

THE LAST DANCE?

Green Bay to
rest before 1st
playoff game

PAGE 2



Green Bay Packers coach Matt LaFleur, right, talks with quarterback Aaron Rodgers, center, as receiver Davante Adams looks on during the team's loss to the Detroit Lions on Jan. 9 in Detroit. GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

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Green Bay Packers offensive players take a break from the action during the team's loss to the Detroit Lions on Jan. 9 in Detroit. The futures of several key players within the Packers organization are in question, making a Super Bowl run this year that much more important.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

Green Bay Packers eye deep postseason run before offseason of uncertainty

Way back in September, the Green Bay Packers began their quest to bring the Lombardi Trophy back to Green Bay.



MORGAN RODE

Here we are, several months later, and the Packers are closing in on their big goal, despite the future still being very much up in the air. That makes this playoff run that much more intriguing, and one fans

Green Bay started the season knowing this could be the last time that several core players might be on the roster, but it didn't stop the organization from dreaming big.

Here we are, several months later, and the Packers are closing in on their big goal, despite the future still being very much up in the air. That makes this playoff run that much more intriguing, and one fans

need to soak up.

The biggest question facing the Packers and their future is whether quarterback Aaron Rodgers will be the one leading the team. He came into the season not thrilled with how the organization had treated him during his Hall of Fame career, and many people expected this year to be No. 12's final one in Green Bay.

The relationship between Rodgers, the likely soon-to-be MVP for a second straight season, and the front office has improved by all accounts, and it seems much more likely that he'll keep wearing the green and gold uniform in the future than it did back in September.

Still, the team is going to have to make several hard decisions in order to get under the salary cap, and it's possible trading or moving on from

Rodgers is the move needed to keep most of the rest of the team in place and competitive for years to come. It's also a possibility that Rodgers asks to be traded.

Another big piece to the puzzle of the Packers' future is wide receiver Davante Adams — who, like Rodgers, had another big season.

Adams, who set new team single season records for receptions and receiving yards, is a free agent after the season. It's been reported that the team and Adams haven't had any contract extension talks since July, and that the team will likely place the franchise tag on Adams for the 2022 season and then try and work on a longer extension.

Of course, if Green Bay ends up moving on from No. 12 and 17, the offense and team will likely experience

a far different season than it did this go 'round.

After those two players' futures are figured out, then the attention will turn to the team's huge list of free agents.

Among the list of unrestricted free agents the team must make decisions on are: cornerbacks Rasul Douglas, Kevin King and Chandon Sullivan, tight end Robert Tonyan, inside linebacker De'Vondre Campbell, offensive lineman Lucas Patrick and wide receiver Marquez Valdes-Scantling.

Then throw in restricted free agent receiver Allen Lazard and offensive lineman Yosh Nijman and exclusive restricted free agent inside linebacker Krys Barnes, among others, and you realize the tall task that awaits the Packers' front office.

Like it did last offseason, the Pack-

ers might also have to restructure or move on from the contracts of veteran players, like outside linebackers Za'Darius Smith and Preston Smith, offensive lineman David Bakhtiari, defensive lineman Kenny Clark, receiver Randall Cobb, kicker Mason Crosby and safeties Adrian Amos and Darnell Savage.

The more you dig into things, the more you realize that running it back with this particular roster — what the Pack essentially attempted this season — is going to be practically impossible.

That means "The Last Dance" that Rodgers and Adams mentioned before the season is going to be the case, even if those two are back in Green Bay next season.

While the Packers' title aspirations and outlook won't be completely decimated after the season, it's likely to take a hit, which puts a little extra pressure on the team in this postseason run.

By earning the NFC's top seed with a 13-4 record, the Packers boosted their Super Bowl hopes a bit.

Now their goal is to avoid a repeat of last year, when the team also had the No. 1 seed but fell to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the NFC Championship Game — a game that's tripped the Packers up four times since their last

Super Bowl win in the 2010-11 season.

Those two teams appear destined for a rematch in this year's conference championship, but first the Packers will have to take care of business in the Divisional Round.

Should the Eagles shock the world and pull off an upset win over the Buccaneers, they would travel to Green Bay for the Divisional Round game. If they don't then there's three teams that the Packers could face.

The first would be the San Francisco 49ers, a team that Green Bay defeated early in the season but that could pose some big problems with its stellar running game. If the 49ers lose to the Dallas Cowboys, then the winner of the Arizona Cardinals and Los Angeles Rams game will head to Lambeau Field.

Green Bay also beat those two teams during the regular season. In fact, of the Packers' losses this season, only one of those teams is in the playoffs — the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC bracket.

The road to the Super Bowl definitely won't be a cakewalk, but it's one that Packers' fans need to try and enjoy as best they can with the team's future so up in the air.

Morgan Rode is the sports editor for NEW Media. Readers can contact him at sports@newmedia-wi.com.



