

# GRIDIRON GOLD

## *Illustrated*

WEEK 7  
SHOWDOWN



# SHULA RISING

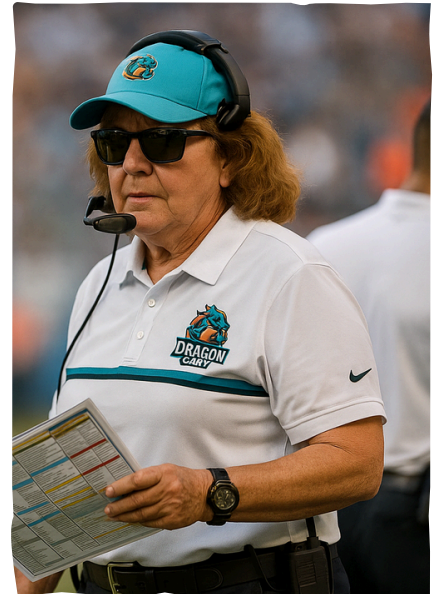
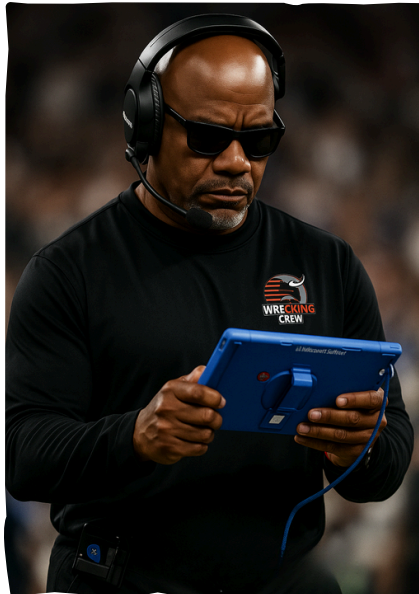
Three contenders. One division. No room for mercy.



# THE SHULA STORM

FROM DRAGON LADY'S REVENGE TO WRECKING CREW'S RESURGENCE  
— THE DIVISION WHERE EVERY WEEK FEELS LIKE A PLAYOFF GAME

BY JENNIFER RAE



## Shula Rising: The Division That Refuses to Blink

Every fantasy football season eventually reveals its power structure. Some divisions stumble into mediocrity, others define balance, and are few— like the 2025 Shula Division — evolve into something closer to chaos theory.

Through six weeks, *Shula* has been that chaos, that unpredictable heartbeat of Gridiron Gold. It's the only division in the league with three legitimate playoff teams, each with a claim to the throne: **Dragon Lady (5–1)**, **The WreckingCrew(4–2)**, and **Avengers Team (4–2)**. If the season ended today, all three would qualify for the postseason — and if Week 7 goes the way of Avengers Team and TheWrecking Crew, the entire division would be gridlocked in a four-way tie at 5–2.

This isn't a division built on luck or fluke blowouts. It's been a six-week gauntlet of measured strategy, waiver precision, and bruising head-to-head battles. The proof? Intra-division matchups have been so even that there's no undisputed alpha. The Avengers beat Dragon Lady in Week 1. The Wrecking Crew stunned the Avengers in Week 2. Then Dragon Lady got her payback on the Crew in Week 3. Every time one contender rises, another humbles them.

And now, as Week 7 dawns, the Shula Division enters what feels like its first real referendum on greatness.

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### The Revenge Game: Dragon Lady vs. Avengers Team

Dragon Lady's only blemish this season came courtesy of the Avengers in Week 1 — a narrow, emotionally charged 98.02–88.88 loss that still lingers. Since then, the team has been nearly flawless, ripping off five straight wins and averaging over 130 points per week during that stretch.

The rematch in Week 7 is more than a chance at redemption; it's a statement opportunity.

