

# 1948

By Bob Carroll

Marion Motley, Cleveland's Bulldozer fullback, got the most votes for the All-American Football Conference All-League team, but he was only one of eight Browns honored with either first or second team berths. Small wonder! Every time the Browns took the field in 1948, they won. It was a spectacular feat – but not very good for attendance in other AAFC cities.

Only San Francisco – boasting a brilliant running attack – was a legitimate threat to the Brown's streak. And, after Cleveland topped the 49ers twice in late-season games, their one-sided win over so-so Buffalo in the championship game was anti climactic.

Many of the year's pro football headlines dealt with the signing war between the National Football League and the AAFC. Each league fought bitterly to sign more college stars than the other. Some of the new faces in the AAFC included Y.A. Tittle, Len Ford and Herman Wedemeyer. The NFL crowed over rookies Johnny Lujack, George Connor, Harry Gilmer and Bobby Layne.

Paced by the "dream backfield" and the brilliant play of end Mal Kutner, the Chicago Cardinals won again in the NFL's West. The crosstown Bears kept pace all season long, but a thrilling, 24-21, win over the Bruins on the final Sunday brought the Cards the Western title.

Coach Greasy Neale's Philadelphia Eagles romped to a second consecutive Eastern title. Neale had so many all-pros and near all-pros on his squad that the issue was never in doubt.

The remainder of the East made losing a habit. Only Washington – with aging Sammy Baugh throwing – remained at all competitive. But even Baugh couldn't help the porous Redskin defense which gave away points almost as fast as Sam could get them.

The championship game was played during one of the worst blizzards ever to hit Philadelphia. For three quarters, 36,309 loyal fans watched the Eagles and Cardinals slip and slide in scoreless frustration. But just at the end of the third period Eagle Bucko Kilroy recovered a Cardinal fumble at the 17-yard line. Philadelphia rushed to the five in three plays and Steve Van Buren blasted over for the touchdown that made the Eagles champions.

## 1948 ALL-AAFC TEAM

E - Mac Speedie, Cleveland  
E - Alyn Beals, San Francisco  
T - Lou Rymkus, Cleveland  
T - Bob Reinhard, Los Angeles  
G - Dick Barwegan, Baltimore  
G - Bill Willis, Cleveland  
C - Bob Nelson, Los Angeles  
Q - Otto Graham, Cleveland  
H - John Strzykalski, San Francisco  
H - Chet Mutryn, Buffalo  
F - Marion Motley, Cleveland

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## AAFC 1948 FINAL STANDINGS

WESTERN DIVISION	W	L	T	Pct.
Cleveland Browns	14	0	0	1.000
San Francisco 49ers	12	2	0	.857
Los Angeles Dons	7	7	0	.500
Chicago Rockets	1	13	0	.071
EASTERN DIVISION				
Buffalo Bills	7	7	0	.500
Baltimore Colts	7	7	0	.500
New York Yankees	6	8	0	.429
Brooklyn Dodgers	2	12	0	.143
Playoff: Buffalo 28, Baltimore 17				
Cleveland 49, Buffalo 7				

## NFL 1948 FINAL STANDINGS

EASTERN DIVISION	W	L	T	Pct.
Philadelphia Eagles	9	2	1	.818
Washington Redskins	7	5	0	.583
New York Giants	4	8	0	.333
Pittsburgh Steelers	4	8	0	.333
Boston Yanks	3	9	0	.250
WESTERN DIVISION				
Chicago Cardinals	11	1	0	.917
Chicago Bears	10	2	0	.833
Los Angeles Rams	6	5	1	.545
Green Bay Packers	3	9	0	.250
Detroit Lions	2	10	0	.167
Philadelphia 7, Chicago Cards 0				

## 1948 UNITED PRESS ALL-NFL

LE - Pete Pihos, Philadelphia  
LT - Albert Wistert, Philadelphia  
LG - Ray Bray, Chicago Bears  
C - Bulldog Turner, Chicago Bears  
RG - Buster Ramsey, Chicago Cards  
RT - Dick Huffman, Los Angeles  
RE - Mal Kutner, Chicago Cards  
QB - Sammy Baugh, Washington  
LH - Steve Van Buren, Philadelphia  
RH - Charlie Trippi, Chicago Cards  
FB - Pat Harder, Chicago Cards