Green Bay Packers quarterback Jordan Love (10) makes a call at the line of scrimmage during the team's game against the Detroit Lions on Jan. 9 in Detroit. With Aaron Rodgers' future in Green Bay up in the air, Love could be the one behind center next season for the Packers. GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

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PACKERS ROSTER

Active

#	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	AGE	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Mason Crosby	K	6-1	207	37	15	Colorado
7	Corey Bojorquez	P	6-0	217	25	4	New Mexico
8	Amari Rodgers	WR	5-9	212	22	R	Clemson
10	Jordan Love	QB	6-4	219	23	2	Utah State
12	Aaron Rodgers	QB	6-2	225	38	17	California
13	Allen Lazard	WR	6-5	227	26	3	Iowa State
17	Davante Adams	WR	6-1	215	29	8	Fresno State
19	Equanimeous St. Brown	WR	6-5	214	25	4	Notre Dame
20	Kevin King	CB	6-3	200	26	5	Washington
21	Eric Stokes	CB	6-0	194	22	R	Georgia
22	Shemar Jean-Charles	CB	5-10	184	23	R	Appalachian State
23	Jaire Alexander	CB	5-10	196	24	4	Louisville
24	Isaac Yiadom	CB	6-1	190	25	4	Boston College
26	Darnell Savage	S	5-11	198	24	3	Maryland
27	Patrick Taylor	RB	6-2	217	23	1	Memphis
28	AJ Dillon	RB	6-0	247	23	2	Boston College
29	Rasul Douglas	CB	6-2	209	26	5	West Virginia
30	Shawn Davis	S	5-11	202	24	R	Florida
31	Adrian Amos	S	6-0	214	28	7	Penn State
33	Aaron Jones	RB	5-9	208	27	5	Texas-El Paso
36	Vernon Scott	S	6-2	202	24	2	TCU
39	Chandon Sullivan	CB	5-11	189	25	4	Georgia State
40	Tipa Galeai	LB	6-5	229	24	1	Utah State
41	Henry Black	S	6-0	204	25	2	Baylor
42	Oren Burks	LB	6-3	233	26	4	Vanderbilt
46	Steven Wirtel	LS	6-4	228	24	1	Iowa State
49	Dominique Dafney	TE	6-2	243	24	1	Indiana State
51	Krys Barnes	LB	6-2	229	23	2	UCLA
52	Rashan Gary	LB	6-5	277	24	3	Michigan
53	Jonathan Garvin	LB	6-4	257	22	2	Miami
58	Isaiah McDuffie	LB	6-1	227	22	R	Boston College
59	De'Vondre Campbell	LB	6-3	232	28	6	Minnesota
62	Lucas Patrick	G	6-3	313	28	5	Duke
64	Ben Braden	G	6-6	329	27	2	Michigan
67	Jake Hanson	C	6-4	296	24	1	Oregon
69	David Bakhtiari	T	6-4	310	30	9	Colorado
70	Royce Newman	T/G	6-5	310	24	R	Mississippi
71	Josh Myers	C/G	6-5	310	23	R	Ohio State
73	Yosh Nijman	T	6-7	314	26	2	Virginia Tech
76	Jon Runyan	G	6-4	307	24	2	Michigan
79	Dennis Kelly	T	6-8	321	31	9	Purdue
81	Josiah Deguara	TE	6-2	238	24	2	Cincinnati
83	Marquez Valdes-Scantling	WR	6-4	206	27	4	South Florida
84	Tyler Davis	TE	6-4	252	24	2	Georgia Tech
88	Juwann Winfree	WR	6-1	210	25	2	Colorado
89	Marcedes Lewis	TE	6-6	267	37	16	UCLA
90	Jack Heflin	DL	6-3	304	23	R	Iowa
91	Preston Smith	LB	6-5	265	29	7	Mississippi State
93	T.J. Slaton	DL	6-4	330	24	R	Florida
94	Dean Lowry	DL	6-6	296	27	6	Northwestern
95	Tyler Lancaster	DL	6-3	313	27	4	Northwestern
96	Kingsley Keke	DL	6-3	288	25	3	Texas A&M
97	Kenny Clark	DL	6-3	314	26	6	UCLA

Reserve/Injured

18	Randall Cobb	WR	5-10	195	31	11	Kentucky
32	Kylin Hill	RB	5-10	214	23	R	Mississippi State
44	Ty Summers	LB	6-1	241	26	3	TCU
47	Chauncey Rivers	LB	6-2	259	24	1	Mississippi State
50	Whitney Mercilus	LB	6-4	261	31	10	Illinois
55	Za'Darius Smith	LB	6-4	272	29	7	Kentucky
56	Randy Ramsey	LB	6-3	238	26	2	Arkansas
74	Elgton Jenkins	G	6-5	311	26	3	Mississippi State
85	Robert Tonyan	TE	6-5	240	27	4	Indiana State
86	Malik Taylor	WR	6-1	220	26	2	Ferris State