Led by **Baker Mayfield**, Dragon Lady has quietly assembled one of the league's most balanced rosters. The Gibbs–Achane backfield tandem might be the fastest in Gridiron Gold, and **Nico Collins** has emerged as a weekly anchor in Houston's high-octane offense. With **Jaylen Waddle** and rookie sparkplug **Xavier Worthy** filling out the air attack, the roster has both explosiveness and depth.

If there's a vulnerability, it lies in Mayfield's inconsistency — his floor can be dangerously low when Tampa Bay stalls. But the supporting cast is elite enough to mask those dips. If Gibbs and Achane both stay healthy and continue to combine for 40+ points per week, Dragon Lady might not just win the division — they could claim the top playoff seed outright.

Their challenge? The Avengers Team has been quietly sharpening its edge.

**Dak Prescott** has found rhythm in recent weeks, riding play-action efficiency and big-play bursts to keep the Avengers offense humming. **Christian McCaffrey** remains fantasy's most bankable superstar, averaging north of 25 points per game, and the wideout duo of **DK Metcalf** and **Brian Thomas Jr.** gives the roster both veteran presence and rookie volatility.

This is a team built to punish defensive lapses, not win shootouts. When they control tempo — using McCaffrey and **Javonte Williams** to grind clock — they suffocate opponents. When Dak gets hot, they destroy them.

The revenge narrative might make the headlines, but this is also about stakes. If Dragon Lady wins, they seize control of the Shula Division and the best record in the league. If the Avengers pull off another victory, they'll level the field and hold a critical 2–0 tiebreaker over their rival.

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### The Statement Game: Wrecking Crew vs. Fins In Low Places

While Dragon Lady and the Avengers duke it out for supremacy, **The Wrecking Crew** faces a different kind of test — a cross-divisional showdown against the Lombardi leader and league newcomer, **Fins In Low Places (4-2)**.

This matchup feels less like a midseason game and more like a potential playoff preview. The Crew, now 4–2, has survived a demanding early slate thanks to a core that finally looks synchronized. **Jayden Daniels** has emerged as the dual-threat fantasy

gem GM Tony McGriff hoped for, averaging nearly 25 points per game since Week 4. His combination of mobility and aggressiveness has elevated both **Drake London** and **George Pickens**, who have each stepped into steady WR2 roles after early inconsistency.

But the Crew's fate, as always, rests on **Ja'Marr Chase**. His chemistry with new Bengals quarterback Joe Flacco — the subject of last week's cover story — could be the wild card that pushes this team from "contender" to "juggernaut." Chase's 40-point ceiling remains unmatched when Cincinnati's offense clicks, and Flacco's arrival promises more catchable targets, even if fewer deep bombs.

A win against Fins In Low Places would not only validate McGriff's midseason adjustments but also potentially create a four-way logjam atop the standings — all at 5–2. That's the kind of divisional chaos Shula seems born for.

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### **No Easy Finishes: The Path Forward**

From here, every week is a minefield.

#### **Dragon Lady's Path to the Title:**

The schedule stiffens — The Wrecking Crew in Week 8, The Bad Guys in Week 9, and a rivalry rematch with DBarber in Week 12. Still, the balance on this roster gives GM Rita Reo room to navigate. If her backfield stays intact, she's the favorite to hold the crown. Her margin for error is slim, but her ceiling is unmatched.

#### **Avengers Team's Path to the Title:**

The Avengers' path depends on consistency. They've beaten elite teams, but their losses — including that wild Week 4 shootout against The Bad Guys — exposed defensive vulnerabilities. With **McCaffrey**, **Prescott**, and **Metcalf**, they have a top-heavy core capable of carrying weeks single-handedly. The key will be avoiding trap games against competitive squads like Fins and Dem Wallz in November.

#### **Wrecking Crew's Path to the Title:**

The Crew's road is toughest on paper — after Fins, they face The Bad Guys, Dragon Lady, and the 1024 Bandits in consecutive weeks. But their upside remains the highest. If Flacco unlocks Chase and Daniels continues trending upward, this team's offensive ceiling can overwhelm anyone. They've already beaten the Avengers and know how to win ugly, which makes them the division's dark horse threat.



