



DEFENDING THE THRONE

Packers' o-line a big reason behind
team's 3rd straight North title

PAGE 2

Green Bay Packers offensive players head off the field during a game against the Baltimore Ravens on Dec. 19 in Baltimore.

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Injuries haven't slowed Packers' o-line

The Green Bay Packers wrapped up a third-straight NFC North title with a thrilling 31-30 win over the Baltimore Ravens on Dec. 19 in Baltimore.



MORGAN RODE

While star players like quarterback Aaron Rodgers, wide receiver Davante Adams and running back Aaron Jones often steal the headlines when it comes to the Packers' play on offense, it's the offensive

line that usually goes unnoticed and underappreciated. This season, the offensive line has had just as much to do with the team's division title than any of the aforementioned players.

The O-line came into the season with lots of question marks after losing center Corey Linsley in free agency and knowing that left tackle David Bakhtiari might miss some time as he worked his way back from a knee injury.

To offset those missing pieces, the Packers selected three linemen in the NFL Draft, and two of those rookies were starters in week one.

It wasn't an ideal start to the season, with the offensive line giving up two sacks and seven quarterback hits, but the group has steadily improved despite having to shuffle guys around due to more injuries.

Last week against the Ravens, the Packers started Yosh Nijman at left tackle, Jon Runyan at left guard, Lucas Patrick at center, rookie Royce Newman at right guard and Dennis Kelly at right tackle.

The list of offensive linemen not playing — Bakhtiari, Elgton Jenkins, rookie Josh Myers and Billy Turner — looks to be a far superior group despite not having a fifth guy to fill out the line.

Yet the group the Packers trotted out did the job against Baltimore.

Rodgers was sacked three times but was only hit a total of four times. He also threw for 268 yards and three scores, while the team's running game averaged nearly four yards a carry against one of the league's best run defenses.

"Those guys deserve a lot of



Green Bay Packers offensive tackle Yosh Nijman celebrates with quarterback Aaron Rodgers during the team's win over the Baltimore Ravens on Dec. 19 in Baltimore. Nijman has helped form a stout offensive line for the Packers this season.

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ONLINE

More coverage of the Packers, including this week's roster moves and more photos from the game against the Ravens, can be found at www.newmedia-wi.com.

credit for the way they've stepped up, given me time and opened up holes for the guys," said Rodgers after the win.

Rodgers went on to credit offensive line coach Adam Stenavich and assistant O-line coach Luke Butkus for how they've continued to put a quality product on the field every week.

"Those guys are very well-coached. They're super prepared, and the standard that he holds them to is very, very high," said Rodgers.

The quarterback added that the standard of play is the same

regardless of who is out there, and that those five starters have all improved and played consistently.

"I always let those guys know — and they know themselves — that it all starts with them up front," said Jones. "If they don't come out ready to play, we can't run the ball, we can't get a pass off. So it ultimately starts with them."

"I'm just so proud of each and every one of them. They never take a play off. One player goes down, the next person steps up and they gel like one."

The Packers won't get Jenkins back this season after he sustained a knee injury but should get Bakhtiari, Myers and Turner back in the near future.

With the division title already locked up and the way the back-

ups have played in their stead, the Packers are afforded the incredible luxury of not having to rush any of those linemen back until they are confident they are past the point of potentially reaggravating an injury.

If they do get one, or all three, of those guys back at some point, that should only make the Packers' offensive line that much better.

If could also add a different dimension to the offense, as the team has primarily used the quick passing game to alleviate some of the pass rush.

Rodgers could, however, take some more shots down the field with some of the veterans and starters back in the fold.

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

Rodgers producing big season despite obstacles

QB in hunt for 4th MVP award

By **BILL HUBER**
Correspondent

It's been quite a year for Aaron Rodgers.

There was the offseason feud with his employer since 2005, the Green Bay Packers, which culminated in late July with his return for a possible "last dance." There was his positive test for COVID-19 – and the fallout that ensued from misleading the public about his vaccination status and his stance on vaccinations, in general. And there was the broken toe sustained during his COVID isolation.

Through it all, Rodgers is on top of his game – and so are the Packers, who are 11-3 and leading the NFC playoff chase ahead of Saturday's game against the Cleveland Browns.

Rodgers is the hottest quarterback in the game. On Sunday afternoon, Rodgers threw three touchdown passes in Green Bay's 31-30 victory over Baltimore to continue his recent run of dominance. Over his last four games, Rodgers is No. 1 in the league with a 127.7 passer rating, 13 touchdown passes, a 13-0 touchdown-to-interception ratio, 1,301 passing yards and 8.91 yards per attempt, and the Packers are No. 1 in points.

With that, the Packers have the best record in the NFL and Rodgers has positioned himself for back-to-back MVPs after posting one of the best seasons in league history last year.