Practice Squad

6	Kurt Benkert	QB	6-3	218	26	2	Virginia
11	JJ Molson	K	5-11	180	24	1	UCLA
16	Chris Blair	WR	6-2	198	24	R	Alcorn State
34	Kerrith Whyte	RB	5-10	204	25	2	Florida Atlantic
38	Innis Gaines	S	6-1	202	23	R	TCU
43	Peter Kalambayi	LB	6-3	252	26	R	Stanford
45	Bronson Kufusi	TE	6-6	270	30	3	Brigham Young
48	Kabion Ento	CB	6-1	187	26	2	Colorado
54	La'Darius Hamilton	LB	6-2	261	23	1	North Texas
57	Ray Wilborn	LB	6-3	230	24	1	Ball State
65	Michal Menet	C	6-4	301	24	R	Penn State
72	Adrian Ealy	T	6-4	321	22	R	Oklahoma
78	Cole Van Lanen	T/G	6-4	305	23	R	Wisconsin
80	Josh Malone	WR	6-3	208	25	3	Tennessee
98	Abdullah Anderson	DL	6-3	303	25	2	Bucknell
99	R.J. McIntosh	DL	6-5	286	25	4	Miami

Practice squad reserve/COVID-19

82	David Moore	WR	6-0	219	26	5	East Central
77	Billy Turner	G/T	6-5	310	30	8	North Dakota State

PACKERS DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE



WR
Davante Adams
Equanimeous St. Brown



TE
Josiah Deguara
Tyler Davis



RT
Billy Turner
Dennis Kelly



RG
Lucas Patrick
Royce Newman



C
Josh Myers
Lucas Patrick



LG
Jon Runyan
Jake Hanson



LT
David Bakhtiari
Yosh Nijman



TE
Marcedes Lewis
Dominique Dafney

RB
Aaron Jones
A.J. Dillon



QB
Aaron Rodgers
Jordan Love



FYI

Rosters and depth charts are accurate as of Jan. 10, 12:30 p.m.

PACKERS SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Result
Sept. 12	at New Orleans	Loss 38-3
Sept. 20	vs. Detroit	Win 35-17
Sept. 26	at San Francisco	Win 30-28
Oct. 3	vs. Pittsburgh	Win 27-17
Oct. 10	at Cincinnati	Win 25-22
Oct. 17	at Chicago	Win 24-14
Oct. 24	vs. Washington	Win 24-10
Oct. 28	at Arizona	Win 24-21
Nov. 7	at Kansas City	Loss 13-7
Nov. 14	vs. Seattle	Win 17-0
Nov. 21	at Minnesota	Loss 34-31
Nov. 28	vs. L.A. Rams	Win 36-28
BYE WEEK		
Dec. 12	vs. Chicago	Win 45-30
Dec. 19	at Baltimore	Win 31-30
Dec. 25	vs. Cleveland	Win 24-22
Jan. 2	vs. Minnesota	Win 37-10
Jan. 9	at Detroit	Loss 37-30
Jan. 22/23	vs. TBD (Divisional Round)	

DEFENSE



CB
Eric Stokes
Kevin King



DE
Dean Lowry
Tyler Lancaster



NT
Kenny Clark
T.J. Slaton



DE
Kingsley Keke
Jack Heflin



CB
Rasul Douglas
Chandon Sullivan



OLB
Preston Smith
Tipa Galeai



ILB
Krys Barnes
Oren Burks



ILB
De'Vondre Campbell
Isaiah McDuffie



OLB
Rashan Gary
Jonathan Garvin



S
Adrian Amos
Vernon Scott



S
Darnell Savage
Henry Black

DRAFT ORDER

Team	Record
1. Jacksonville Jaguars	3-14-0
2. Detroit Lions	3-13-1
3. Houston Texans	4-13-0
4. New York Jets	4-13-0
5. New York Giants	4-13-0
6. Carolina Panthers	5-12-0
7. New York Giants (from CHI)	6-11-0
8. Atlanta Falcons	7-10-0
9. Denver Broncos	7-10-0
10. New York Jets (from SEA)	7-10-0
11. Washington Football Team	7-10-0
12. Minnesota Vikings	8-9-0
13. Cleveland Browns	8-9-0
14. Baltimore Ravens	8-9-0
15. Philadelphia Eagles (from MIA)	9-8-0
16. Philadelphia Eagles (from IND)	9-8-0
17. Los Angeles Chargers	9-8-0
18. New Orleans Saints	9-8-0

FYI

Clubs not participating in the playoffs select in the first through 18th positions in all rounds, according to the reverse order of their standing.



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PLAYOFF
SCHEDULE

Saturday's Games

Las Vegas at Cincinnati, 3:35 p.m.
New England at Buffalo, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday's Games

Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, noon
San Francisco at Dallas, 3:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Kansas City, 7:15 p.m.

Monday's Game

Arizona at L.A. Rams, 7:15 p.m.

Teams on bye: Green Bay, Tennessee

Divisional Round

Jan. 22 Games

TBD vs. TBD, 3:30 p.m.
TBD vs. TBD, 7:15 p.m.

Jan. 23 Games

TBD vs. TBD, 2 p.m.
TBD vs. TBD, 5:30 p.m.

