

VIKINGS

PRE 01 08.09

MIN vs
HOU



LB ERIC WILSON

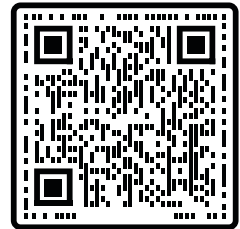


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QUESTIONS AT TODAY'S GAME?

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TODAY'S GAME
PRESENTED BY

2024 TEAM STATS

YARDS PER GAME / ALLOWED

	RUSH	PASS
MIN OFF	109.1 346.9 12TH IN THE NFL	237.8
HOU DEF	114.0 315.0 6TH IN THE NFL	201.0
HOU OFF	112.3 319.7 22ND IN THE NFL	207.4
MIN DEF	93.4 335.4 16TH IN THE NFL	242.0

RECONNECTING

This matchup features considerable overlap between players facing their former teams.

Vikings Jonathan Greenard and Blake Cashman are entering their second season with Minnesota after previously playing for Houston. Jeff Okudah joined Minnesota this offseason after appearing in six games for the Texans in 2024.

Houston's roster includes Danielle Hunter, the five-time Pro Bowler who began his career as a third-round draft pick by the Vikings in 2015. Hunter headed to Houston last offseason. Irv Smith, Jr., (2019-22) and Ed Ingram (2022-24) are former Vikings draft picks, and Cam Robinson joined Houston this offseason after filling in for Christian Darrisaw for the final half of 2024.

AUG. 9, 2025 | U.S. BANK STADIUM

TODAY'S GAME MARKS THE PRESEASON OPENER FOR BOTH TEAMS AND THE FIRST OF CONSECUTIVE HOME EXHIBITION CONTESTS FOR MINNESOTA.

Rookies have the chance to make their NFL debuts, and newcomers will leave the home locker room for the first time amid pregame pageantry. In-game entertainment elements include the following:

JUNIOR CHEERLEADERS

The Minnesota Vikings Cheerleaders Junior Cheer and Flag Runner program is designed specifically to promote

confidence, hard work, leadership, and FUN among Junior Cheerleaders and Flag Runners 3-14 years of age. More than 530 participants in the Junior (ages 6-14) and Angel (ages 3-5) Cheerleaders will perform at halftime.

GAME THEME: NFL PLAY FOOTBALL

We will be celebrating youth football by honoring impactful coaches who inspire children on and off the field.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Ashley Wongbi, a Twin Cities-based singer, actress and model with a vocal background in R&B, classical, opera and musical theater.

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TODAY'S

GAME

PROMOTIONS & CONTESTS

SACKS FOR WINGS

Buffalo Wild Wings brings you "Sacks for Wings" during all Vikings home and away games this season! When the Vikings record 2.0 or more sacks in a game, all fans score six free wings with a minimum purchase of \$10. Offer is valid for three days after each eligible game. Visit Vikings.com/bww for your digital coupon and details.



KWIK TRIP TO END ZONE

Vikings fans, do you want to score big this season? Purchase any Pothole Pizza or 20 oz. Pepsi or Mountain Dew product with Kwik Rewards, and you're entered! One weekly winner will automatically win a \$500 gift card. And if the Vikings score a touchdown over 50 yards that week ... one lucky fan wins \$5,000! See kwiktrip.com/sweepstakes for details.



HY-VEE PERKS CARD

THEY score, YOU save! Shop your local Hy-Vee store following game day to receive great fuel savings. Simply spend the same amount that the Vikings scored, and earn a 1¢ credit on your Hy-Vee PERKS® card. If the Vikings score 14 points, spend \$14 or more the next day and earn 14¢ credit on your Hy-Vee PERKS® card. SKOL! Promotion valid at all Minnesota Hy-Vee locations, some limitations apply. See store for details.



GAME-DAY AUCTION

The Minnesota Vikings Foundation is partnering with Universal Sports Auctions to provide an elevated auction experience on Vikings game days. Visit the auction kiosks located on the Medtronic Plaza and Main Concourse for signed memorabilia. For exclusive Vikings experiences, please visit vikings.com/auction.



MINNESOTA VIKINGS
FOUNDATION

FIELD GOALS FOR CHARITY

A Vikings field goal means another donation to Field Goals for Charity, courtesy of Innovative and Post-It brand. Funds raised will help add potential blood stem cell donors to the registry, help patients with uninsured costs and fund life-saving research. For patients with blood cancers like leukemia and other life-threatening diseases like sickle cell anemia, a cure exists – a stem cell transplant. Visit nmdp.org/vikings to make a difference!



TODAY'S GAME
PROMOTIONS & CONTESTS



VIKINGS TABLE

Vikings Table, powered by Xcel Energy, is a custom-built food truck that sells delicious food on game days. Find us on the Plaza before kickoff; your purchase directly supports our ability to provide free, healthy meals to kids in need. Join us as we tackle food insecurity in the Twin Cities. Follow @vikingsfdn on Instagram and X for all Vikings Table updates.



SPLIT THE POT

Benefiting the Minnesota Vikings Foundation

Purchase your raffle tickets from roaming sellers pregame on the Plaza or on the concourse at Split the Pot kiosks. The winning ticket will be selected by a random drawing and posted online after the game. Winner has 30 days to claim the prize. Split The Pot supports the Minnesota Vikings Foundation's mission to advance youth health and education initiatives. Visit vikings.com/splitthepot for details.



