



Interception ends comeback

Packers lose 17-13 to Raiders, drop to 2-3

Las Vegas Raiders' Amik Robertson (21) intercepts a ball in the end zone in the last minute of Monday night's matchup against the Green Bay Packers. Intended for Christian Watson (9), it was Packers' quarterback Jordan Love's third interception of the game.

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Packers fall to 2-3 after loss to Raiders

Love throws three interceptions, five in last two games

By **LUKE REIMER**

Green & Gold Express

Three interceptions from Jordan Love were the catalyst to Green Bay dropping its Week 5 game against the Las Vegas Raiders in Las Vegas on Oct. 9.

Bad play calling, combined with squandered opportunities and a poor offensive performance, allowed the Raiders to defeat the Packers for the first time since 1987, when Randy Wright was the starting quarterback for the Packers.

Love finished the game throwing 16-for-30 for 183 yards and three interceptions for a passer rating of just 32.2. While Love struggled mightily, it was Packers running back A.J. Dillon who was able to garner some success on offense, turning in his best performance of the season with 20 carries for 76 yards and one touchdown.

"I think that the run game started off good tonight," said Love. "I had the turnover early. We just have to find a way to get going faster and get a rhythm going. I just need to find a way to be better and get some completions going and move the ball."

Christian Watson recorded three receptions for 91 yards, while Luke Musgrave saw one of his busiest nights of the year, catching six balls for 34 yards.

For the Raiders, quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo finished his day completing 22-of-31 for 208 yards and one touchdown. He also added one interception. Raiders All-Pro running back Josh Jacobs was held to 69 yards on 20 carries, but he did find the end zone.

The story leading up to the game was Davante Adams facing his former team. The former Packers legend was held to 45 yards on four catches, with teammate Jakobi Meyers doing most of the damage through the air. Meyers caught seven balls for 75 yards and one touchdown.

The game started out with an exchange of punts from both teams, setting Green Bay up on its own 7-yard line on the team's second drive of the game. An unnecessary



Davante Adams (17) won in his first game against the Green Bay Packers, helping the Las Vegas Raiders secure a 17-13 victory Monday night. Facing the club that drafted him in 2014 and traded him to Vegas in 2022, Adams put up four catches for 45 yards while playing through a right shoulder injury.

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roughness penalty on Raiders defensive end Maxx Crosby helped move Green Bay down the field quickly. Later that drive, Love scrambled for a career-high 26-yard gain to set up a first-and-10 from the Raiders 43-yard line. Love followed that up with a 19-yard completion to Josiah Deguara. The drive eventually stalled, and Green Bay was forced to settle for an Anders Carlson 37-yard field goal.

The teams then exchanged punts again and Las Vegas found itself with the ball midway through the second quarter. After a converted third-and-11 and an offsides penalty, the Raiders were set up with a first-and-10 from Green Bay's 25-yard line. That drive culminated in Meyers' touchdown to give the Raiders a 10-3 lead going into halftime.

"We have to look at everything," said Packers head coach Matt LaFleur. "It seemed like when we dialed up some passes, they had some timely calls defensively. They did a better job than we did."

On Green Bay's ensuing drive,

Love threw an interception to Raiders linebacker Robert Spillane to set up a 26-yard field goal. After Green Bay went three-and-out, the Raiders were set up with a field goal before the half. Backup tackle Yosh Nijman was able to get his hand on the ball though, blocking the kick to hold the Raiders at 10 points going into halftime.

To open the second half, Packers safety Rudy Ford intercepted Garoppolo to set up the Packers with great field position. Riding on the back of Dillon, the Packers marched down the field and scored a 5-yard touchdown from the Boston College alum.

Green Bay's defense once again stifled the Raiders offense, forcing them to punt. With the ball back, Love rolled to the left side of the field and found a wide-open Watson for a 77-yard completion. The pass would have been a touchdown, if not for a horse collar tackle by Raiders defensive back Marcus Peters. That horse collar tackle proved to be the saving grace for Las Vegas though,

as Green Bay was held to just a field goal.

Up 13-10, the Raiders started to get Adams involved in the game. Adams totaled 39 yards on a drive that finished with a Jacobs rushing touchdown. That touchdown ultimately proved to be the dagger, as Love threw interceptions on two of Green Bay's last three drives.

"It is tough," said Love, on the fourth-quarter struggles. "We had a lot of opportunities, definitely. The defense did a great job getting us those opportunities, and we didn't do enough. I didn't do enough. There is a lot of good stuff to learn from, but it is tough, because we had opportunities to go win, it and we couldn't do it."

Green Bay now holds a 2-3 record as the team enters its Week 6 bye. With the Lions looking like one of the better teams in the NFL, Green Bay may have to do some upward climbing, as it now sits two games behind Detroit for the No. 1 spot in the NFC North.

