT WRITER

On the Reports menu are also Encyclopedia and Team Yearbook options. For more information on these features feel free to consult the Help File.

Once a season has ended, you may create a playoff league with the teams you feel have earned a playoff spot. To do this, within League Manager click on League and click on Form Playoff League.



Enter a name for the league and click Ok.



*SELECT PLAYOFF TEAMS SCREEN*

Select all of the teams you would like to participate in the playoff league. Hold down the Ctrl key on your keyboard while clicking to highlight multiple teams. Once you click Ok to lock in your selections a new league will be created and you may schedule each game individually based upon the matchups you would like to see.

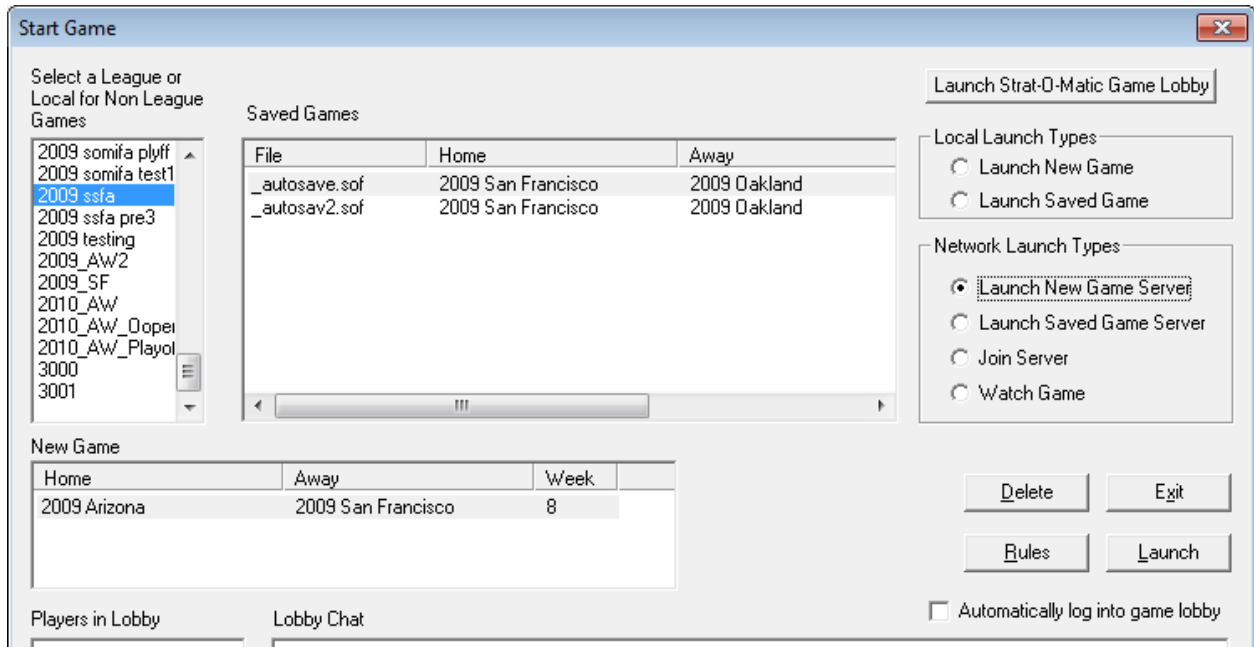
Within the League Manager if you would like to restart a league, then click on Schedule and click on Restart Season. Note that all of the standings and statistics for the season would be reset although modifications you may have made in the depth charts or computer managers would be retained. If you would like to retain all of the standings and statistics, another option is to duplicate the league by clicking on League and clicking on Copy; this creates a copy of the league which you may restart without affecting the original league.