### **A Division Without a King or Queen**

Six weeks in, the Shula Division isn't just competitive — it's redefining what balance looks like. Every contender has a case, every contender has a flaw, and every matchup feels like a playoff preview.

If Dragon Lady avenges her lone loss, she becomes the front-runner. If the Avengers sweep her again, they seize control and bragging rights. And if The Wrecking Crew upsets Fins In Low Places, the standings may implode into a perfect 5–2 stalemate — the kind of symmetry only Shula could produce.

Either way, the league's message is clear: the road to Gridiron Gold runs straight through Shula.\

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Jennifer Rae is the **Senior Writer for Gridiron Gold Illustrated**, bringing sharp insight and a seasoned voice to every story. Before joining the magazine, she produced the nightly newscast at **Las Vegas One**, anchored sports at **KENS 5 in San Antonio** and **WMBB in Panama City**, and contributed her pen to the pages of **Sports Illustrated** and **ESPN The Magazine**.



# WEEK 6 LEAGUE RECAP



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## The Fall of a Titan



The mighty **1024 Bandits**, once the measuring stick of Gridiron Gold dominance, looked mortal again—crumbling for the second straight week in a 161.9–106.8 defeat at the hands of **Fins In Low Places**.

**Jared Goff** and **Rico Dowdle** delivered a combined 55+ points, powering Fins to a statement victory and reminding the Lombardi Division that consistency still wins over flash. For the Bandits, **Justin Herbert** and **Josh Jacobs** fought to stem the tide, but their efforts barely kept the game respectable.

**Jasmine Nesmith**, Fins' ever-steady voice, stayed grounded:

“One game at a time. We just executed. The rest takes care of itself.”

Across the aisle, **DeAndre Bell**'s dismissive confidence returned—if slightly cracked:

“Two losses mean nothing. Nobody panic. We'll be fine when it counts.”

But the whispers in the league say otherwise. The Bandits' aura of invincibility is flickering.



## Vengeance in Motion

The **Dragon Lady** kept her crown polished with a fourth straight win, dismantling the **Appalachian Mud Dogs** 119.8–89.1.

**Baker Mayfield** and **De'Von Achane** were relentless, putting up 53 points between them as Dragon Lady's composure strangled any chance of a Mud Dog rally. **Derrick Henry** and **James Cook** showed flashes, but it wasn't enough to dent the armor of the most efficient team in the league.

**Sterling Jones**, as measured as ever, spoke like a general:



“We’re not chasing records—we’re building consistency. Control every week, and the results follow.”

Meanwhile, **Joe Riddle** didn’t waste words:

“They outplayed us. Period. We’ll be ready next time.”

All eyes now turn to Week 7, where Dragon Lady seeks *revenge* against the **Avengers Team**—the only squad to beat her this season.

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## Silencing the Boast

For weeks, **Hobbton** talked. And talked. Week 6, they fell silent.



The **Avengers Team**, led by **Dak Prescott** and **Christian McCaffrey**, tore through their opponent 142.6–98.3, continuing a stunning midseason surge in the post–Joe Burrow era. **Brian Thomas Jr.** provided another steady punch, while **Josh Allen**’s heroics for Hobbton couldn’t overcome the disappearing act from the rest of the roster. **Lauren Beltran**, still catching her breath, reflected with optimism:

“We’re finally playing our brand of football. We’re not surviving anymore—we’re dictating.”

**Sam King**, usually brash, had venom for his own sideline:

“Half this team played like spectators. If you can’t back up the talk, keep your mouth shut.”

For now, the Avengers are the league’s hottest team—and Hobbton has learned the cost of arrogance.