FINAL
STANDINGS

NFC East				AFC East			
Team	W	L	T	Team	W	L	T
Dallas	12	5	0	Buffalo	11	6	0
Philadelphia	9	8	0	New England	10	7	0
Washington	7	10	0	Miami	9	8	0
N.Y. Giants	4	13	0	N.Y. Jets	4	13	0
North				North			
Team	W	L	T	Team	W	L	T
Green Bay	13	4	0	Cincinnati	10	7	0
Minnesota	8	9	0	Pittsburgh	9	7	1
Chicago	6	11	0	Cleveland	8	9	0
Detroit	3	13	1	Baltimore	8	9	0
South				South			
Team	W	L	T	Team	W	L	T
Tampa Bay	13	4	0	Tennessee	12	5	0
New Orleans	9	8	0	Indianapolis	9	8	0
Atlanta	7	10	0	Houston	4	13	0
Carolina	5	12	0	Jacksonville	3	14	0
West				West			
Team	W	L	T	Team	W	L	T
L.A. Rams	12	5	0	Kansas City	12	5	0
Arizona	11	6	0	Las Vegas	10	7	0
San Francisco	10	7	0	L.A. Chargers	9	8	0
Seattle	7	10	0	Denver	7	10	0

NFC PLAYOFF PREVIEW

By BILL HUBER
Correspondent

The Green Bay Packers are the No. 1 seed in the NFC playoffs with an NFL-best 13-4 record. As they embark yet again on their elusive quest for a fifth Super Bowl championship and 14th NFL title, here is a look at the seven-team NFC playoff field:

No. 1: Green Bay Packers (13-4)

Points scored: 26.5 (ninth). Points against: 21.8 (14th).

Record vs. playoff teams: 5-1.

Why they'll win the Super Bowl: The Rodgers-led offense is on a roll. Over the last seven games, they were second in the NFL in scoring. A really good unit is about to get even better.

Former All-Pro left tackle David Bakhtiari is back, receiver Randall Cobb is coming back and former Pro Bowl running back Aaron Jones should be rejuvenated after getting week 18 off to rest his ailing knee.

The Packers won't beat themselves. They take care of the football (league-low 13 giveaways, even after the backups had three against Detroit) and they follow the rules (league-low 69 penalties).

Two things are critical in winning a Super Bowl: the play of the quarterback and having a relatively healthy roster. With Rodgers, the Packers have the presumptive MVP.

With the return of Bakhtiari and the potential returns of Jaire Alexander and Za'Darius Smith, the Packers suddenly could get three Pro Bowl-caliber players added to the lineup.

No. 2: Tampa Bay Buccaneers (13-4)

Points scored: 30.1 (second). Points against: 20.8 (fifth).

Record vs. playoff teams: 4-1.

Why they could beat the Packers:



Green Bay Packers running back A.J. Dillon runs with the ball during the team's game against the Detroit Lions on Jan. 9 in Detroit. After going 13-4 in the regular season, the Packers have the No. 1 seed and a bye for the first week of the postseason.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

We could wrap this section up by simply saying "Tom Brady" and moving on. Brady is the greatest quarterback in NFL history. He's won a staggering seven Super Bowls — including last year, when he led the Buccaneers into Lambeau Field and beat the Packers in the NFC Championship Game.

The Packers were the only team in the NFL to go undefeated at home this season, but the Bucs won't be fazed one bit if they make a return visit.

The 44-year-old Brady remains a marvel. He led the NFL with 5,316 passing yards and 41 touchdowns. The offense isn't as good as last year with standout receiver Chris Godwin out with a torn ACL. He caught five passes for 110 yards in last year's title game and led the Bucs with 98 catches for 1,110 yards this season.

But towering Mike Evans (14 touchdowns) and Hall of Fame-bound tight end Rob Gronkowski are good enough

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to carry the passing game, and the offensive line features three Pro Bowlers.

Like the Packers, the Bucs are getting healthier. Do-it-all running back Leonard Fournette and starting outside linebackers Shaquil Barrett and Jason Pierre-Paul are expected back this week. Without Bakhtiari, Barrett and Pierre-Paul combined for five sacks in last year's title game. That defense returns just about intact.

A front seven that includes Vita Vea and Ndamukong Suh on the line and Lavonte David and Devin White at linebacker is as good as it gets.

No. 3: Dallas Cowboys (12-5)

Points scored: 31.2 (first). Points against: 21.7 (seventh).

Record vs. playoff teams: 3-4.

Why they could beat the Packers: Mike McCarthy's team might be the most dangerous team in the 14-team field. This is a group filled with star players capable of making a game-changing play on any snap.

Showing their power, their plus-10.1 scoring differential was tops in the NFC and their plus-14 in turnovers paced the NFL.

In a sense, this team is a carbon copy of McCarthy's best teams in Green Bay. Score, force a turnover, score again and step on the gas. The Cowboys are an offensive powerhouse. They led the NFL in scoring and yards behind quarterback Dak Prescott, who set career highs for completion percentage (68.8) and touchdowns (37).

