

# SCOUTING REPORT

Broncos at Lions » 11 a.m. today » KCNC-4

By Mike Klis, The Denver Post

## GamePlan

**When the Broncos run**  
Travis Henry returns from his rib injury. With Selvin Young playing well in Henry's absence last week against Green Bay, don't be surprised if the Broncos use an inside-outside tailback rotation, especially with Ford Field's artificial surface only enhancing Young's speed. The Lions' potent offense may cause Broncos coach Mike Shanahan to use a ball-possession game. **Edge: Broncos**

**When the Lions run**  
Kevin Jones has been hot since the bye week, rushing for 181 yards on 38 carries (4.8 yards per carry) in the past two games against Tampa Bay and Chicago. T.J. Duckett may get an occasional carry and the Lions will use receivers Calvin Johnson or Roy Williams on a reverse once a game. **Edge: Even**

**When the Broncos pass**  
This is a \$3 million game for quarterback Jay Cutler. A clause in his contract signed prior to his rookie year states he will receive a \$3 million bonus if he takes 45 percent of the snaps this year. The 45 percent mark will hit following the first quarter of this game. Cutler has become reacquainted the past two games with good friend Tony Scheffler, who has eight receptions and two TDs in his last two games. **Edge: Broncos**

**When the Lions pass**  
Benefiting from the pass guru, offensive coordinator Mike Martz, quarterback Jon Kitna has a completion percentage of 69.4. He has big-time receiving targets in Roy Williams and Calvin Johnson. Shaun McDonald and Mike Furrey also catch their share. The Broncos' secondary was burned by Brett Favre last week. **Edge: Lions**

**Special teams**  
This is the unit where the Broncos have shown the most improvement in recent weeks. Two big reasons are Glenn Martinez as a returner and Jamie Winborn as a tackler. The Lions have a decent punt returner in Troy Walters. Their kicker, Jason Hanson, has missed four field goals. Broncos kicker Jason Elam has missed three, but he's also kicked four in the final seconds that either won the game or forced overtime. **Edge: Broncos**

## InjuryReport

**Broncos**  
**Out:** DE Jarvis Moss (fibula), WR Javon Walker (knee). **Questionable:** S John Lynch (neck). **Probable:** CB Champ Bailey (quadriceps), DT Antwon Burton (ankle), RB Travis Henry (ribs), G Montrae Holland (shoulder), WR Brandon Stokley (hamstring), LB D.J. Williams (shoulder).

**Lions**  
**Questionable:** DE Kalimba Edwards (knee). **Probable:** T George Foster (ankle), WR Calvin Johnson (back).

## ByTheNumbers

6

of the Broncos' final nine regular-season games will be played on the road. Considering the Broncos are 2-3 at home, that might not be so bad.

21-23

Combined record of the Broncos' six remaining road opponents. The Lions have the best mark at 5-2.

2

Bailey brothers who will start in this game. Champ Bailey is Denver's left cornerback and Boss Bailey is a Detroit outside linebacker.

# 5 things to watch

## 1 Chance of a shootout

Both defenses are vulnerable. The Lions rank 28th in total defense and 25th in points allowed. The Broncos rank 25th in total defense and 28th in points allowed. Both teams will move the ball between the 20s. If they finish off drives, the combined final score could push 60 points. In the Broncos' case, that's a big "if."

## 2 Ball!

In almost all statistical categories, the Broncos are superior, or equal, to the Lions. So why is Detroit 5-2 while the Broncos are 3-4 and underdogs for this game? One answer is in takeaways. Detroit's defense has forced 20 turnovers, tops in the NFL. In contrast, only four teams have fewer takeaways than the Broncos' nine.

## 3 Brandon and Brandon

The Lions rank 30th in defending the pass, allowing a whopping 258.3 passing yards a game. The Broncos have become much more pass-oriented since their bye week. Granted, circumstances dictated some of this, as Pittsburgh is extremely tough against the run and the Broncos were without running back Travis Henry due to injury last week against Green Bay. But quarterback Jay Cutler has improved each week, and this matchup should keep receivers Brandon Marshall and Brandon Stokley busy.

