Can Fantasy Football Consumers Rely on Player Projections Found on Internet Websites?

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ABSTRACT

The popularity of fantasy sports has continued to grow over the past two decades, becoming a multi-billion-dollar industry. While the traditional leagues utilize a one-time draft process with subsequent waivers, daily fantasy sports (DFS) involves picking a new team(s) every week. As a result, traditional leagues require participants to predict the long-term (season) value of a player, whereas DFS requires participants to optimize the team value of players on a weekly basis. Therefore, the average DFS participant places a high premium on weekly player projections by “so-called” experts found on fantasy football websites. The purpose of this paper is to compare the weekly projections of a simple model based on cumulative averages with those of two websites (Fantasy Sharks and NFL.com) that incorporate additional skill and knowledge by experts to see if fantasy football consumers can rely on these player projections for their DFS lineups. While none of the models performed particularly well in terms of absolute percentages, one of the “expert” models did perform significantly better overall than the other two models.

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