With receivers CeeDee Lamb, Amari Cooper and Cedric Wilson, plus tight end Dalton Schultz, he's got weapons galore and doesn't play favorites. Running back Ezekiel Elliott isn't the menace he was a few years ago, but he and Tony Pollard combined for 1,721 rushing yards and 86 receptions.

A defense that ranked second on third down finished strong. The rookie duo of linebacker Micah Parsons and cornerback Trevon Diggs are franchise-changing players. Parsons not only had 84 tackles but finished sixth in the NFL with 13 sacks, fourth with 30 quarterback hits and added three forced fumbles.

Diggs led the NFL with 11 interceptions. Bakhtiari vs. Parsons and Davante Adams vs. Diggs would be made-for-TV gold.

No. 4: Los Angeles Rams (12-5)

Points scored: 27.1 (eighth). Points against: 21.9 (15th).

Record vs. playoff teams: 2-5.

Why they could beat the Packers: The Rams are hard to figure. With the high-profile additions of Matthew Staf-

ford, Von Miller and Odell Beckham, they've got a roster built to win a Super Bowl.

After three consecutive midseason losses to the Titans, 49ers and Packers – all playoff teams – they recovered to win five straight. But with a chance to secure the No. 2 seed, the Rams lost at home to the 49ers on Sunday.

The Rams will go as far as Stafford can take them. Acquired from the Lions during the offseason, he finished sixth in passer rating (102.9), third in yards (4,886) and second in touchdowns (41). He also threw eight interceptions in his final three games after tossing just 10 in the first 14. That's not going to cut it in the playoffs.

Receiver Cooper Kupp had a superb season with 145 receptions for 1,947 yards and 16 touchdowns. In eight games, Beckham added 27 receptions for 305 yards and five touchdowns.

The potential return of running back Cam Akers from a torn Achilles could provide a lift.

Defensively, Aaron Donald is a generational talent on the line. Despite a steady stream of double teams, he had 12½ sacks and four forced fumbles. Outside linebackers Leonard Floyd and Miller combined for 14½ sacks.

Even while rarely tested, premier cornerback Jalen Ramsey had four interceptions, 16 passes defended and nine tackles for losses.

No. 5: Arizona Cardinals (11-6)

Points scored: 26.4 (11th). Points against: 21.5 (ninth).

Record vs. playoff teams: 5-2.

Why they could beat the Packers: Which Cardinals team will show up for the playoffs? Will it be the one that started 7-0, including a signature victory at the Rams, then won at Dallas in week 17? Or will it be the one that dropped four of its last five entering the playoffs? Will it be the team that went 8-1 on the road? Or will it be the club that got crushed at Detroit?

Young quarterback Kyler Murray is capable of winning a game with his arm as well as his legs. That's a dangerous combination in a do-or-die scenario. He finished eighth in passer rating (100.5) and second in completion percentage (69.2). While he didn't run with the ball as much this year, his 6.2-yard average and 11 touchdowns in 2020 serve as a reminder of what he brings to the party.

With James Conner (15 touchdowns) and Chase Edmonds (5.1 average), the Cardinals can run the ball against anyone. With receivers DeAndre Hopkins, Christian Kirk and A.J. Green and tight end Zach Ertz, Murray's got some top-flight targets. Hopkins, who caught 115 passes

last season, is a name to watch as the playoffs begin. He missed the last four games with a knee injury, and his return for the playoffs is in doubt.

The defense is led by outside linebackers Chandler Jones and Markus Golden, who combined for 21½ sacks and 10 forced fumbles. They finished plus-12 in turnovers.

No. 6: San Francisco 49ers (10-7)

Points scored: 25.1 (13th). Points against: 21.5 (12th).

Record vs. playoff teams: 4-4.

Why they could beat the Packers: The 49ers went 4-1 down the stretch, including an upset at the Rams in week 18.

Quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo had a solid season with a 68.3% completion rate and 98.8 passer rating. He's got a lot of talent around him with receivers Deebo Samuel and Brandon Aiyuk and tight end George Kittle. While Kittle is an established star and arguably the best tight end in the game, Samuel is one of the league's emerging studs. Not only did he catch 77 passes for 1,405 yards and six touchdowns, but he carried 59 times for 365 yards and eight touchdowns.

In 12 games, Elijah Mitchell rushed for 963 yards. With Bakhtiari missing most of the season, Trent Williams has taken over as the best left tackle

in the NFL.

The defense might not be of recent vintage, but the Niners ranked third in yards allowed and third in sack percentage. Nick Bosa ranked fourth with 15½ sacks and third with 32 quarterback hits. His best days are long behind him, but cornerback Josh Norman forced a whopping seven fumbles.

No. 7: Philadelphia Eagles (9-8)

Points scored: 26.1 (12th). Points against: 22.6 (18th).

Record vs. playoff teams: 0-6.

Why they could beat the Packers: The Eagles can run the football. They finished first with 159.7 rushing yards per game and fourth with 4.94 yards per carry. Quarterback Jalen Hurts (784 yards, 5.6 average, 10 touchdowns) and running back Miles Sanders (754 yards, 5.5 average) are big-time threats to move the chains and keep the opposing offense chilling on the bench.