## 4 Broncos' pass rush

No quarterback is easier to sack than the Lions' Jon Kitna. He was dumped a league-high 63 times last year and has been sacked a league-high 32 times this year. However, the Lions did protect him much better in their past two games, allowing seven combined sacks against the rugged defenses in Tampa Bay and Chicago. The Broncos' pass rush has been inconsistent. Defensive end Elvis Dumervil is among the league leaders with six sacks, but he got two each in three games and none in the other four. The rest of the team has just eight sacks.

## ThePicks



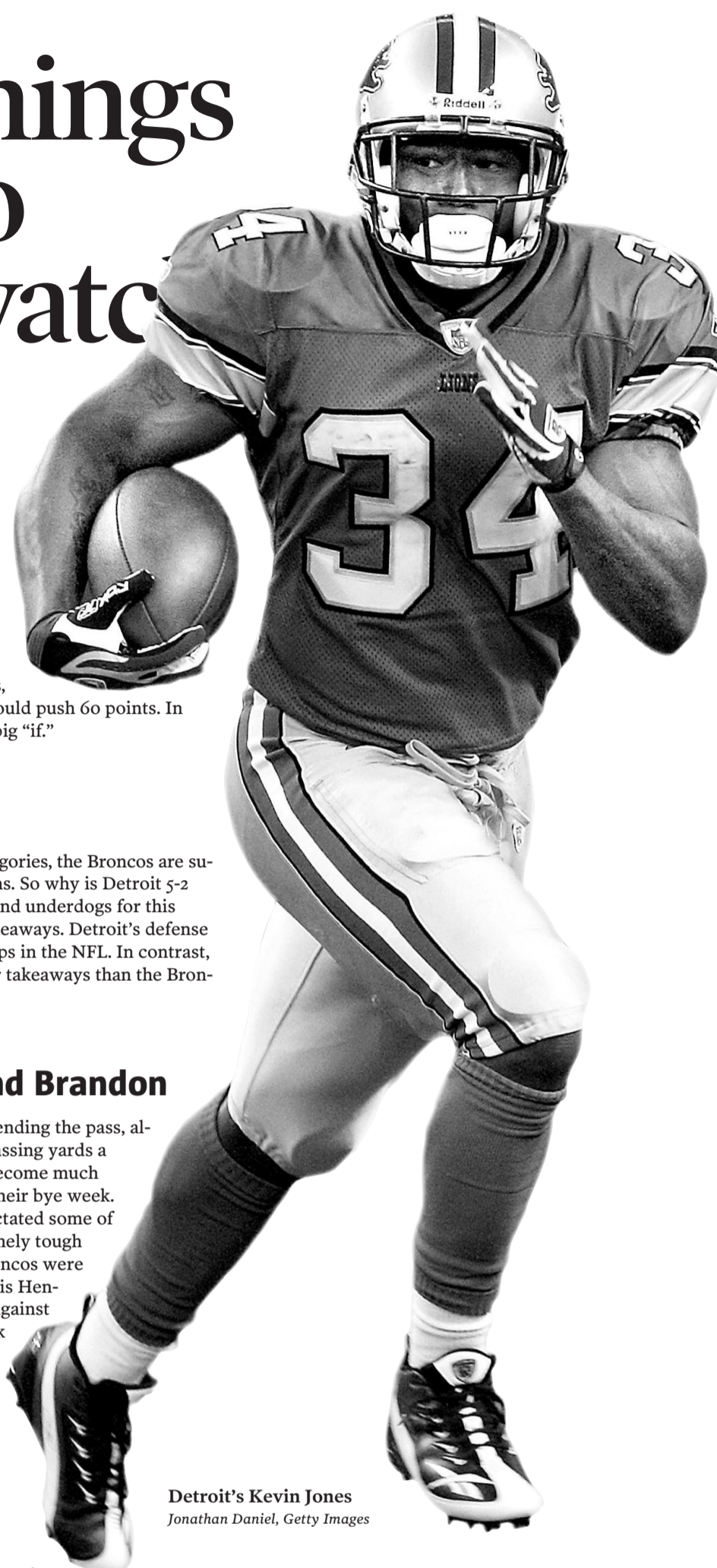
### WEEKLY GUEST PICKER (4-3)