BEAT The Expert

Week 6 Games: Sunday, Oct. 15



Luke Reimer
New Media

Green Bay On Bye

Minnesota @ Chicago
Philadelphia @ New York Jets
New England @ Las Vegas
Dallas @ LA chargers...Mon., Oct. 16
Tie Breaker Game:
Detroit @ Tampa Bay

**Week 5
Winner :**

**Robert Buss
Buss
Automotive**

Weekly Standings

Weekly Record

Overall Record

Jacob Westendorf, New Media	2-3	20-5
Jim Wiegand, Tower Clock Eye Center	2-3	18-7
Tim Murphy, New Media.....	3-2	17-8
Kevin Passon, New Media.....	2-3	16-9
Staff, Shawano Health Services	2-3	15-10
Robert Buss, Buss Automotive.....	3-2	15-10
Luke Reimer, New Media	3-2	15-10
Staff, Iverson's Piggly Wiggly	2-3	14-11
Shane Senn, Senn Insurance.....	2-3	13-12
Sue Moede, Moede & Sons Plumbing.....	2-3	12-13
Staff, Walsh Dental Group.....	3-2	11-14



Jim Wiegand
Tower Clock
Eye Center

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
Las Vegas
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 28 @ Tampa Bay 17



Robert Buss
Buss
Automotive

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
New England
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 38 @ Tampa Bay 24



Shane Senn
Senn
Insurance

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
Las Vegas
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 28 @ Tampa Bay 17



Staff
Walsh Dental Group
Shawano

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
Las Vegas
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 28 @ Tampa Bay 17



Staff
Shawano
Health Services

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
New England
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 14 @ Tampa Bay 28



Moede & Sons
Plumbing
Shawano

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
Las Vegas
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 35 @ Tampa Bay 14



Staff
Iverson's
Piggly Wiggly

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
New York Jets
Las Vegas
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 21 @ Tampa Bay 14



Jacob Westendorf
New
Media

This Week's Picks:

Chicago
Philadelphia
New England
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 21 @ Tampa Bay 14



Luke Reimer
New
Media

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
Las Vegas
LA Chargers

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score : Detroit 24 @ Tampa Bay 21



Tim Murphy
New
Media

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
Las Vegas
Dallas

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 31 @ Tampa Bay 27



Kevin Passon
New
Media

This Week's Picks:

Minnesota
Philadelphia
New England
LA Chargers

Tie Breaker Game:

Final Score: Detroit 30 @ Tampa Bay 17

Packers underwhelming after 5 games

Bright spot may be performance of special teams, minus the penalties

By JACOB WESTENDORF
Green & Gold Express

The fifth game of the 2022 season marked a turning point for the Packers. They traveled to London and blew a double-digit lead in a loss to the Giants.

On the final play of the game, Aaron Rodgers broke his thumb and was clearly limited for the next several weeks. The Packers would see their losing streak balloon to five games before finally snapping it against Mike McCarthy's Dallas Cowboys.

This year, they're behind that pace after a dismal performance on Monday Night Football against the Las Vegas Raiders, losing 17-13.

Packers offense

Prior to Monday night's game against the Las Vegas Raiders, the argument could be made that Jordan Love had more highs than lows in the early portion of his time as a starting quarterback.

That is no longer the case.

Love is coming off his worst game of the season. The Packers were only able to muster 182 yards passing. For the first time all season, Love looked rattled in the pocket and turned the ball over at an alarming rate.

Love threw three interceptions, including one that sealed the team's fate. Christian Watson looked to have separation early in the route, but Love had to escape the pocket, then underthrew Watson, making an easy interception for Amik Robertson.

After not turning the ball over in his first two starts, Love is now second in the league in interceptions. He's thrown six of them in the team's last three games, including three against the Raiders.

Love was off to a solid start early in the year, but things have gotten worse instead of better over the last three games.

Through five games, the Packers have topped 250 yards passing once.

They have yet to have a receiver top 100 yards receiving in a single



AJ Dillon (28) scores a touchdown Monday night against the Raiders. Despite rushing for 76 yards on 20 carries, Dillon's yards per carry of 3.8 is still below his career average of 4.2. The Packers' running game, without Aaron Jones to bolster it, is under performing this year, much like the rest of the team during the first five games of the season.

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game.

They currently rank in the bottom half of the league in passing offense.

Their rushing offense has struggled to gain any traction as well.

Aaron Jones has essentially missed every game since the season opener. The offense has missed him.

A.J. Dillon is in the midst of a tough season. He is averaging 3.0 yards per carry and did not find the end zone until Monday night's loss to the Raiders.

Emanuel Wilson and Patrick Taylor had nice stories in the preseason, but that has not carried over to games that count.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment early in the season is the offensive line.

After a new regimen was implemented in the preseason, David Bakhtiari was ready to play in the team's season opener.

He looked like David Bakhtiari. Bakhtiari when he is healthy, was a future Hall of Fame type of player.

Unfortunately, the injury bug continues to bite him. Bakhtiari only

played in the season opener.