"Every year is so different, and it's hard to compare year to year. I feel like I'm playing better in many respects," Rodgers said, when asked Sunday if he's playing better than last season. "I feel like my movement in the pocket, my feel, my timing – tonight there were a couple of throws that I was proud of.

"There's not many games where you make a throw and you're really smiling on the inside because it makes you feel good, but I threw a ball to Marquez on the first play of the 2-minute and it was kind of hearkening back to a feeling I had years ago as far as my footwork and my timing and ball placement. Those are the fun ones, and those are the ones that you feel really, really good about."

Rodgers went out of his way to credit his makeshift offensive line – "those guys deserve a lot of credit for the way they've stepped up" – and the



Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers gestures to the sideline during the team's win over the Baltimore Ravens on Dec. 19 in Baltimore. Rodgers has put together another MVP-worthy season, despite running into several obstacles.

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play of Marquez Valdes-Scantling, whom he called a "special human being," for making some big plays against a Ravens defense that was bound and determined to limit Davante Adams. But Rodgers' dominance is why Green Bay has been able to overcome the prolonged absences of two All-Pro (David Bakhtiari and Jaire Alexander) and two Pro Bowlers (Elgton Jenkins and Za'Darius Smith) to lead the chase for homefield advantage in the NFC playoffs.

"He's had multiple games with multiple touchdowns and no picks," Valdes-Scantling said. "I don't really know too many guys that can do that consistently. He doesn't turn the ball over. He makes throw after throw, that you're just like, 'How did he get that ball in there?' Like the one he threw to me in 2-minute across the middle of the field. He's the best, and that's who he's going to be."

Valdes-Scantling caught Rodgers'

third and final touchdown of the day against the Ravens. It was the 442nd of his career, tying Hall of Famer Brett Favre's franchise record.

Breaking the record – perhaps on Christmas against Cleveland – will be especially meaningful for Rodgers. It's an award he's been chasing for years. Earlier in the week, Rodgers recalled sitting at his locker and paging through the program before games and looking at the team records.

At the time, Favre's record seemed impossibly out of reach. Heck, Rodgers didn't throw his 100th touchdown pass until 2011, his sixth year in the league.

"I remember looking at the number of touchdowns that Favre had and thinking, 'Oh, my God. I'm not even at 100 yet,'" Rodgers said. "How could I ever play long enough to be in this same category as that? But, obviously, I've been able to stay pretty healthy and have some sustained success.

"That's a special one just because of the history of the franchise and how long our franchise has been around and how many great players have come through here. The opportunity to be here 17 years and the longevity records, as Favre I remember used to talk about when he was here, to be a part of some of those is pretty cool."

Rodgers had a chance to break the record during the fourth quarter but threw the ball just out of Allen Lazard's reach. The rare mistake almost cost the Packers the game, as the Ravens staged a furious comeback over the final minutes, but it will allow Rodgers a chance to set the record in front of the home fans on Saturday.

"There is something special about being able to do it at home," Rodgers said after the game.

Records are great, but the elusive second Super Bowl is at the forefront of Rodgers' mind. The Packers haven't won a championship since 2010. Over the succeeding decade, Rodgers has put up a lot of incredible numbers and the team has won a lot of games, but four empty trips to NFC Championship Games are a stain on his glittering resume. Thus, getting the coveted first-round bye and home-field advantage is Rodgers' focus.

Nonetheless, there is some individual history suddenly within his grasp.

On Sunday night, Tom Brady and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers were blanked by the New Orleans Saints. On Monday morning, FanDuel Sportsbook's updated MVP odds showed Rodgers and Brady in a dead heat at +160 and far ahead of the rest of the field. Just days earlier, Brady was the runaway favorite at -150 and Rodgers a distant second at +500.

Peyton Manning won a record five MVP awards. Rodgers, Brady and Hall of Famers Favre, Jim Brown and Johnny Unitas won three each. So, a win by Rodgers or Brady would produce the only four-time winner of the award.

Since the week one debacle against New Orleans, Rodgers has thrown 28 touchdowns vs. two interceptions, despite leading one of the most-injured teams in the NFL. The Packers are 11-1 in those 12 games. Brady, meanwhile, leads the NFL in passing yards and passing touchdowns.

Winning a fourth MVP would be a tremendous notch on Rodgers' legacy. So, too, would be winning a second championship and interrupting Brady's legendary run of greatness.