Jim Leyland, Detroit Tigers and former Rockies manager

Leyland guided the Tigers to the World Series a year ago, only to have a six-day layoff and lose to the Cardinals. The Rockies just had an eight-day layoff before the World Series and were swept by the Red Sox. "It didn't help them, but the layoff had nothing to do with us losing the World Series. We lost to a better team. I had not seen the Rockies play much this year, but I watched every one of their games in the playoffs and I was impressed. They're not the Blake Street Bombers anymore. They've got athletes. They've got speed. They've got players. I had never seen anything like it, what they did to get in. But it was more than just getting hot. That's a good team. I give Dan O'Dowd and Clint Hurdle a lot of credit."

### Lions 24, Broncos 20

"I think the Lions are legitimately a good football team. I don't think they're a fluke. I'm a big Shanahan guy. If he got the Broncos to go into Detroit and win, would I be surprised? No, I wouldn't. But I think the Lions are the better team. I don't think they're winning the Super Bowl, but they're better. And they have a good coach (in Rod Marinelli)."



Detroit's Kevin Jones  
Jonathan Daniel, Getty Images

## 5 Kevin Jones goes for 100

The Lions have run the ball much more effectively since Kevin Jones replaced former Bronco Tatum Bell as their lead running back. Sidelined the first two games with a foot injury, Jones rushed for 5.1 yards per carry against Tampa Bay two weeks ago and 10.5 yards last week against the Bears. The Broncos continue to rank last in defending the run. In seven games, they have allowed four 100-yard rushers and two others went for at least 90 yards.

## BRONCOS STARTERS

OFFENSE		
No.	Player	Pos.
15	Brandon Marshall	WR
78	Matt Leipsis	LT
73	Chris Kuper	LG
62	Chris Myers	C
70	Montrae Holland	RG
64	Erik Pears	RT
89	Daniel Graham	TE
6	Jay Cutler	QB
37	Cecil Sapp	FB
20	Travis Henry	TB
14	Brandon Stokley	WR
1	Jason Elam	PK
DEFENSE		
No.	Player	Pos.
60	John Engelberger	LE
95	Sam Adams	LT
79	Marcus Thomas	RT
92	Elvis Dumervil	RE
52	Ian Gold	WLB
55	D.J. Williams	MLB
58	Nate Webster	SLB
24	Champ Bailey	LCB
25	Nick Ferguson	SS
47	John Lynch	FS
32	Dré Bly	RCB
10	Todd Sauerbrun	P

## LIONS STARTERS

OFFENSE		
No.	Player	Pos.
11	Roy Williams	WR
76	Jeff Backus	LT
64	Edwin Mulitalo	LG
51	Dominic Raiola	C
66	Stephen Peterman	RG
72	George Foster	RT
49	Sean McHugh	TE
8	Jon Kitna	QB
40	John Bradley	FB
34	Kevin Jones	TB
81	Calvin Johnson	WR
4	Jason Hanson	PK
DEFENSE		
No.	Player	Pos.
99	DeWayne White	LE
92	Shaun Rogers	NT
78	Corey Redding	UT
98	Kalimba Edwards	RE
50	Ernie Sims	WLB
53	Paris Lenon	MLB
97	Boss Bailey	SLB
25	Fernando Bryant	LCB
26	Kenoy Kennedy	SS
42	Gerald Alexander	FS
31	Stanley Wilson	RCB
2	Nick Harris	P