He was placed on injured reserve before the team's Sept. 28 game against the Detroit Lions. The injury puts his future in the short term into focus. Bakhtiari won't return this season.

His long term future is unclear. Bakhtiari says he wants to continue playing. It remains to be seen if his body will allow him to.

Apart from him, the Packers' offensive line has struggled with injuries. Elgton Jenkins missed two games. His replacement, Royce Newman, struggled immensely in his absence.

Zach Tom and Jon Runyan Jr. both played injured against Detroit earlier in the season and are mending from those injuries now.

Rasheed Walker has stepped in for Bakhtiari. He's been solid if unspectacular, but it's clear the team misses its All-Pro left tackle.

The offense is young and still finding its way, but the lack of progress to this point, is disappointing.

Packers defense

Joe Barry might be public enemy

number one in the eyes of the Packers' fan base. Coordinators typically make for easy fall guys, but in Barry's case, it's hard to argue that his team has played up to its potential during his tenure as the Packers' defensive coordinator.

Barry was hired in 2021 to help the team get over the top and back into the Super Bowl.

Instead, they've regressed from the units that Mike Pettine helped put together.

Early returns this season, have been a mixed bag. The Packers have allowed more than 200 yards rushing in two of their five games.

That's dreadful.

The pass rush has been excellent, powered by Rashan Gary who looks to be all the way back from an ACL injury that ended his 2022 season.

Through five games, Gary leads the team with 4.5 sacks.

The Packers have 10 sacks as a team, and they've gotten them from a wide range of players.

Kenny Clark, Karl Brooks, and Devonte Wyatt each have at least one sack this season. Lukas Van

THE SCHEDULES

GREEN BAY PACKERS BYE WEEK

PACKERS SCHEDULE

Sept. 10 at Chicago W 38-20
 Sept. 17 at Atlanta L 25-24
 Sept. 24 vs. New Orleans Noon W 18-17
 Sept. 28 vs. Detroit 7:15 p.m. L 34-20
 Oct. 9 at Las Vegas 7:15 p.m. L 17-13
 Oct. 15 BYE
 Oct. 22 at Denver 3:25 p.m. CBS
 Oct. 29 vs. Minnesota Noon FOX
 Nov. 5 vs. LA Rams Noon FOX
 Nov. 12 at Pittsburgh Noon CBS
 Nov. 19 vs. LA Chargers Noon FOX
 Nov. 23 at Detroit 11:30 a.m. FOX
 Dec. 3 vs. Kansas City 7:20 p.m. NBC
 Dec. 11 at NY Giants 7:15 p.m. ABC
 Dec. 17 vs. Tampa Bay Noon FOX
 Dec. 24 at Carolina Noon FOX
 Dec. 31 at Minnesota 7:20 p.m. NBC
 Jan. 7 vs. Chicago, TBD

NFL SCHEDULE

Thursday, Oct. 12

Broncos at Chiefs, 7:15 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 15

Ravens at Titans, 8:30 a.m. (London)
 Panthers at Dolphins, Noon
 Saints at Texans, Noon
 Commanders at Falcons, Noon
 Colts at Jaguars, Noon
 Seahawks at Bengals, Noon
 Vikings at Bears, Noon
 49ers at Browns, Noon
 Patriots at Raiders, 3:05 p.m.
 Lions at Buccaneers, 3:25 p.m.
 Cardinals at Rams, 3:25 p.m.
 Eagles at Jets, 3:25 p.m.
 Giants at Bills, 7:20 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 16

Cowboys at Chargers, 7:15 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 19

Jaguars at Saints, 7:20 p.m.

Ness and Preston Smith have each gotten on the board as well.

When the team has been able to get opposing offenses into obvious passing situations, their pass rush has been able to create havoc.

The issue is the same as it has been since Brian Gutekunst took over as general manager. They've been gashed by Detroit and Atlanta,

two teams that are not shy about their desire to run the ball.

Opposing offenses are still averaging 155.3 yards per game on the ground. That would rank last in the NFL if not for a truly abysmal Denver defense giving up 187 yards per game.

Conversely – their pass defense ranks 10th in the NFL.

If the Packers could ever find some middle ground in the run game, their defense might have a chance to live up to its billing.

Packers special teams

One of the biggest storylines coming out of training camp was the struggles of rookie kicker Anders Carlson.

Carlson missed a kick in practice, usually needing to miss before finding his rhythm. There are no mulligans, however, once the games are real.

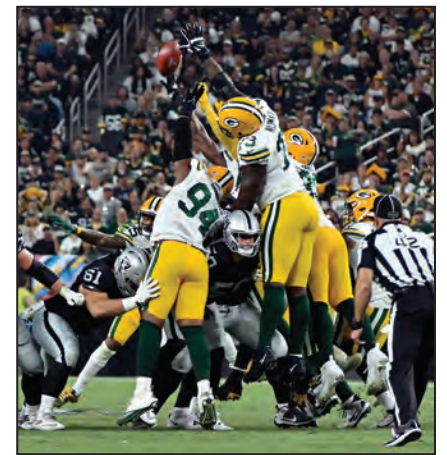
Carlson has not needed a mulligan.