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PACKERS ROSTER

Active

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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	28	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
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	23	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	24	2	Baylor
42	Oren Burks	LB	6-3	233	26	4	Vanderbilt
44	Ty Summers	LB	6-1	241	25	3	TCU
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
73	Yosh Nijman	T	6-7	314	25	2	Virginia Tech
76	Jon Runyan	G	6-4	307	24	2	Michigan
77	Billy Turner	G/T	6-5	310	30	8	North Dakota State
79	Dennis Kelly	T	6-8	321	31	10	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
86	Malik Taylor	WR	6-1	220	26	2	Ferris State
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

Reserve/Injured

18	Randall Cobb	WR	5-10	195	31	11	Kentucky
23	Jaire Alexander	CB	5-10	196	24	4	Louisville
32	Kylin Hill	RB	5-10	214	23	R	Mississippi State
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
71	Josh Myers	C/G	6-5	310	23	R	Ohio State
74	Elgton Jenkins	G	6-5	311	25	3	Mississippi State
85	Robert Tonyan	TE	6-5	237	27	4	Indiana State

Practice Squad

6	Kurt Benkert	QB	6-3	218	26	2	Virginia
11	J.J. Molson	K	5-11	180	24	1	UCLA
16	Chris Blair	WR	6-2	198	24	R	Alcorn State
35	Ryquell Armstead	RB	5-11	220	25	3	Temple
38	Innis Gaines	S	6-1	202	23	R	TCU
45	Bronson Kaufusi	TE	6-6	270	30	3	Brigham Young
48	Kabion Ento	CB	6-1	187	25	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
61	Jon Dietzen	G/T	6-5	312	24	R	Wisconsin
65	Michael Menet	C	6-4	301	24	R	Penn State
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

Reserve/COVID-19

97	Kenny Clark	DL	6-3	314	26	6	UCLA
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	2	Dustin Colquitt	P	6-3	210	39	17	Tennessee
	3	Chase McLaughlin	K	6-0	180	25	3	Illinois
	4	Anthony Walker	LB	6-1	235	26	5	Northwestern
	9	Nick Mullens	QB	6-1	210	26	4	Southern Mississippi
	10	Anthony Schwartz	WR	6-0	186	21	R	Auburn
	11	Donovan Peoples-Jones	WR	6-2	204	22	2	Michigan
	17	Kyle Lauetta	QB	6-3	222	26	2	Richmond
	20	Greg Newsome II	CB	6-0	192	21	R	Northwestern
	21	Denzel Ward	CB	5-11	190	24	4	Ohio State
	24	Nick Chubb	RB	5-11	227	25	4	Georgia
	25	Demetric Felton	RB	5-9	189	23	R	UCLA
	26	Greedy Williams	CB	6-2	185	24	3	LSU
	28	Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah	LB	6-2	221	22	R	Notre Dame
	29	Herb Miller	CB	6-1	201	24	1	Florida Atlantic
	30	D'Ernest Johnson	RB	5-10	208	25	3	South Florida
	31	Andy Janovich	FB	6-1	238	28	6	Nebraska
	34	Brian Allen	CB	6-3	200	28	3	Utah
	35	Jovante Moffatt	S	5-11	213	24	2	Middle Tennessee State
	36	M.J. Stewart Jr.	S	5-11	200	26	4	North Carolina
	37	Tedric Thompson	S	6-0	204	26	5	Colorado
	39	Richard LeCounte III	S	5-11	196	23	R	Georgia
	41	John Kelly	RB	5-10	208	25	2	Tennessee
	43	John Johnson III	S	6-0	209	26	5	Boston College
	44	Sione Takitaki	LB	6-1	238	26	3	BYU
	47	Charley Hughlett	LS	6-4	248	31	7	Central Florida
	52	Elijah Lee	LB	6-3	230	25	5	Kansas State
	53	Nick Harris	C	6-1	293	23	2	Washington
	54	Willie Harvey Jr.	LB	5-11	230	25	2	Iowa State
	55	Takkarist McKinley	DE	6-2	260	26	5	UCLA
	56	Malcolm Smith	LB	6-0	225	32	10	USC
	62	Blake Hance	G	6-6	310	25	1	Northwestern
	64	JC Tretter	C	6-4	307	30	9	Cornell
	65	Michael Dunn	G	6-5	315	27	2	Maryland
	70	Alex Taylor	T	6-8	301	24	1	South Carolina State
	72	Hjalte Froholdt	G	6-5	310	25	3	Arkansas
	75	Joel Bitonio	G	6-4	320	30	8	Nevada
	77	Wyatt Teller	G	6-4	314	27	4	Virginia Tech
	82	Rashard Higgins	WR	6-1	198	27	6	Colorado State
	83	Lawrence Cager	WR	6-5	220	24	2	Georgia
	84	Ja Marcus Bradley	WR	6-0	198	25	1	Louisiana-Lafayette
	85	David Njoku	TE	6-4	246	25	5	Miami (Fla.)
	86	Miller Forristall	TE	6-5	245	23	R	Alabama
	88	Harrison Bryant	TE	6-5	230	23	2	Florida Atlantic
	91	Joe Jackson	DE	6-4	278	25	3	Miami (Fla.)
	92	Sheldon Day	DT	6-1	293	27	6	Notre Dame
	93	Tommy Togiai	DT	6-2	296	22	R	Ohio State
	94	Porter Gustin	DE	6-5	257	24	3	USC
	95	Myles Garrett	DE	6-4	272	25	5	Texas A&M
	96	Jordan Elliott	DT	6-4	303	24	2	Missouri
	97	Malik Jackson	DT	6-5	285	31	10	Tennessee
	99	Josiah Bronson	DT	6-3	300	24	R	Washington
Reserve/Injured								
	15	Ryan Switzer	WR	5-9	183	27	4	North Carolina
	37	Tre Harbison	RB	5-11	218	23	R	Charlotte
	41	Montrel Meander	LB	6-2	215	27	1	Grambling State
	74	Chris Hubbard	T	6-4	295	30	8	Alabama-Birmingham
	78	Jack Conklin	T	6-6	308	27	6	Michigan State
	89	Stephen Carlson	TE	6-4	240	25	3	Princeton
Reserve/Retired								
	16	Derrick Willies	WR	6-4	207	27	2	Texas Tech
Practice Squad								
	8	Chris Naggar	K	5-11	193	24	R	SMU
	12	Alexander Hollins	WR	6-0	166	25	1	Eastern Illinois
	15	Adrian Colbert	S	6-2	205	28	5	Miami
	16	Bryan Mills	CB	6-1	184	22	R	North Carolina Central
	40	Johnny Stanton	FB	6-2	240	27	2	UNLV
	48	Nick Guggemos	TE	6-5	231	26	R	University of St. Thomas
	59	Curtis Weaver	DE	6-2	265	23	2	Boise State
	60	David Moore	G	6-2	320	23	R	Grambling State
	65	Elijah Nkansah	T	6-1	328	26	1	Toledo
Practice Squad/COVID-19								
	19	JoJo Natson	WR	5-7	153	27	5	Akron
	49	Nate Meadors	S	5-11	189	24	1	UCLA
	87	Ross Travis	TE	6-6	251	28	5	Penn State
Reserve/COVID-19								
	5	Case Keenum	QB	6-1	215	33	9	Houston
	6	Baker Mayfield	QB	6-1	215	26	4	Oklahoma
	7	Jamie Gillan	P	6-1	207	24	3	Arkansas Pine-Bluff
	22	Grant Delpit	S	6-3	208	23	2	LSU
	23	Troy Hill	CB	5-11	183	30	6	Oregon
	27	Kareem Hunt	RB	5-11	216	26	5	Toledo
	33	Ronnie Harrison Jr.	S	6-3	214	24	4	Alabama
	38	A.J. Green	CB	6-2	198	23	1	Oklahoma State
	42	Tony Fields II	LB	6-0	222	22	R	West Virginia
	50	Jacob Phillips	LB	6-3	228	22	2	LSU
	51	Mack Wilson	LB	6-1	233	23	3	Alabama
	57	Ifeadi Odenigbo	DE	6-3	258	27	4	Northwestern
	58	Malik McDowell	DT	6-6	295	25	1	Michigan State
	66	James Hudson III	T	6-5	313	22	R	Cincinnati
	71	Jedrick Willis Jr.	T	6-4	307	22	2	Alabama
	79	Drew Forbes	G	6-5	308	24	2	Southeast Missouri State
	80	Jarvis Landry	WR	5-11	196	29	8	LSU
	81	Austin Hooper	TE	6-4	255	27	6	Stanford
	90	Jadeveon Clowney	DE	6-5	255	28	8	South Carolina