The Eagles can also stop other teams from running the football, ranking sixth with 4 yards allowed per carry behind linebackers Alex Singleton and T.J. Edwards. Darius Slay gives the Eagles a premier cornerback.

Philly is a flawed team in most every other sense – it lost to the woeful Giants and just got crushed 51-26 by Dallas – but it did go 6-3 on the road.



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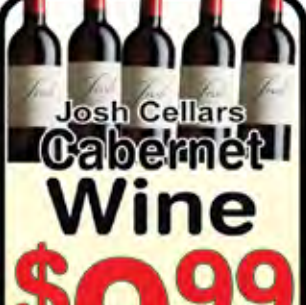
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Philadelphia @ Tampa Bay
San Francisco @ Dallas

Tie Breaker Game: Arizona @ LA Rams

Weekly Standings

	Weekly Record	Overall Record
God's Purpose.....	9-7	181-89-1
Idell Johnston, State Farm Insurance Agent.....	9-7	172-98-1
Tim Murphy.....	8-8	172-98-1
Morgan Rode.....	9-7	171-99-1
Shawano Place Assisted Living.....	11-5	171-99-1
Dennis Brei.....	9-7	169-101-1
Shawano Seasons Restaurant.....	8-8	169-101-1
Tower Clock Eye Center.....	8-8	169-101-1
22 Shell.....	7-9	167-103-1

Weekly Standings

	Weekly Record	Overall Record
Buss Automotive.....	8-8	167-103-1
Smokey Joe's.....	8-8	166-104-1
B & C Auto Recycling.....	7-9	165-105-1
P & D Sales.....	9-7	165-105-1
Hawkeye Hearth & Home.....	8-8	163-107-1
Gehm's Club 117.....	7-9	159-111-1
Iverson's Piggly Wiggly.....	8-8	154-116-1
Senn Insurance.....	10-6	149-121-1
Cirinnity/Wittenberg Telephone.....	6-10	148-122-1



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Shawano Place Assisted Living



This Week's Picks:

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Buffalo
Las Vegas
Tampa Bay
San Francisco

Morgan Rode
Shawano
Leader

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score : Arizona 30 @ LA Rams 31



This Week's Picks:

Kansas City
Buffalo
Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Tim Murphy
Shawano
Leader

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 34 @ LA Rams 37



This Week's Picks:

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Tampa Bay
Dallas

Dennis Brei
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Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 20 @ LA Rams 24

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This Week's Picks:

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Buffalo
Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
San Francisco

Toby
B&C Auto
Recycling

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 24 @ LA Rams 31



This Week's Picks:

Kansas City
New England
Las Vegas
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Iverson's Staff
Iverson's
Piggly Wiggly

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 14 @ LA Rams 32



This Week's Picks:

Kansas City
Buffalo
Las Vegas
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Amber
Smokey Joe's
& JDoggs

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 22 @ LA Rams 17



This Week's Picks:

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Buffalo
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Tampa Bay
San Francisco

Robert Buss
Buss
Automotive

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 32 @ LA Rams 28



This Week's Picks:

Kansas City
Buffalo
Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
Dallas

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& Service

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 33 @ LA Rams 27



This Week's Picks:

Kansas City
Buffalo
Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Sophie
Idell Johnston
State Farm Agent

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 32 @ LA Rams 35



This Week's Picks:

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Buffalo
Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Scott Nyman
Cirinity

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 28 @ LA Rams 31



This Week's Picks:

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Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
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Patty Lasher
Shawano Seasons
Restaurant

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 31 @ LA Rams 28



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Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 23 @ LA Rams 20



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Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 28 @ LA Rams 21



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Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 24 @ LA Rams 27



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Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 24 @ La Rams 27



This Week's Picks:

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Buffalo
Cincinnati
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Chris
God's Purpose
Apparel

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 24 @ LA Rams 27



This Week's Picks:

Pittsburgh
Buffalo
Las Vegas
Tampa Bay
San Francisco

Aaron
Shawano
Place

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 21 @ LA Rams 27



This Week's Picks:

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Las Vegas
Tampa Bay
Dallas

Dale
Hawkeye
Hearth & Home

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Arizona 24 @ LA Rams 28

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Monday, September 20	7:15 pm	at New York Giants	ESPN
Sunday, September 26	1:25 pm	at San Francisco 49ers	NBC
OCTOBER			
Sunday, October 3	1:25 pm	Pittsburgh Steelers (AFC)	CBS
Sunday, October 10	NOON	at Cincinnati Bengals	FOX
Sunday, October 17	NOON	at Chicago Bears	FOX
Sunday, October 24	NOON	WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM	FOX
Thursday, October 28	7:25 pm	at Arizona Cardinals	ESPN
NOVEMBER			
Sunday, November 7	1:25 pm	at Kansas City Chiefs	FOX
Sunday, November 14	1:25 pm	at Seattle Seahawks	CBS
Sunday, November 21	NOON	at Minnesota Vikings	FOX
Sunday, November 28	1:25 pm	at Houston Texans (AFC)	FOX
DECEMBER			
BYE WEEK			
Sunday, December 12	1:25 pm	at Cleveland Browns	AFC
Sunday, December 19	NOON	at Baltimore Ravens	FOX
Saturday, December 25	1:00 pm	at Cleveland Browns	FOX
JANUARY			
Sunday, January 3	1:25 pm	at Minnesota Vikings	NBC
Sunday, January 10	NOON	at New York Giants	FOX