He's yet to miss a kick in a game. He's one of the few bright spots on a special teams unit that has struggled to find its way in 2023.

Keisean Nixon, one of the team's most exciting players in 2022, has yet to find a crease in the return game. It's tough to make an impact as a kickoff returner in today's NFL, with most kickers able to boom the ball out of the back of the end zone.

Nixon has still struggled to capture the magic that made him a first team All-Pro a season ago. His longest return of the season was 36 yards. Not bad, but certainly not as exciting as he was a season ago.

Daniel Whelan has been solid as a punter after the team cut Pat



Green Bay Packers' tackle Yosh Nijman blocks a 53-yard field goal attempt by Las Vegas Raiders' kicker Daniel Carlson near the end of the first half on Monday Night Football. The Raiders would go on to win the game 17-13.

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O'Donnell in favor of the younger punter. He's part of the field goal operation that has been flawless thus far.

If there's one thing to clean up with this unit, it is the penalties.

The special teams have been penalized 10 times.

With the Packers' offense struggling, they cannot afford for their third phase to put them even further behind the gun with a poor performance.



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Eric Stokes (21) is walked off the field last year against the Detroit Lions. He is finally back on the field, having been removed from the injured reserve list.

GREG MELLIS | NEW MEDIA

Stokes happy to be back on the field

Injuries kept cornerback sidelined for past 11 months

By **JACOB WESTENDORF**
Green & Gold Express

Green Bay Packers cornerback Eric Stokes, who opened the season on the physically unable to perform list, is back on the field.

He is practicing again, after sustaining foot and knee injuries at the Detroit Lions on Nov. 6, 2022. He started practice Oct. 3.

When did you find out you'd start practicing?

I found out sometime last week, I wasn't 100% sure I was going to go until yesterday or the day before yesterday. That's when I found out I was full go.

Why did everyone wait this long?

We were just waiting until the four weeks were over with, and then we'd take it off from there. I tweaked my hamstring and then some other little stuff happened.

When can you play?

We're just going to take it day to day, so who knows?

What do you need to get on the field?

Just get more practice reps, just get more comfortable with everything. Just seeing how my footwork

is at and seeing how everything will be. Finally when I get comfortable with that, I'm like I'm back, I'm back. I'm back for sure.

Are you worried about being rusty?

It's a little jitters. I'm not gonna lie. It's a little feel. It was funny because when I went in the training room to go get tape this morning, I was like, 'Damn my stomach hurt.' It was real deal hurting for some reason, but the moment I got back out there, it was all good.

Worried about how your body will hold up?

Just haven't played. Just haven't played. I knew mentally everything already was at the point of all right, this is the day. It's actually time to go out there and this is what I do. It's just a little jitters from missing it.

Can you run at full speed?

Oh yeah. I hit full speed. I know I ain't worried about that. I ain't worried about the speed.

Are you as fast as before?

I guess you gotta see.

How can you help the team?

I'm fitting in wherever they need me at. I know we already got a little thing going with Sul, Ja and Kei and

all that stuff. Wherever they need me, I'm gonna fit in. Special teams, get my role in on dime, whatever. Wherever y'all need me, I'm fitting in and I'm just happy to be back.

Did you struggle mentally being out so long?

Oh yeah, it was struggles at points. You already know, especially from last year. This is my first time missing this amount of time. Being away from the game for this long, just missing the team, missing all this little stuff. This is my first time battling mentals and battling everything, being cheerful, being grateful. All that stuff, it just kept being roadblocks after roadblocks. No, I'm getting closer back, it's just great. I feel better.

How long you been able to run full speed?

I've been able to run full speed since camp started. I just any little thing – I would have little knockback or something, a little setback or whatever. I've been running full tilt. There were always setbacks.

When did you hurt the hamstring?

A couple times during camp. It happened a couple times during camp. I was like, all right, it's time to

sit back and chill.

On the same side?

On that same side.

How was it overcoming that after knee and foot injuries?

Man, it was tough, man. Ain't gonna lie. It was very tough because any little thing, I kept feeling like I got closer and closer to making it back and boom something else would happen. It's just like dang. Throughout this whole thing, I feel like it taught me patience more than anything to where I feel like I'm ready. I feel like I'm here and boom something else that keep on recurring and all that stuff.

Did the hamstring come from running?

Man, it was either running. I know one time it was from running. Another time I'm just braking. It was just random events.

Have you had hamstring problems before?

Nah. I've had hamstrings, but I haven't had them since my senior year of high school or freshman year of college was the last time I had hamstring issues. They were just like a little annoying.

Was it related to your rehab?

Nah, I just feel like it was some-

thing to do with my whole – because it was all going on in the same leg. It was something was going on there that I had to refocus on, go look at and all that stuff and find different people. It's been a blessing in disguise because I've met a lot of good people.

Will you start again?