One other important feature of the League Manager is the ability to back up your league file. This is useful in case a problem occurs with your hard drive or if you would like to share the league with someone else. To back up your league file within League Manager click on League and click on Backup League, you may select a location on your hard drive for the backup file. If at any time in the future you would like to restore the file, within League Manager click on League, click on Restore League, and navigate on your hard drive to the location where the backup file is stored. To share your league file with someone else you may send (via e-mail, for example) the backup file for that person to restore. Note that if you restore a league then all standings, statistics, rules, schedule, and computer manager choices would be restored; for example, if you back up the league after week 4 and play games through week 8, and then at that time you restore the week 4 backup file, the league would revert to just after week 4 and the games you played in weeks 5-8 would be lost.

## LEAGUE MANAGER – ONLINE LEAGUES

One of the most fun aspects of Strat-O-Matic Football is participating in an online league to play games head-to-head, whether the league is comprised of stock teams or draft teams.

Online League Participants: To participate in an online league which is managed by someone else is very easy. The Commissioner or Administrator of the league will send you a “pregame” file which you should download into the “Receive” folder within the Strat-O-Matic Football folder on your computer’s hard drive. After downloading the pregame file into the Receive folder, the next time you launch the initial game setup screen that league will show up on the list of leagues on the left side of the screen.



If you and your opponent have agreed that you are the host for the game then click to highlight the league on the left side of the screen, below that click to highlight the game, on the right side of the screen click on Launch New Game Server (it is important not to skip this step since just Launch New Game would set the computer to control the other team), and click on Launch as you would in any online game, as covered in an earlier section of this document.

If your opponent will be the host for the game, then on the initial game setup screen simply click on Join Server as you would to be the client in any online game. You would still need to have downloaded the pregame file beforehand into the Receive folder.

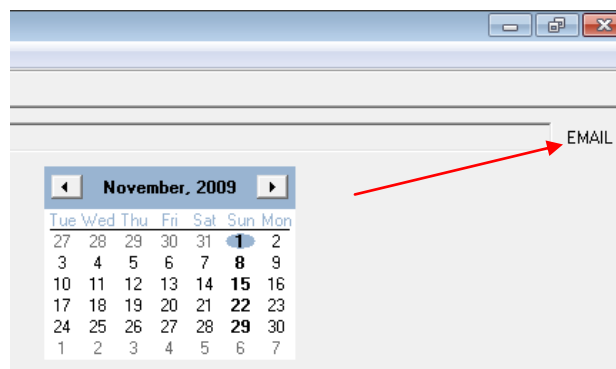
Once the game is over either you or your opponent will need to send to the league’s Commissioner or Administrator the “post” file for the game. The “post” file may be found in the “Send” folder within the Strat-O-Matic Football folder on your hard drive.

You will not be able to view standings, statistics, and reports for a league unless the you obtain the league file. If you would like the league file then ask the league Commissioner or Administrator to send you a backup copy of the league file. Typically, a Commissioner will post the league file on a web page for the league before the season begins and periodically during the season. This is especially useful to see coaching tendencies and other reports.

Online League Commissioners: Being the Commissioner of an online league is very rewarding and not nearly as difficult as it may at first seem. You will need to establish the rules and timelines of the league and let league members know what to expect.

Draft leagues are more challenging to set up than leagues comprising stock teams since for draft leagues you will need to select the players for each team. You may want to consider turning on the “Looser Substitution Restrictions” game option before the league begins to allow, for example, a left cornerback to play right cornerback, a strong safety to play free safety, and so on. In addition, for draft leagues we recommend for each team to use a “draft defensive card” which have a greater reliance on individual player ratings and receiver cards than the default team defensive cards. To select a draft defensive card for a team, in League Manager click on the team to highlight it, click on Team in the upper-left corner of the screen, click on Manage Team, click on the Special tab, in the Defense Team section click on the drop-down arrow, and scroll up to see the variety of draft defensive cards to choose from. For more information about draft defensive cards feel free to consult the Help file by clicking on Help, clicking on Contents, clicking on Index, and double-clicking on Draft League Defensive Cards.