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Satellite Radio (WTMJ feed)

THE SERIES

Packers vs. Ravens
All-time, regular season: 12-7
All-time, postseason: 1-0
All-time, at Packers: 6-3
Streaks: The Green Bay Packers have won the last three matchups against the Cleveland Browns.
Last meeting, regular season: Dec. 10, 2017, Packers won 27-21 in overtime at Lambeau Field.

Davante Adams caught a 25-yard touchdown pass from Brett Hundley to win the game. Hundley threw for 265 yards and three touchdowns that day.

SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	TV
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	3:30 p.m.	FOX
Jan. 2	vs. Minnesota	7:20 p.m.	NBC
Jan. 9	at Detroit	noon	FOX

OFFENSE

RB
Aaron Jones
A.J. Dillon



QB
Aaron Rodgers
Jordan Love



WR
Davante Adams
Equanimeous St. Brown



TE
Josiah Deguara
Tyler Davis



RT
Billy Turner
Dennis Kelly



RG
Royce Newman
Ben Braden



C
Lucas Patrick
Jake Hanson



LG
Jon Runyan
Ben Braden



LT
Yosh Nijman
Dennis Kelly



TE
Marcedes Lewis
Dominique Dafney



WR
Marquez Valdes-Scantling
Allen Lazard



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
Ty Summers



OLB
Rashan Gary
Jonathan Garvin



S
Adrian Amos
Vernon Scott



S
Darnell Savage
Henry Black



FYI

Rosters and depth charts are accurate as of Dec. 20, 11:30 a.m.