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## Business as Usual



The **Bad Guys** have hit their stride, and no one looks happier—or more exhausted—than their Media Director, **Arthur Robinson**.

In a 142.6–67.6 beatdown of **Dem Wallz**, **Bijan Robinson** and **Drake Maye** powered the offensive onslaught. It was clinical, efficient, and ruthless.

Meanwhile, injuries once again crippled Dem Wallz. **Spencer Rattler** and **Wan'Dale Robinson** offered brief resistance, but without **Lamar Jackson** and **Trey Benson**, it was never close.

Robinson exhaled:

“Glad it's over. Another week, another win. We just keep moving.”

**Greg Cantrell** didn't hide his frustration:

“It's been three years of this injury curse. We'll fight through it like we always do.”

At this point, Dem Wallz needs health—and fast—if they want to keep the season afloat.

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## Order Restored



After weeks of inconsistency, **The Wrecking Crew** reasserted their dominance with a thunderous 145.0–79.6 victory over **DBarber**.

**Ja'Marr Chase**, revitalized under the veteran hand of **Joe Flacco**, exploded for a vintage performance, while **George Pickens** torched defensive matchups en route to the Crew's most balanced effort of the season.

**Deb Levi**, composed as always, called it by the numbers:

“We executed clean. It was business, plain and simple.”

**Jose Vargas** of DBarber, ever the realist, owned the result:

“We got outplayed, outplanned, and outscored. Time to get back to work.”

After an uneven start, the Crew now look like the contenders their draft predicted.

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## The Narrow Escape



The tightest contest of the week belonged to **The Travelers** and **Pud's Playmakers**, with the Travelers squeaking by 107.9–101.4.

**Patrick Mahomes** and **Ladd McConkey** led the Travelers' offense, while **Travis Kelce** and **Cam Skattebo** powered Pud's spirited push. It was a chess match of efficiency and near-misses, ending with Mahomes closing it out like only he can.

**Delilah Sandoval**, equal parts charm and swagger, kept it short:



“Mahomes did what Mahomes does. We’ll take the win and move on.”

**Will Powers**, steady in defeat, found solace in perspective:

“We’re not far off. One or two bounces, and that’s our game. We’ll keep building.”

For both teams, Week 6 was less about standings and more about heart.

## Reflection: The Turning Point

Week 6 wasn’t just another checkpoint—it was a fracture in the narrative.

The **Bandits** are suddenly vulnerable.

The **Dragon Lady** feels inevitable.

The **Avengers** are resurgent.

The **Bad Guys** are dangerous.

And **The Wrecking Crew** is quietly sharpening its edge again.













Every win revealed hunger; every loss revealed truth.

Momentum has shifted across divisions, and with rivalries like **DragonLady vs Avengers** and **Bad Guys vs Hobbton** looming, the tension in Gridiron Gold is palpable.

One thing is certain—

**In this league, even the thrones have expiration dates.**

## WEEK 7 MATCH-UPS

<b>The Wrecking Crew</b> 4-2-0   5th		0.00 107.84	vs	0.00 116.00		<b>Fins In Low Places</b> 4-2-0   3rd
<b>1024 Bandits</b> 3-3-0   6th		0.00 109.68	vs	0.00 88.40		<b>HOBBDTON</b> 2-4-0   8th
<b>Appalachian Mud Dogs</b> 3-3-0   7th		0.00 93.42	vs	0.00 89.59		<b>DEM WALLZ</b> 2-4-0   11th
<b>Avengers Team</b> 4-2-0   4th		0.00 120.13	vs	0.00 121.54		<b>Dragon Lady</b> 5-1-0   1st
<b>DBarber</b> 1-5-0   12th		0.00 91.07	vs	0.00 111.24		<b>Travelers</b> 2-4-0   10th
<b>Puds' Playmakers</b> 2-4-0   9th		0.00 110.97	vs	0.00 113.93		<b>The Bad Guys</b> 4-2-0   2nd

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