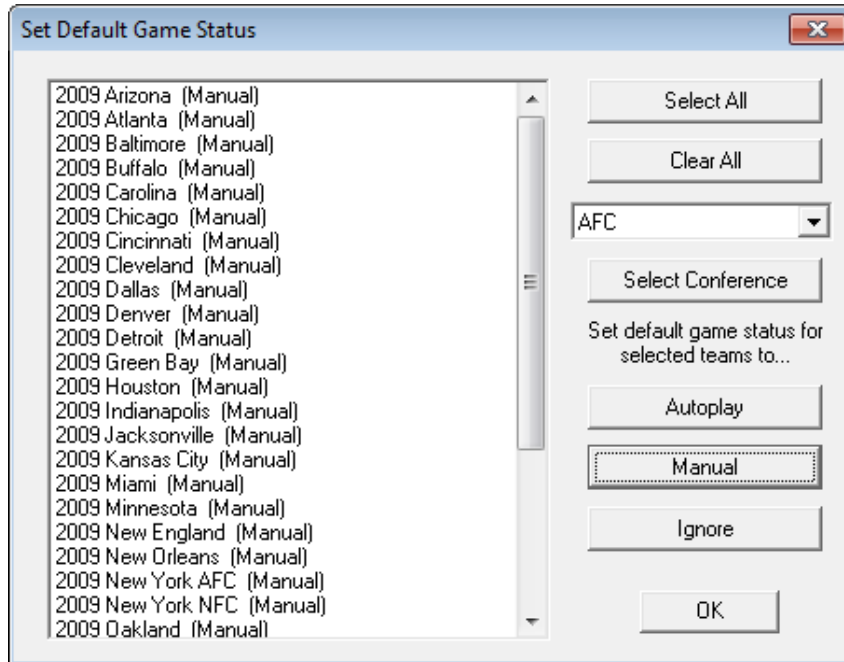
In a previous section of this document we went over how to create a league. When creating an online league it is important and necessary to choose Email League on the Create New League screen. To verify that a league is an email league, look at the far upper-right corner of the League Manager screen.



Depending upon the structure of your league you may need to adjust rosters if you are allowing player transactions, or the schedule if you are not just using the real-life schedule which is already input in the League Manager. Typically, player transactions are reported to the Commissioner who modifies the rosters within the League Manager or just wait until all transactions are completed before creating the league.