Aaron Rodgers closes in on 4th MVP award

QB focused on winning Super Bowl

By **BILL HUBER**
Correspondent

When Aaron Rodgers won his first MVP in 2011, it was the culmination of a professional journey that started with his unforgettable plunge deep into the first round of the 2005 draft to his rise to the summit of the NFL.

When Rodgers won his second MVP in 2014, it put his stamp on Hall of Fame credentials.

When Rodgers won his third MVP in 2020, it marked his return to the pinnacle of the NFL after a couple so-so seasons.

What of Rodgers' potential fourth MVP?

"I don't think you can be the biggest jerk in the league and punish your team and your organization and your fan base the way he did and be the Most Valuable Player," MVP voter and Pro Football Weekly editor Hub Arkush said on Chicago radio station 670 AM. "I think he's a bad guy, and I don't think a bad guy can be the most valuable guy at the same time."

A "jerk" to some but beloved by his teammates, Rodgers has turned in another phenomenal season. After throwing two interceptions in the week one loss against New Orleans, Rodgers threw 37 touchdowns vs. two interceptions in his final 15 games. He ended the season ranked No. 1 in the league in passer rating, touchdown percentage and interception percentage, a feat accomplished in the Super Bowl era only Rodgers last season, Tom Brady in 2010, Steve Young in 1992 and Ken Anderson in 1981.

He threw at least two touchdowns with zero interceptions in his last seven games, the second-longest streak in NFL history. It was his 13th game with those credentials this season, an NFL record. In NFL history, there have been four seasons of at least 11 games of two touchdowns and zero picks: Rodgers in 2021, Rodgers in 2020, Rodgers in 2014 and Brady in 2010.

It's all absurd as Rodgers appears poised to win his fourth MVP exactly one decade after winning his first.

Physically, he still throws the ball as well as anyone in the NFL. Mentally, he's leaps-and-bounds better than he was in 2011 through more than 10,000 additional game reps and countless numbers of practices and film sessions.

"The physical part is an interesting



Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers smiles during the team's final regular season game against the Detroit Lions on Jan. 9 in Detroit. Rodgers is the favorite to win this year's MVP award, his fourth, but says he is more focused on winning the Super Bowl.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

one because, obviously, I don't run as much as I used to — less scrambles, less scramble drills, less touchdowns outside the pocket, I would assume, based on that year," Rodgers said last week. "I think the older you get, the smarter you have to get in a number of different areas. Obviously, the experience gives you a lot of banked memories you can draw from."

Physically, Rodgers has adapted to stay ahead of Father Time. Former coach Mike McCarthy used to say that a quarterback is done when his legs are shot. That stuck with Rodgers.

"Just from a physical standpoint, I probably weighed between 225 and 230 the majority of the season in 2011, and I've been between 215 and 220 in the majority of this season, so that 10 pounds has made a big difference for me," he said.

"It's allowed me to still move in the pocket, to still keep legs. I rededicated myself in the weight room to squats, which has been really important. I

haven't had the knee problems that I even had 10 years ago, which has been great. Just playing smarter, smarter with diet and body maintenance off the field has been important to still play at a high level. But the greatest asset is the experience and the banked memories and just the ability to play on instincts so often on game day."

Here's a comparison of Rodgers' MVP seasons:

- 2014 (fourth-best of his MVP seasons): Rodgers' passer rating of 112.2 trailed only Dallas' Tony Romo and ranks 17th in NFL history. He threw 38 touchdowns vs. only five interceptions as the Packers went 7-1 after getting crushed at New Orleans. Jordy Nelson caught 98 passes for a franchise-record 1,519 yards and 13 touchdowns, Randall Cobb had his best season with 91 receptions for 1,287 yards and 12 touchdowns and a rookie named Davante Adams chipped in 38 catches for 446 yards and three scores.

- 2021 (third): Rodgers' passer

rating of 111.9 led the NFL and ranks 20th in NFL history. The Packers once again won 13 games despite All-Pro left tackle David Bakhtiari missing the first 16 games and the losses of Pro Bowl left guard Elgton Jenkins and rising tight end Robert Tonyan to torn ACLs. The passing game revolved almost wholly around Adams, whose 123 receptions were almost as many as the next three players on the team combined. Adams had 1,040 more receiving yards than anyone else, as well.