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BROWNS DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

		RB Nick Chubb Kareem Hunt		QB Baker Mayfield Case Keenum		FB Andy Janovich	
							
WR Jarvis Landry Anthony Schwartz		TE Austin Hooper David Njoku		RT James Hudson III Blake Hance		RG Wyatt Teller Michael Dunn	
							
				C JC Tretter Nick Harris		LG Joel Bitonio	
							
						LT Jedrick Wills Jr.	
							
						WR Donovan Peoples-Jones Rashard Higgins	

DEFENSE

					
CB Denzel Ward Troy Hill	DE Myles Garrett Takkarist McKinley	DT Malik Jackson Jordan Elliott	DT Malik McDowell Sheldon Day	DE Jadeveon Clowney Ifeadi Odenigbo	CB Greg Newsome II Greedy Williams
					
	WILL Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah Mack Wilson		MIKE Anthony Walker Jacob Phillips	SAM Sione Takitaki Malcolm Smith	
					
		S Ronnie Harrison Jr. Grant Delpit		S John Johnson III Richard LeCounte III	

WEEK 16 SCHEDULE

Saturday's Games

Cleveland at Green Bay, 3:30 p.m.
Indianapolis at Arizona, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday's Games

N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia, noon
L.A. Rams at Minnesota, noon
Buffalo at New England, noon
Tampa Bay at Carolina, noon
Jacksonville at N.Y. Jets, noon
Detroit at Atlanta, noon
L.A. Chargers at Houston, noon
Baltimore at Cincinnati, noon
Chicago at Seattle, 3:05 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Kansas City, 3:25 p.m.
Denver at Las Vegas, 3:25 p.m.
Washington at Dallas, 7:20 p.m.

Monday's Game

Miami at New Orleans, 7:15 p.m.

PLAYOFF PICTURE

NFC

Seed Team Record

- Green Bay 11-3 (xz)
- Dallas 10-4
- Tampa Bay 10-4
- Arizona 10-4
- L.A. Rams 9-4
- San Francisco 8-6
- Minnesota 7-7
- New Orleans 7-7
- Washington 6-7
- Philadelphia 6-7
- Atlanta 6-8
- Seattle 5-8
- Carolina 5-9
- N.Y. Giants 4-10
- Chicago 4-10 (e)
- Detroit 2-11-1 (e)

AFC

Seed Team Record

- Kansas City 10-4
- New England 9-5
- Tennessee 9-5
- Cincinnati 8-6
- Indianapolis 8-6
- L.A. Chargers 8-6
- Buffalo 8-6
- Baltimore 8-6
- Pittsburgh 7-6-1
- Las Vegas 7-7
- Miami 7-7
- Cleveland 7-7
- Denver 7-7
- N.Y. Jets 3-11 (e)
- Houston 3-11 (e)
- Jacksonville 2-12 (e)

x - clinched playoff spot

z - clinched division

e - eliminated



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DeWar's White Label Scotch Whiskey \$29⁹⁹ 1.75 ltr.

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Windsor Black Cherry or Canadian Whiskey 3 FOR \$26⁹⁷ 1.75 ltr. After \$15.00 mail in rebate on 3



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Jack Daniel's Winter Jack Tennessee Cider \$15⁹⁹ 750 ml.

Leroy Butler Leap Vodka \$19⁹⁹ 1.75 ltr.

7x Distilled Platinum Vodka \$6⁹⁹ 1.75 ltr. After \$5.00 rebate



10x Filtered Smirnoff Vodka 2 FOR \$23⁹⁸ 1.75 ltr. After \$12.00 rebate on 2

Canadian Mist Whiskey \$13⁹⁹ 1.75 ltr.

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Kendall Jackson Vinters Reserve Chardonnay Wine \$9.99 750 ml.
Roscato Sweet Wines \$7.99 750 ml.



Menage A Trois California Wines \$6.99 750 ml.
William Hill Wines \$9.49 750 ml.
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Louis M. Martini Cabernet Wine \$13.99 750 ml.



Door Peninsula Christmas Wines \$7.99 750 ml.