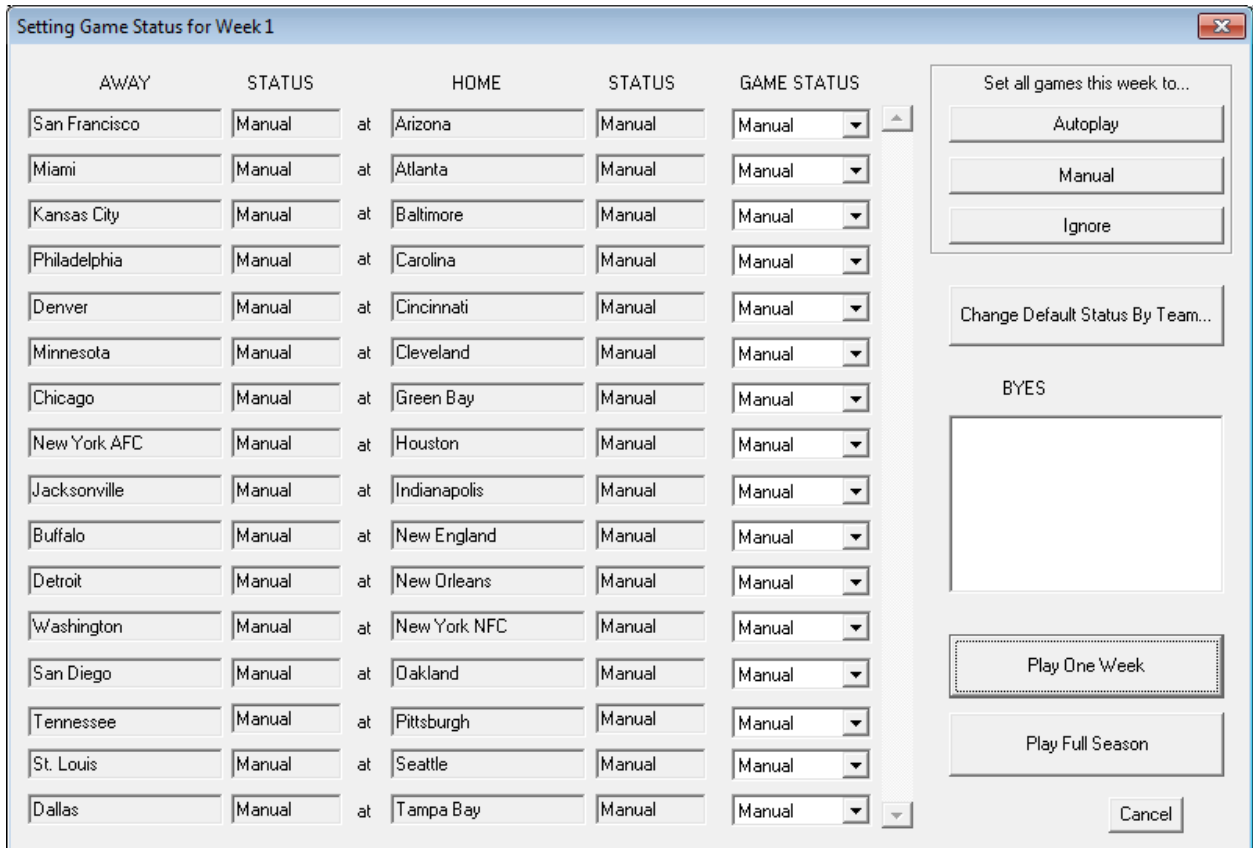
Once the league has been created and all of the rosters and schedule have been finalized, your league members may want a copy of the league so that they may see all of the reports, in this case back up your league file within the League Manager by clicking on League and clicking on Backup League, choose the location on your hard drive for the backup file (the default is in your Strat-O-Matic Football folder). League file names end with .leag. Then send this file to your league members or post it on a web page if there is one for your league. It is a good policy to back up and post the league file periodically during the league for league members who are interested, after each quarter of the season is one approach.

The next step is to begin the season and create “pregame” files to send to league members. To create pregame files, start the league as we covered previously and set all teams to Manual.



*SET ALL TEAMS TO MANUAL*

On the Week 1 Status screen ensure that all games are set to Manual and click on the Play One Week button.



*WEEK 1 STATUS SCREEN*

The League Manager will pause for up to a few minutes as it creates the pregame files. Once the process is done, the main Game Setup screen will launch and you may exit from this to return to the League Manager.

In the "Send" folder within the Strat-O-Matic Football folder on your hard drive will be several files with names ending in .PRE, there will be two files for each game in week 1. An example of a pregame file name is "2009SFN\_AT\_2009ARN(San Francisco).PRE". The coach of the team which is listed in parentheses will need to receive from you this pregame file, via e-mail or post on a web site.

Once a game is completed, at least one participant must send you the "post" file for the game. An example of a "post" file name is "2009SFN\_AT\_2009ARN.POST". Download this file into the Receive folder within the Strat-O-Matic Football folder on your hard drive. Then, within the League Manager with your league displayed, click on League, and click on Import Postgame File. The League Manager will update standings, statistics, and reports with the results of the game. You may import several or even dozens of "post" files for a specific league at one time, it only takes a few seconds for each file.

If you are participating in the league as a coach then copy your own pregame file into your Receive folder before you import anyone else's "post" files. To ensure that the process has been completed successfully, launch the game and verify that on the Game Setup screen your league is listed, click to highlight your league, and verify that your week 1 game is listed. When your game is over your League Manager will update automatically, you do not need to import the "post" file from your own game.

You may use the Report Writer to create html or text files with standings and statistics.