Oh yeah, that was always the case, especially like last year because last year they hit it off towards the end. They went on a big run towards the end, and they were flying around doing great, so I really knew coming back like man, it don't matter where I'm at. I just want to be back out there with y'all. I miss y'all so much. I don't care where I'm at, where I fill in. I know for a fact when I'm back out there you're going to get 110% of me though. I'm gonna go ahead and show any little impact I can, any little thing I can to show that I'm valuable.

Have a chance to watch game closer?

Oh heck yeah. There's a lot of little things that I sit back and start noticing games and see how everybody else plays and how I can play with this person, how I can do with this person. OK, then, this is how we do it. Just break down more scheme, break down more things and get more comfortable with a lot more

stuff. It was a lot of little things and this injury taught me a lot different little things, and I just can't wait. Can't wait.

Are you going to play anywhere on the field?

Yeah, I know what I can do but it's only a matter of time. I gotta go ahead and get that trust back into the football, get back into practicing and getting back into guarding people and finding the tempo of doing all the little stuff. I just can't wait to find that. When I find that, everything else will just solve itself.

How did you stay positive?

Man, I just kept looking at the bigger picture. I know for a fact this happened for a reason. It wasn't an accident. It wasn't nothing that I did. My injury happened for a reason. It sat me down for something. I was just taking the good with the bad. Yeah, there would be days where I'm down and all that stuff. It is what it is. I know for a fact there's multiple things going on. My worst day is somebody's great day. You just gotta look at that and keep on pushing through and keep moving. Once I changed my mindset on everything, then everything else just came easy.

Did you have any low moments?

Of course. Of course. You don't

feel like doing this. You don't feel like doing that. But those are the days that you really have to push through, that you really gotta grind, that you really gotta get through. Because those days are gonna make you better.

When was that for you?

The hardest point would easily be – God, there was multiple. I can easily say the wheelchair days were hard. I was down bad. The days I thought I was coming back or thought I was coming closer, then boom something else would happen, and it would set me back again. Those days were real deal tough. Another day, when I finally saw RG. Me and RG got hurt literally the same day and big proud of him and all that stuff. But it was another little setback for me. It's like dang, I'm not where I wanted to be. I thought me and you were pretty much on the same pace and everything and I see you moving forward and me still staying back. It was another little rough day for me, too. It was just like another little slap in the face that I was back there. It just felt like hey I can't compare my injuries to his. It's two different injuries.

What goes through your mind when you're in a wheelchair?

Oh man, you just gotta stay positive any little type of way that you

can. Just have positive people around you, positive people that keep you up and all that stuff. Because you already know on those dark days, it gets dark. It gets dark, especially being in Green Bay – snowing. It's dark already. Even on your dark days like hey man, you don't see too much sunlight. All you see is snow. It's a lot going on. You just gotta keep positive people around you and keep the positive energy. That's something I try to hone in on. Having Quay around, having my Georgia people around, it was unbelievable.

Who told you that you could practice?

Actually, it was Flea. I was in the training room, getting treatment or whatever. Then Flea came up to me, and he was like, 'I think we're gonna actually let you go this week.' That changed my whole mood. I got super happy, dumb happy. I couldn't stop smiling since.

No tears like Rashan Gary?

Nah, nah, nah, nah. It wasn't one of them because I already had in my mindset – after these four weeks, I knew what I was working forward to. It was already something that was in the back of my mind and all this stuff. It's just day by day, just marking it off on the calendar. It was a matter of time.



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Bakhtiari won't play again this season as he prepares for fifth knee surgery

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Green Bay Packers offensive tackle David Bakhtiari's season is over. He hopes his NFL career isn't.

He's set to undergo his fifth knee surgery to give himself a chance at playing again, Bakhtiari said Friday when he spoke with reporters for nearly 40 minutes in the team's Lambeau Field locker room trying to explain what he's endured since suffering a catastrophic left knee injury during a Dec. 31, 2020, practice, as well as what needs to be done to allow him to continue his career.

"We know what we need to do for me to be back," said Bakhtiari, who last played in the Packers' Sept. 10 season-opening victory at Chicago. "It's not ideal, but that is pretty much my plan now. Now that we have a plan in place, it's the road I have to go down."

That new road, which began with

a recent arthroscopic procedure, will next include surgery aimed at resolving a cartilage issue performed by Chicago-based orthopedic surgeon Brian J. Cole.

Bakhtiari wouldn't say when that surgery would happen.

"My goal is to be ready for training camp next year," he said.

His issue is with the femoral condyles, which are the ball-shaped ends to the femur at the knee joint. Although the initial surgery, performed on Jan. 7, 2021, repaired Bakhtiari's anterior cruciate ligament and the meniscus damage he sustained when he first got hurt, Bakhtiari said his doctors knew that he had an issue with that portion of his femur.

The issue was, they couldn't predict whether the abnormality in his knee would cause him issues moving forward. As it turned out, as Bakhtiari worked his way back from the initial injury, he did further

damage to the cartilage at the end of his femur and began experiencing irritation and fluid buildup in his knee as a result.