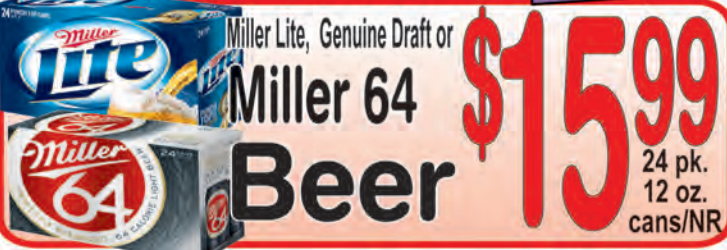
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BEAT The Expert



Morgan Rode
NEW Media Sports Editor

Week 16 Games: Sat., Dec. 25/Sun., Dec. 26

San Francisco @ Tennessee..... Thurs., Dec. 23
Indianapolis @ Arizona
Detroit @ Atlanta
Tampa Bay @ Carolina
Baltimore @ Cincinnati
LA Chargers @ Houston
LA Rams @ Minnesota
Buffalo @ New England
Jacksonville @ NY Jets
NY Giants @ Philadelphia
Chicago @ Seattle
Pittsburgh @ Kansas City
Denver @ Las Vegas
Washington @ Dallas
Miami @ New Orleans..... Mon., Dec. 27

Tie Breaker Game: Cleveland @ Green Bay

Weekly Standings

Weekly Standings	Weekly Record	Overall Record
God's Purpose Apparel.....	10-4.....	149-72-1
Shawano Seasons Restaurant.....	10-4.....	141-80-1
Tim Murphy.....	8-6.....	139-82-1
22 Shell.....	9-5.....	138-83-1
Tower Clock Eye Center.....	9-5.....	138-83-1
Dennis Brei.....	8-6.....	137-84-1
Buss Automotive.....	9-5.....	136-85-1
Hawkeye Hearth & Home.....	9-5.....	136-85-1
Shawano Place Assisted Living.....	7-7.....	136-85-1

Weekly Standings

Weekly Standings	Weekly Record	Overall Record
Idell Johnston, State Farm Insurance Agent.....	9-5.....	136-85-1
Morgan Rode.....	9-5.....	135-86-1
Smokey Joe's.....	7-7.....	135-86-1
B & C Auto Recycling.....	8-6.....	133-88-1
Gehm's Club 117.....	9-5.....	132-89-1
P & D Sales & Service.....	8-6.....	129-92-1
Cirinity/Wittenberg Telephone.....	8-6.....	122-99-1
Iverson's Piggly Wiggly.....	8-6.....	122-99-1
Senn Insurance.....	7-7.....	116-105-1



This Week's Winner:
Tie: God's Purpose Apparel & Shawano Seasons Restaurant



Morgan Rode
Shawano
Leader

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	Miami
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 28 @ Green Bay 31



Tim Murphy
Shawano
Leader

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 17 @ Green Bay 34



Dennis Brei
Oconto County
Times Herald

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Denver
Indianapolis	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 20 @ Green Bay 31

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Toby
B&C Auto
Recycling

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Indianapolis	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	Miami
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 24 @ Green Bay 38



Iverson's Staff
Iverson's
Piggly Wiggly

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	LA Rams	Denver
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 14 @ Green Bay 34



Amber
Smokey Joe's
& JDoggs

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Denver
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 27 @ Green Bay 37



Robert Buss
Buss
Automotive

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Denver
Indianapolis	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	Miami
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 20 @ Green Bay 38



Dena
P&D Sales
& Service

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 27 @ Green Bay 30



Caroline
Idell Johnston
State Farm Agent

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 21 @ Green Bay 34



Scott Nyman
Cirrinity

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	LA Rams	Denver
Arizona	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	Miami
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 17 @ Green Bay 35



In Memory of
Patty Lasher
Shawano Seasons
Restaurant

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Denver
Indianapolis	Buffalo	Dallas
Detroit	NY Jets	Miami
Tampa Bay	NY Giants	
Baltimore	Chicago	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 20 @ Green Bay 35



Jim Wiegand
Tower Clock
Eye Center

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 17 @ Green Bay 34



Russ
Gehm's
Club 117

This Week's Picks:

Tennessee	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 27 @ Green Bay 30



Shane Senn
Senn
Insurance

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	Minnesota	Denver
Indianapolis	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	Miami
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 17 @ Green Bay 21



Brenda
22 Shell

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	LA Rams	Denver
Arizona	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 20 @ Green Bay 31



Chris
God's Purpose
Apparel

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	LA Rams	Denver
Indianapolis	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 20 @ Green Bay 31



Aaron
Shawano
Place

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	LA Rams	Las Vegas
Arizona	Buffalo	Dallas
Atlanta	Jacksonville	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Cincinnati	Seattle	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 24 @ Green Bay 34



Dale
Hawkeye
Hearth & Home

This Week's Picks:

San Francisco	LA Rams	Denver
Arizona	New England	Dallas
Atlanta	NY Jets	New Orleans
Tampa Bay	Philadelphia	
Baltimore	Chicago	
LA Chargers	Kansas City	

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Cleveland 17 @ Green Bay 28

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Green Bay Football 2021 Season