## BRONCOS LEADERS

	PASSING										
	Att	Com	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	LG	RATE			
Denver	215	141	65.6	1,670	8	8	49	86.0			
Opponents	165	114	69.1	1,408	13	6	821	106.3			
	RUSHING										
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD						
Henry	119	549	4.6	33	1						
Young	36	210	5.8	40	0						
Cutler	19	81	4.3	31	1						
Denver	192	872	4.5	40	3						
Opponents	235	1,162	4.9	74	6						
	RECEIVING										
	No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD						
Marshall	36	513	14.3	49	2						
Stokley	22	319	14.5	34	2						
Walker	19	230	12.1	24	0						
Young	16	142	8.9	24	0						
Graham	13	107	8.2	15	0						
Scheffler	10	115	11.5	26	2						
Denver	141	1,670	11.8	49	8						
Opponents	114	1,408	12.4	82	13						
	INTERCEPTIONS										
	No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD						
Bly	2	0	0.0	0	0						
Denver	6	25	4.2	27	0						
Opponents	8	127	15.9	44	1						
	PUNTING										
	No	Yds	Avg	Net	In20	LG	BK				
Sauerbrun	19	952	50.1	37.9	5	65	0				
Denver	19	952	50.1	37.9	5	65	0				
Opponents	23	992	43.1	37.2	10	61	1				
	SCORING										
	1	2	3	4	OT	TOT					
Denver	3	4	23	19	3	119					
Opponents	35	46	52	44	6	183					

## LIONS LEADERS

	PASSING										
	Att	Com	Pct	Yds	TD	Int	LG	RATE			
Kitna	222	154	69.4	1,748	8	6	91	93.4			
O'Sullivan	24	13	54.2	148	1	2	42	52.1			
Detroit	246	167	67.9	1,896	9	8	91	89.4			
Opponents	269	187	69.5	1,944	13	13	68	86.1			
	RUSHING										
	Att	Yds	Avg	LG	TD						
Jones	62	272	4.4	34	4						
Bell	44	182	4.1	24	1						
Johnson	3	50	16.7	32	1						
Kitna	17	41	2.4	11	0						
Detroit	149	632	4.2	34	6						
Opponents	196	762	3.9	25	7						
	RECEIVING										
	No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD						
Williams	40	524	13.1	91	3						
McDonald	33	368	11.2	32	3						
Furrey	26	328	12.6	49	0						
Johnson	15	273	18.2	39	2						
Bell	14	63	4.5	15	0						
Jones	13	83	6.4	16	0						
Detroit	167	1,896	11.4	91	9						
Opponents	187	1,944	10.4	68	13						
	INTERCEPTIONS										
	No	Yds	Avg	LG	TD						
K. Smith	3	64	21.3	64	1						
Alexander	2	70	35.0	36	0						
Bryant	2	0	0.0	0	0						
Detroit	13	184	14.2	64	1						
Opponents	8	127	15.9	44	1						
	SCORING										
	1	2	3	4	OT	TOT					
Detroit	20	50	20	63	3	156					
Opponents	21	56	46	55	0	178					

## BY THE NUMBERS

	Broncos	Lions
Total offense	354.6 (7)	333.7 (14)
Rush offense	124.6 (11)	90.3 (26)
Pass offense	230.0 (13)	243.4 (7)
Total defense	353.6 (25)	367.1 (28)
Rush defense	166.0 (32)	108.9 (18)
Pass defense	187.6 (6)	258.3 (30)
Turnover margin	-5 (22)	+5 (7)
Points/game	17.0 (27)	22.3 (11)
Opp. points/game	26.1 (28)	25.4 (25)
Punting (gross)	50.1 (2)	44.1 (13)
Punting (net)	42.1 (5)	35.1 (31)

Stats Complete rosters, team leaders. [denverpost.com/broncos](http://denverpost.com/broncos)



**Jim Armstrong (4-3)**  
Lions 27, Broncos 25  
The Performers Formerly Known as Pussycats look like the real deal.



**Mark Kiszla (5-2)**  
Broncos 17, Lions 16  
If Broncos lose, the really, really mad man in the Motor City will be Mike Shanahan, not Ted Nugent.



**Mike Klis (4-3)**  
Broncos 31, Lions 27  
If Broncos protect the ball, they'll expose frauds known as the Lions.



**Woody Paige (5-2)**  
Broncos 17, Lions 9  
Broncos roar.



**Bill Williamson (3-4)**  
Denver 20, Lions 17  
The Broncos are actually improving, even though it might not seem like it.