"What if my league members want to update their depth charts before the league begins?" This may occur especially in draft leagues. One approach is to allow league members to create a "coach" file for their team. This must be done before you have created the pregame files. For a league member to create a coach file you must send a league backup file which the league member would restore. Within the League Manager the league member would modify the depth charts of the team and when everything is set, the league member would highlight the team, click on League, and click on Export Coach File. This would create a file name ending in .coach in the Send folder on the league member's hard drive. This file should be sent to you and you would simply place the file in your Receive folder and then within the League Manager click on League and click on "Import Coach File (Commissioner Only)". Note that while this would import all of the depth chart and computer manager changes made by the league member, it would not reflect any selections made on the "Special" tab of the "Manage Teams" screen, including choice of kick returners, so you would need to set those manually based upon the choices of the league member (you may ask the league member their choices on this screen). Also, between the time when you create the league backup file and the time when you import coach files you should not make any changes to the league or roster such as renaming the league or moving players from one roster to another.

League Commissioner Recap: create the league and set it to an "email league", adjust the rosters and set the schedule (if necessary), back up the league file and send it to league members, if league members want to create a coach file for their team then you may import those, start the season and set all teams to manual, "start week 1" to create the week 1 pregame files in your Send folder, send the appropriate pregame file to each league member, and when "post" files are received after games import them from your Receive folder.

Here is an additional tip: You do not need to wait for week 1 to finish before creating pregame files for week 2. After you create all of the pregame files for week 1 you may "start week one" again except on the "Week 1 Status" screen set all of the games to Ignore before you click on "Play One Week". This will take the computer up to a few minutes but it will then set all week 1 games to Ignore allowing you to create the pregame files for week 2. You may repeat this process for week 2, week 3, and so on. It is not uncommon for league Commissioners to send out 4 weeks of pregame files all at once to allow league members to play the 4 games within a specific timeframe (such as one month) in any order they choose. A major benefit of this is to allow scheduling flexibility for league members who may be out of town for awhile or otherwise unavailable to play their games without holding up the rest of the league. Once all of the pregame files for weeks 1-4 have been created, the "post" files will import with no problem, even though the games will have been set to Ignore. The only issue to be careful about is if you are one of the league members, then

place all of your pregame files in your Receive folder and then launch the Game Setup screen (to load those pregame files) before you import any “post” files for the league.

## **MORE THINGS YOU’LL WANT TO CHECK OUT**

Here is a list of game features that you’ll definitely want to check out. Refer to the help file for more information on using these features:

- Game Lobby – allows you to connect to a chat room to meet others for games over the internet
- Card Image Option – This **optional feature** (available at additional cost) lets you see the card image on the Game Screen and in the notebooks. The card images are the key to the Strat-O-Matic game engine. Some play the game without the card images and are perfectly satisfied. Others prefer to use the card images because they give you a better feel of the game engine.
- Game Rules – in the Strat-O-Matic Football folder on your hard drive is a file “Football Rules.htm” which covers all of the rules
- Tournaments – allows you to set up and play games in a tournament format
- Encyclopedia – allows you to consolidate multiple seasons of statistics into a single encyclopedia
- Draft-O-Matic – allows you to set the computer to draft players within a league
- Model League – allows you to maintain a draft league from year to year without having to re-draft each team every year
- Player Pictures – allows you to view player pictures within a game and in the League Manager
- Quarterback Schedule or QB Starter File – allows the computer to use the actual QB who started the game for each game in the season
- Skinned Interface – allows you to “skin” the game for a more visually appealing look, a number of skins are included with the game and you may download additional skins at no cost
- Copy Protection – if you are going to transfer your game to another computer or if you need to uninstall and re-install for any reason, we strongly recommend reviewing the procedures in this section of the Help File

For more information please refer to the help file or call our Tech Support department at 1-888-613-6198. Please note that this line is \$1.99 per minute and available from 9 AM to 12 PM Mondays to Fridays. You can also email at [techsupport@strat-o-matic.com](mailto:techsupport@strat-o-matic.com).