"In my knee, it's basically like sandpaper where it rubs, it's just not smooth, which is creating a lot of fluid," Bakhtiari said. "It's just the defect I have."

He added: "I would've loved if on January 7th of 2021, to have been like, 'Yeah, do (this surgery). Because this is clearly what it is.' But no one knew. You don't want to do more than you have to."

Bakhtiari, who turned 32 last week, has one year remaining on his contract with the Packers, who could opt to move on from him after this season. His salary-cap number for 2024 is \$40.5 million, so if he were to return, he would have to do so on an altered contract.

"I hate the situation Dave's in. I feel for him," said head coach Matt LaFleur. "He's been battling and battling and battling to try to make it back. He had a bad injury, unfortunately, and I think we're seeing the effects of that. I knew that when it happened."

"He's tried everything. He wants

to be out there, he wants to play ball. He's tried anything and everything to make it back, and his knee's not responding in the right way."

A 2013 fourth-round pick out of Colorado, Bakhtiari has played in 131 career games with the Packers, but just 13 over the past two-plus seasons.

He saw action in one game in 2021 — the regular-season finale at Detroit — before being unable to play in the team's NFC divisional playoff game two weeks later. He only played in 11 of 17 games last season, when he not only had issues with his knee but also underwent an emergency appendectomy late in the year.

He acknowledged on Friday that he may have played his final down with the only NFL team he's ever known.

"I'm not ignoring that (possibility)," said Bakhtiari, who had started 118 of a possible 127 games in his first eight seasons before the injury. "I would love to play here until I decide that I'm done."

"Regardless of whatever happens, that's just life. If it does, great. If not, I can only control what I can control. If I can keep playing here, great."

Packers sign running back Patrick Taylor to their active roster and release linebacker Justin Hollins

The ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Green Bay Packers have signed running back Patrick Taylor to their active roster and released outside linebacker Justin Hollins in advance of its Monday night game at Las Vegas.

Taylor already had been promoted from Green Bay's practice squad for gameday in three of the Packers' previous four games. He's now part of their regular 53-man roster.

The 25-year-old Taylor has nine carries for 29 yards and three catches for 23 yards this season.

Hollins, 27, had nine tackles

through Green Bay's first four games. He played 25 snaps on defense in the season opener at Chicago, 26 at Atlanta, 20 against New Orleans and 13 in the Packers' most recent game against the Detroit Lions.

He had 2 1/2 sacks in six games for the Packers last season after they claimed him off waivers from the Los Angeles Rams. He played for the Rams from 2020-22 after spending the 2019 season with the Denver Broncos.

In another move, the Packers promoted cornerback Corey Ballentine from their practice squad for Monday's game.

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Welch excited to play for the Packers

By JACOB WESTENDORF
Green & Gold Express

The Green Bay Packers signed linebacker Kristian Welch to the practice squad on Aug. 31. He played in the games against the Lions and Raiders.

Welch (6-3, 240), a fourth-year player out of the University of Iowa, was originally signed by the Baltimore Ravens as an undrafted free agent in 2020. In three seasons, he played in 43 regular-season games and three postseason contests for the Ravens. Welch has posted five tackles (four solo) on defense and 16 tackles on special teams during the regular season and two tackles on special teams during the postseason. In 2021, he tied for No. 2 on the team with a career-best nine special teams tackles and helped Baltimore's unit rank No. 1 in Football Outsiders' DVOA rating.

Welch took time to answer a few questions before his first game with the Packers.

How far was the commute from home to here?

About an hour and 15 minutes.

So what was it like? I'm assuming these guys were your team growing up?

Yeah, I grew up a fan.

So what was it like on Thursday night?