SEPTEMBER - REGULAR SEASON			
Sunday, September 12	3:25 pm	@ New Orleans Saints	FOX
Monday, September 20	7:15 pm	DETROIT LIONS	ESPN
Saturday, September 25	1:20 pm	@ San Francisco 49ers	NBC
OCTOBER			
Sunday, October 03	3:25 pm	Pittsburgh Steelers (GOLD)	CBS
Sunday, October 10	NOON*	@ Cincinnati Bengals	FOX
Sunday, October 17	NOON*	@ Chicago Bears	FOX
Sunday, October 24	NOON*	WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM	FOX
Thursday, October 28	7:30 pm	@ Arizona Cardinals	FOX
NOVEMBER			
Sunday, November 07	1:25 pm*	@ Kansas City Chiefs	FOX
Sunday, November 14	3:25 pm*	SEATTLE SEAHAWKS	CBS
Sunday, November 21	NOON*	@ Minnesota Vikings	FOX
Sunday, November 28	3:25 pm*	LOS ANGELES DOLPHINS (GOLD)	FOX
DECEMBER			
BYE WEEK			
Sunday, December 12	7:20 pm*	INDIANAPOLIS	NBC
Sunday, December 19	NOON*	@ Baltimore Ravens	FOX
Saturday, December 25	3:30 pm	CLEVELAND BROWNS	FOX
JANUARY			
Sunday, January 02	7:20 pm*	MINNESOTA VIKINGS	NBC
Sunday, January 09	NOON*	@ Detroit Lions	FOX

KEYS TO THE GAME

By **BILL HUBER**
Correspondent

The Green Bay Packers (11-3) will host the Cleveland Browns (7-7) at 3:30 p.m. Saturday at Lambeau Field in Green Bay. FOX will televise the game.

History

The Packers lead the series 13-7, a mark that includes a 23-12 victory at Lambeau Field in the 1965 NFL Championship Game.

Coaches

Green Bay – Matt LaFleur, 37-9, third season. Cleveland — Kevin Stefanski, 18-12, second season.

When the Packers have the ball

This will be strength on strength. Green Bay has scored more than 30 points in four consecutive games, the longest streak in the NFL, and Rodgers is the hottest quarterback on the planet. Meanwhile, the Browns are 12th in points allowed (21.8), fifth in total defense (321.7 per game), ninth against the run (105.6 per game) and eighth against the pass (216.1 per game).

The weaknesses are in the key situations of third down (20th, 41.2% conversions) and red zone (26th, 67.4% touchdowns).

In defensive end Miles Garrett, the Browns might have the most-feared defender in the NFL. He's third in the league with 15 sacks and 28 quarterback hits. He is No. 1 among edge defenders in ProFootballFocus.com's pass-rush win rate. He's rushed about 82% from the defense's right side, meaning against the opponent's left tackle.

That puts the spotlight on the left tackle — perhaps the return of David Bakhtiari, but more likely Yosh Nijman, the Packers' third-string left tackle who has played surprisingly well in matchups this year against the likes of T.J. Watt and Nick Bosa. He allowed only one pressure vs. Baltimore.

Garrett is joined by tackles Malik Jackson and Malik McDowell and end Jadeveon Clowney. Clowney has five sacks and 15 quarterback hits and McDowell has three sacks. On passing downs, former first-round pick Takk McKinley has chipped in 2½ sacks.

At linebacker, rookie Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah is joined by Anthony Walker and Malcolm Smith. Walker leads the Browns with 89 tackles, but Owusu-Koramoah has been the best player with 59 tackles, four passes defended and two forced fumbles. He's the new-age, ultra-athletic linebacker.

Denzel Ward, Greedy Williams and rookie Greg Newsome are the corner-



Green Bay Packers wide receiver Allen Lazard stretches to try and catch a pass during the team's win over the Baltimore Ravens on Dec. 19 in Baltimore. The Packers' passing game will go up against a solid Cleveland Browns' passing defense on Dec. 25.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

backs, with Ronnie Harrison and John Johnson the safeties. Williams has two interceptions and a team-high nine interceptions, Ward has a team-high three interceptions and eight passes defended, and Newsome has seven pass breakups.

Ward generally plays in the slot, though Troy Hill has seen plenty of action in that role, too. There is not a weak link among them.

When the Browns have the ball

Green Bay is 10th in the NFL with 21.6 points allowed per game and eighth in total defense with 325.8 yards allowed per game. But it's a unit that has been trending the wrong way, with 34, 28, 30 and 30 points allowed the last four games.

It relied on game-changing plays in victories over the Rams and Bears. It didn't make any of those against Baltimore and almost lost to a backup quarterback.

Cleveland is 19th with 20.9 points scored per game. While quarterback Baker Mayfield will get a lot of air time during commercial breaks, the offense is led by an elite rushing attack that enters the week ranked fifth in yards per game (139.6) and third in yards per carry (4.9).

In terms of yards per carry, Nick Chubb is one of the best backs in NFL

history. This season, Chubb is fourth with 1,017 rushing yards, sixth with 5.35 yards per carry and 11th with seven touchdowns. He's a 227-pounder with the speed to take it the distance.

