

IBM Brings Next Generation of AI-Powered Insights to ESPN Fantasy Football Platform

- IBM Granite puts generative AI to work for fantasy football users, offering more detailed reasoning around players' assigned waiver grades and trade grades

- New IBM and Morning Consult survey finds that fantasy football users are turning to AI to enhance digital performance and experience in fantasy leagues



ARMONK, N.Y., Sept. 10, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) and ESPN are unveiling enhancements to the ESPN Fantasy app – powered by [generative AI](#) technologies from [IBM's AI and data platform, watsonx](#) – designed to deliver a more customized and engaging digital experience for more than 12 million fantasy football users. The announcement comes as new research commissioned by IBM and conducted by Morning Consult confirms fantasy football users are increasingly embracing AI to improve their rosters and overall fantasy football experiences.

Now available, the "Top Contributing Factors" within the [Waiver Grade and Trade Grade features](#) offers more detailed reasoning around a player's assigned grades. The information appears as bulleted statements and is generated by IBM's Granite [large language model](#). The grades themselves are personalized to each team and produced by AI models built with IBM watsonx, taking into account large volumes of complex data including player performance, articles written by football experts, and the specific needs of each fantasy owner's roster. Examples of the benefits to fantasy football participants include:

- **Personalized** player grades based on each team's needs
- **Transparent** explanations of AI-generated player grades
- **Predictions** of each player's potential upside and downside

The new and updated features bolster a suite of IBM watsonx-powered tools, including **Trade Analyzer with IBM watsonx** and **Player Insights with IBM watsonx**, all of which transform large volumes of football data into insights that can help ESPN Fantasy Football users make more informed decisions about their lineups.

A new survey¹ from IBM and Morning Consult of 500 fantasy football users in the United States confirms that surveyed fantasy football users are embracing AI-powered solutions to help enhance their lineups and overall league performances. Key

highlights from respondents include:

- Nearly 90% of users regularly engage with at least one AI or AI-related tool.
- 82% confirmed they leverage trade and waiver suggestions to improve their fantasy lineups.
- Of users not yet engaged with the technology, 92% surveyed indicated they would find AI helpful in their fantasy football efforts.

"Millions of people participate in fantasy football on the ESPN Fantasy platform each year, and they are constantly looking for the best information available to complete in and win their leagues. This year's enhancements in the ESPN Fantasy platform put watsonx-powered insights directly in their hands, giving them access to personalized, data-driven insights that help deliver on these expectations," said **Noah Syken VP, Sports and Entertainment Partnerships**. "These same generative AI technologies on watsonx including IBM Granite are also at work for businesses across all sectors, turning complex information into actionable insights that modernize their workflows."

Entering its eighth consecutive year, the collaboration between IBM and ESPN Fantasy Football continues to tap into the latest technologies from watsonx to transform football data into compelling and helpful information for fantasy team owners. This includes [IBM's Granite collection](#) of large language models, as well as [IBM watsonx Code Assistant](#) which provides AI-generated coding recommendations and developer insights.

For more information on watsonx, visit: <https://www.ibm.com/watsonx>.

To play ESPN Fantasy Football, sign up at ESPN.com/FFL or download the ESPN Fantasy App from the App Store and Android stores.

¹ *Based on an online survey conducted in August 2024, among a sample of 500 Fantasy Football Users Ages 18 to 45 in the US.*




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