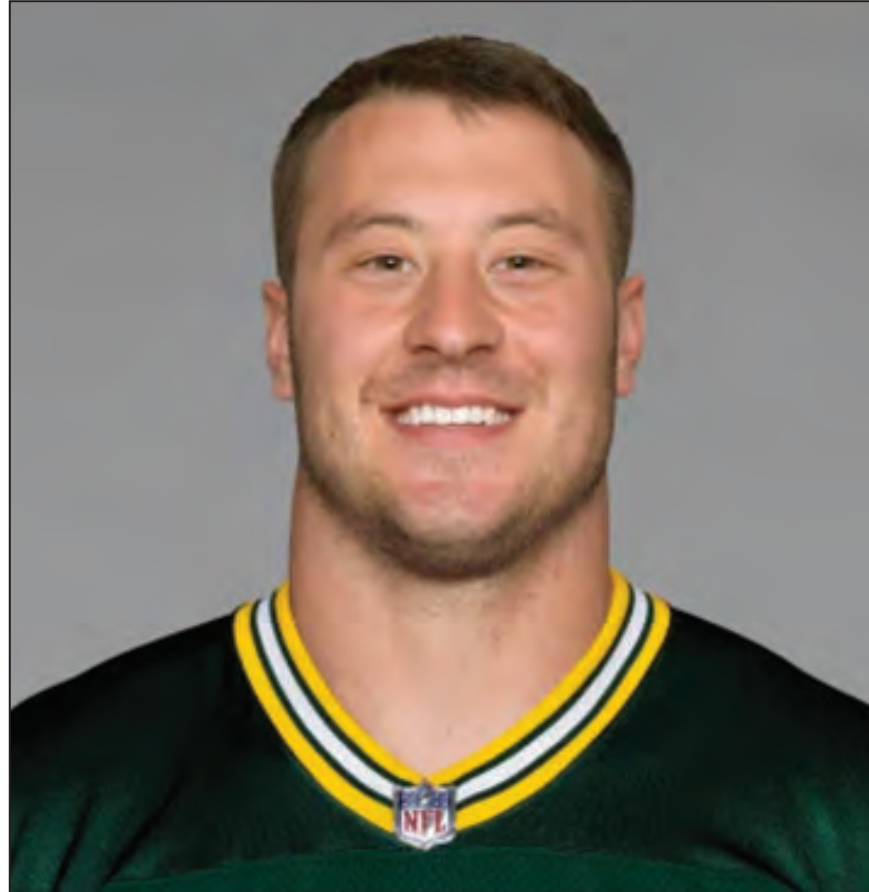
It was a very surreal feeling. Definitely a dream come true. Really, just to have the opportunity to be here – came here at the end of training camp, just kind of a whirlwind. Didn't know where I was going to end up. I knew that there was interest here from the get-go, and it ended up working out where I was able to get the opportunity here to be on the practice squad. I just kind of put my head down and worked. It's kind of been the motto of my entire life and my NFL career. To get the opportunity to play, it just kind of all fell into place. It's an awesome feeling.

So we found out on Thursday. When did you find out?

Thursday.

What's the reaction like on Thursday, A, that you're up, but B, it's also with your team?

Yeah, I mean, it happens quickly. Early in the week, obviously, I'm preparing to play, so I kind of knew that there was a good chance that I'm playing. But then on Thursday after our meetings, around noon, they pulled me in and were like, hey,



The Green Bay Packers signed linebacker Kristian Welch to the practice squad on Aug. 31. He played in the games against the Lions and Raiders. Welch (6-3, 240), a fourth-year player out of the University of Iowa, was originally signed by the Baltimore Ravens as an undrafted free agent in 2020. In three seasons, he played in 43 regular-season games and three postseason contests for the Ravens.

we're going to sign you in 53. So that was pretty surprising, just based off how I haven't even played a game yet. I don't think a lot of guys get signed right away.

That's a good point. I didn't think about that.

Yeah, because I was still on the practice squad at that point. For not even having played a game, for them to sign me was a little bit surprising. But I'm obviously glad that now I'm going to be playing for, hopefully, the rest of the year.

So when was this your dream? Think about when you were a kid.

Man, probably when I was 4 or 5. There's pictures of me in my Halloween costume when I was a kid and I was a Packer player.

So obviously you're a good high school player, which is how you get to Iowa, but at what point in this path does it go from your dream to, you know what, maybe I'm good enough, or I certainly am good enough?

I think my first year in the NFL. The first or second year in the NFL, you start to get more comfortable.

You start realizing that, OK, I can play in the NFL, and I am. There's 32 teams, right? It's crazy to end up back home. There's a lot of guys that don't ever get that chance. Look across the league, right? Like, you pick any player and you say, OK, he's from Atlanta. What are the chances that he plays for the Atlanta Falcons? Very small chance. There's a lot of guys that don't get that opportunity, so I'm very fortunate. I don't take anything for granted to be this close to home. It's a dream come true. I just take every day as it comes, and I'm enjoying it.

Who's the first person you told?

I told my wife. And then I called my parents, my grandparents, my sister. Everybody was super emotional and happy for me.

To the football stuff, for a guy who was on a practice squad, you've got a pretty extensive track record, right? You've played a lot of games. You had a lot of tackles one year, as I recall.

In Baltimore, my rookie year, I played 12 games. And then I was on

the roster the next two years. So, I played three years in Baltimore. In '21, we were the best special teams unit in the league, and I think I led the team in tackles. If it was that year or whatever, I mean, I'm not looking at my individual stats. It just matters to me. It's how we go out and play as a unit and that we're winning games. So, yeah, I played, I don't know what the exact number is but 800-something snaps.

We were pretty solid in the units that I was on, so I'm pretty proud of that. I respect the heck out of the Ravens organization and all the coaches there. I have nothing but great things to say about them. So, yeah, I have some experience.

What does it take to be a really good special teams player? What are the traits that requires?

You have to be versatile. I think the great ones know that and they are able to play a bunch of different positions. You look at each phase, there's kick return or kickoff. Each phase has its own element to it. There's so many little technique things that it's very unique in a sense. A lot of people don't grow up to want to be special teams players. They want to play on offense, they want to play tight end, they want to play quarterback.