Regardless of the No. 2 back, the Browns will field a high-quality tandem. Kareem Hunt, the 2017 NFL rushing champion who has been dealing with an ankle injury, has 386 rushing yards, a 4.9 average, 22 receptions and five touchdowns, and D'Ernest Johnson has 340 rushing yards and a 5.2 average.

Mayfield has been a major disappointment. He's 20th with a 90.1 passer rating and 25th with a completion rate of 62.8%. He's thrown 13 touchdowns in 12 starts; Rodgers has 13 in his last four. The first pick of the 2018 draft, the Browns have a tough decision regarding their long-term quarterback future.

Receiver Jarvis Landry is one of 11 players with at least 16 receptions. He's caught 38 passes for 397 yards and one touchdown. Donovan Peoples-Jones has added 27 receptions for 478 yards (17.7 average) and three scores.

Tight ends Austin Hooper (33 receptions, 291 yards, three touchdowns), David Njoku (30 receptions, 436 yards, three touchdowns) and Harrison Bryant (18 receptions, 222 yards, one touchdown) have combined for 81

catches and seven scores.

The offensive line is strong with left tackle Jedrick Wills, left guard Joel Bitonio, center JC Tretter, right guard Wyatt Teller and right tackle James Hudson. They power a strong rushing attack and haven't allowed a sack in back-to-back games.

Special teams

This will be a battle between two of the worst special teams in the NFL.

For Cleveland, kicker Chase McLaughlin is 15-of-21 on field goals. Oddly, he's 4-of-10 from 40 to 49 yards but 4-of-4 from 50-plus.

Veteran punter Dustin Colquitt, who signed with Cleveland a couple weeks ago, had a strong performance on Monday vs. the Raiders. It has speedy rookie weapons at returner with Demetric Felton (punts) and Anthony Schwartz (kickoffs), but neither have done much.

If the Browns have been bad, the Packers have been horrendous. They are 29th on punt returns, 31st on kickoff returns, 27th on kickoff coverage, 32nd on punt coverage and 30th in field-goal accuracy. At least kicker Mason Crosby is 12-of-12 on kicks the past two games with 10 extra points and two short field goals. At this point on returns, simply fielding the ball is a victory.

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Packers clinch North after Ravens' 2-point try fails

Rodgers throws 3 TDs to tie Favre's mark

By **NOAH TRISTER**
The Associated Press

Aaron Rodgers threw three touchdown passes — tying Brett Favre on Green Bay's career list — and the Packers became the first team this season to clinch a division title, wrapping up the NFC

North with a 31-30 win over Baltimore on Dec. 18 in Baltimore.

The Ravens missed a big 2-point conversion in the final minute.

With Lamar Jackson out with a sprained ankle, quarterback Tyler Huntley nearly led Baltimore (8-6) all the way back from a 31-17 deficit. His 8-yard touchdown run with 42 seconds left pulled the Ravens within one, but Huntley's 2-point conversion pass was incomplete.

It was the third consecutive loss

for Baltimore, which also fell to Pittsburgh two weekends ago on a missed 2-point conversion in the final seconds. The Ravens fell into a first-place tie in the AFC North with Cincinnati.

Ravaged this season by injuries — especially in the secondary — Baltimore faced a difficult task trying to stop Rodgers and the Green Bay receivers. The Ravens mounted enough time-consuming drives of their own to keep the game close; the score was 14-14 at halftime. But the Packers received the kickoff to start the second half and took full advantage.

Baltimore appeared to have Green Bay (11-3) stopped on a third-down incompletion, but minimal contact by Kevon Seymour was enough for a pass interference flag. Rodgers found Aaron Jones for a 9-yard touchdown on the next play.

The Ravens drove into Green Bay territory before another devastating penalty. With Baltimore running the ball effectively and preparing to go on fourth-and-1 in the red zone, Ben Cleveland committed a false start. The Ravens settled for

a field goal, and Green Bay drove 88 yards, taking an 11-point lead on an 11-yard pass from Rodgers to Marquez Valdes-Scantling.

That was Rodgers' 442nd career touchdown pass, pulling him even with Favre. He went 23 of 31 for 268 yards. Rodgers has thrown for 13 touchdowns without an interception over his last four games and didn't appear the slightest bit limited by his toe injury.

Down 31-17, the Ravens began their comeback when Huntley ran for a 3-yard touchdown with 4:47 remaining. Then they got the ball back and scored again.

Huntley threw for 215 yards and two first-half touchdowns to Mark Andrews. The first, which gave Baltimore a 7-0 lead, was the first time in eight weeks the Ravens scored an opening-quarter TD.

A 9-yard pass to Andrews gave Baltimore a 14-7 lead in the second quarter, but Rodgers answered with a 3-yard scoring pass to Davante Adams.

Andrews had 10 catches for 136 yards and two TDs.

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