- 2011 (second): Rodgers set the NFL record with a passer rating of 122.5, a mark that has held up for a decade. He threw 45 touchdowns vs. six interceptions as the Packers scored the second-most points in NFL history and finished 15-1. It was a star-studded group of pass catchers. Led by Nelson's 68 receptions for 1,263 yards and 15 touchdowns, the Packers had five players with at least 37 receptions and six touchdowns (receivers Nelson, Greg Jennings, James Jones and Donald Driver and tight end Jermichael Finley). It was a group so good that rookie Cobb finished just seventh in catches.

- 2020 (first): Rodgers had arguably the best quarterbacking season in football history. His passer rating of 121.5 led the NFL and is the second-best in the NFL history. Rodgers joined one of his mentors, Steve Young, as the only quarterback since 1940 to lead the NFL in passer rating, touchdown percentage, interception percentage and completion percentage in the same season.

Rodgers threw 48 touchdowns vs. five interceptions in 2020 despite having only one consistently reliable receiving threat, Adams, who had more than twice as many receptions and almost twice as many receiving yards as anyone else on the roster. With Rodgers' passer rating rising by 26.1 points compared to 2019, the Packers averaged 8.3 more points per game.

Of course, the Packers didn't win the Super Bowl after each of Rodgers' first three MVP seasons. In fact, no NFL MVP has won a Super Bowl since the Rams' Kurt Warner in 1999. Entering the playoffs, Rodgers knows what's at stake. In the locker room after the loss at Detroit, he reminded his teammates.

"The fact is it's win or go home at this point," Rodgers said after the game. "We have a little over a month left in the season. Let's make sure we're thinking about the right things, doing the right things, focused on the end goal."

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Packers lose to Lions in regular season finale

Rodgers throws 2 TDs in 1st half

By LARRY LAGE
The Associated Press

Aaron Rodgers got off the field unscathed, giving Green Bay a win of sorts in a game it lost on the scoreboard.

Rodgers threw two touchdown passes in the first half and sat out the second half with nothing at stake as the Detroit Lions beat the top-seeded Packers 37-30 on Jan. 9 in Detroit.

"The win obviously would be nice, but the most important thing was to get out there," Rodgers said.

Backup Jordan Love threw two late interceptions, sealing a defeat that didn't affect Green Bay's play-off positioning.

The NFC North champion Packers (13-4) rolled into the Motor City after already clinching the conference's No. 1 seed and its only first-round bye.

"I might have a better perspec-



Green Bay Packers running back Patrick Taylor (27) runs the ball behind the blocking of tight end Josiah Deguara (81) during the team's loss to the Detroit Lions on Jan. 9 in Detroit. GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

tive tomorrow," Green Bay coach Matt LaFleur said. "We're all competitors, and we don't like losing.

"I am happy in the fact that we got out fairly healthy."

Rodgers, the reigning NFL MVP who may win the award for a fourth time, was 14 of 18 for 138 yards.

He threw a 1-yard pass to Allen Lazard to cap a 13-play, 74-yard drive that took 7:18 off the clock to

open the game and a 29-yard pass to the fourth-year receiver late in the second quarter for another score.

Rodgers replaced his helmet with a baseball cap at halftime and watched the rest of the game from the sideline out of harm's way after getting roughed up at times by the hard-charging Lions.

"I hold my breath every time he gets hit," LaFleur said.

The Lions (3-13-1) closed coach Dan Campbell's first season with plenty of pride and some nothing-to-lose plays.

The tricky Lions tied it 7-all late in the first quarter when seldom-used Tom Kennedy ended up with the ball on a reverse and threw a 75-yard touchdown pass to Kalif Raymond.

Detroit took a 24-13 lead early in the third on a reverse flea-flicker with Jared Goff throwing a 36-yard touchdown pass to Brock Wright.

Love threw a go-ahead, 62-yard touchdown pass to Josiah Deguara with 4:49 left in the fourth, but the

Packers could not hold on for the win.

D'Andre Swift scored on a 14-yard run with 1:54 left to put Detroit back ahead.

C.J. Moore intercepted Love's pass at the Green Bay 36 on the ensuing possessions after it was deflected by linebacker Jalen Reeves-Maybin, setting up Riley Patterson's field goal to put the Lions up by a touchdown.

Love threw a second interception with 21 seconds left after his pass went off rookie receiver Amari Rodgers' hands.

Packer pacer

Green Bay's Davante Adams had six catches for 55 yards, giving him a single-season franchise record of 1,553 yards receiving that Jordy Nelson set in 2014.

"He just texted me when I was walking in here right now," Adams told reporters after the game, saying his former teammate congratulated him.

Injuries

Packers wide receiver Marquez Valdes-Scantling left the game with a back injury.

Left tackle David Bakhtiari, a 2020 All-Pro, started and played for first time since tearing his left ACL on Dec. 31, 2020, and having two surgeries.

Center Josh Myers started after getting removed from IR on Saturday. The rookie second-round pick from Ohio State had been out since had a knee injury on Oct. 17 at Chicago.

"Like I told (Bakhtiari) and Josh, there's no substitute for football shape, and it will be good for them to be out there," LaFleur said.



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