So, I found out early in my career, starting at Iowa, I didn't redshirt when I was a freshman. The reason was because they wanted me on special teams. I adopted that role. Whatever this team asks me to do, whatever my role is that will allow us to win games, that's what I was going to do. Early in my career in college, I learned how to play special teams. Shoutout to Coach LeVar Woods, who's still there, still doing a great job. And there's a lot of great special teams players that come out of there – guys that have cut their teeth, they've made their role – and that's kind of what I've done.

It happened early in my college career and it happened early in my NFL career and it's still the reason I'm in the NFL. Let's be honest. I can play special teams, I'm a solid player, I have a ton of experience. I think being versatile, I think being a tough dude. You've got to be able to run. You have to be able to play fast, you have to be quick, you have to be strong. All the things that make you an NFL player, right? That's what's on display when it comes to special teams. You have to be a tough guy.

Green Bay has a lot to correct on offense

Packers have scored three points in last three first halves

By **LUKE REIMER**
Green & Gold Express

The Green Bay Packers enter the Week 6 bye with a 2-3 record, a multitude of injuries and a lot of questions that need to be answered on offense — sooner rather than later.

In Green Bay's 17-13 loss to the Las Vegas Raiders on Oct. 9, linebacker Quay Walker and defensive back Darnell Savage both left the game with injuries. Those two injuries are in addition to Aaron Jones, David Bakhtiari and De'Vondre Campbell, all of whom have missed time this year. While it is never encouraging to see injuries, the Packers now have 12 days off for players to rest up and try to get back onto the field when the team travels to Denver on Oct. 22.

Injuries may not be the biggest issue for the team right now though, as the lack of production on offense over the past three weeks has severely limited Green Bay. The Pack-

ers have mustered just three points in the team's last three first halves of football.

"We have to find something to get us going — to jump start us," said Packers head coach Matt LaFleur, on the first half struggles in this game and throughout the season.

While the first half offense has been a problem this year, a silver lining from Green Bay's matchup with the Raiders was that A.J. Dillon cashed in his best performance of the year. Given the uncertainty regarding Jordan Love's completion ability and the injury to Jones, it seems likely that Dillon will shoulder a little bit more of the load early in games moving forward. With an early established run game, it makes sense that Love should be able to settle into the game with quick-hitting underneath passes and play-action shots.

Establishing that run game and setting up those short passes is going to be key for this Packers team, as it has become obvious that Love does



not have the ability yet to carry this offense on his back. With five interceptions in the last two games, finding ways for Love to succeed needs to be at the forefront of LaFleur's mind, heading into the bye week.

"I am sure there are some things that we can look at and do better," said LaFleur. "I am sure there are some things that I need to do a better job in terms of what we are asking (Love) to do and try not to put him in a position where he is susceptible to maybe throwing those picks."

While struggling on offense is a byproduct of having no veteran experience, at what point does the

excuse of "It is just a young team" and "growing pains" end? At some point, LaFleur is going to need Love to make the play, and through six NFL starts, that just has not happened yet.

"We have to do a better job offensively," said LaFleur. "It just seems like we are putting ourselves in those situations quite a bit over the course of the first five games of the season, and that is tough to overcome in this league, especially when you have a lot of youth on that side of the ball. I am not trying to make excuses for it. We have to do a better job to avoid those situations."

As for Love, he is looking forward to correcting the mistakes that have reared their ugly head over the last three first halves.

"It is a good break, and I think we will just all come together and bounce back," said Love. "That is how it goes — it is week-to-week, and we just have to find a way to bounce back."



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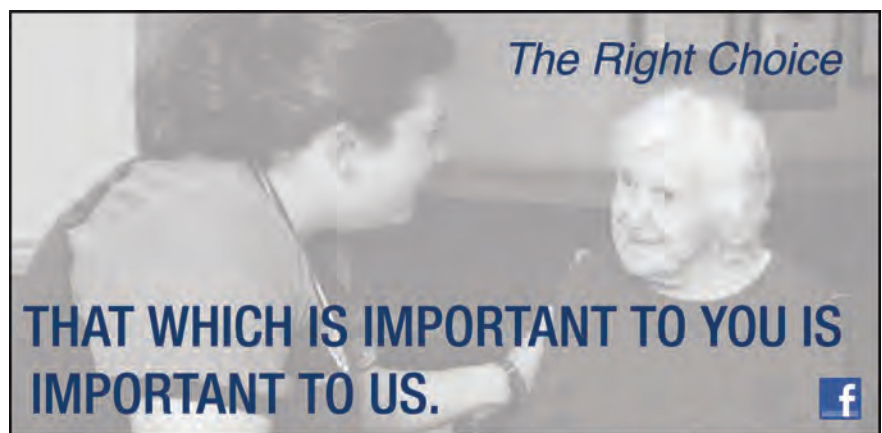
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