MINNESOTA **VIKINGS**
FOUNDATION

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Spalon Montage is giving one lucky fan a \$100 gift card. Tweet a photo of you at the game to @VikingsPromos using #VikingsHAIR for a chance to win!

SPALON
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WIN VIKTOR'S RIDE!

Purchase a Vikings souvenir Pepsi cup at U.S. Bank Stadium this season or at participating Hy-Vee and Buffalo Wild Wings locations and enter to win Viktor's Ride.

MEDTRONIC GAME CHANGER

Today's Today's Medtronic Game Changer is Brittany Beaulieu, a Special Olympics Minnesota athlete who has taken on roles as a coach and advocate for 16 years, working to promote inclusion and expand opportunities in sports for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

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DONOVAN JACKSON

DONOVAN JACKSON, MINNESOTA'S FIRST-ROUND PICK OF 2025, AND OTHER VIKINGS ROOKIES ARE SET TO MAKE THEIR NFL DEBUTS IN TODAY'S GAME.

Jackson was selected with the 24th overall pick, becoming the third player ever selected by the Vikings at that draft spot. The other two (Leo Hayden in 1971 and Korey Stringer in 1995) also are former Buckeyes.

After locking things down at guard, Jackson was willing to kick out to left tackle on the way to helping Ohio State win the 2025 College Football Playoff National Championship and garnering his second consecutive First-Team All-Big Ten selection. According to Pro Football Focus, Jackson allowed just 5.0 sacks over the

course of 1,293 pass blocking snaps during his college career.

HOUSTON'S OWN

Jackson will be opening his NFL career against his hometown team. He racked up significant honors during his prep career, earning a five-star rating and top guard designations from recruiting services. He played at Houston Christian High School before transferring to Episcopal High School. Jackson helped Episcopal win the Southwest Preparatory Conference 4A title as a junior.

DID YOU KNOW?

Jackson and Bengals rookie Seth McLaughlin became the third and fourth players in Ohio State history to earn First-Team All-America honors as a player and First-Team Academic All-America honors, joining Bob White in 1958 and Randy Gradishar in 1973.

CHI WK1
SEPT. 8

WK2
SEPT. 14 **ATL**

WK3
SEPT. 21 **CIN**

PIT WK4
SEPT. 28

CLE WK5
OCT. 5

BYE WK6
OCT. 12

WK7
OCT. 19 **PHI**

LAC WK8
OCT. 23

DET WK9
NOV. 2

WK10
NOV. 9 **BAL**

WK11
NOV. 16 **CHI**

GB WK12
NOV. 23

SEA WK13
NOV. 30

WK14
DEC. 7 **WAS**

DAL WK15
DEC. 14

NYG WK16
DEC. 21

WK17
DEC. 25 **DET**

WK18
TBD **GB**



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VIKINGS ROSTER

DEPTH
CHART



#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE	#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE	
0	Ivan Pace Jr.	LB	5-10	231	24	3	Cincinnati	50	Levi Drake Rodriguez	DL	6-2	290	25	2	Texas A&M Commerce	
1	Jalen Nailor	WR	5-11	190	26	4	Michigan State	51	Blake Cashman	LB	6-1	235	29	7	Minnesota	
2	Isaiah Rodgers	CB	5-10	176	27	5	Massachusetts	52	Dorian Mausi	LB	6-1	234	23	R	Auburn	
3	Jordan Addison	WR	5-11	175	23	3	USC	54	Bo Richter	OLB	6-1	248	24	2	Air Force	
4	Rondale Moore	WR	5-7	181	25	5	Purdue	55	Eric Wilson	LB	6-1	230	30	9	Cincinnati	
5	Mekhi Blackmon	CB	5-11	178	26	3	USC	56	Austin Keys	LB	6-2	247	23	R	Auburn	
6	Brian Asamoah II	LB	6-0	226	25	4	Oklahoma	57	Chaz Chambliss	OLB	6-1	242	22	R	Georgia	
7	Byron Murphy Jr.	CB	5-11	190	27	7	Washington	58	Jonathan Greenard	OLB	6-3	259	28	6	Florida	
8	Sam Howell	QB	6-1	225	24	4	North Carolina	59	Gabriel Murphy	OLB	6-2	247	24	1	UCLA	
9	J.J. McCarthy	QB	6-3	219	22	2	Michigan	60	Joe Huber	G	6-5	310	23	R	Wisconsin	
11	Brett Rypien	QB	6-2	210	29	7	Boise State	61	Jalen Redmond	DL	6-3	291	26	2	Oklahoma	
12	Max Brosmer	QB	6-2	217	24	R	Minnesota	62	Logan Brown	OL	6-6	311	24	R	Kansas	
13	Tai Felton	WR	6-1	183	22	R	Maryland	63	Zeke Correll	OL	6-3	307	24	R	N.C. State	
14	Tim Jones	WR	6-1	200	27	4	Southern Miss	64	Blake Brandel	G	6-6	315	28	5	Oregon State	
15	Dallas Turner	OLB	6-3	247	22	2	Alabama	65	Michael Jurgens	G	6-5	311	25	2	Wake Forest	
16	Will Reichard	K	6-1	187	24	2	Alabama	66	Vershon Lee	OL	6-4	310	23	R	South Carolina	
17	Ryan Wright	P	6-3	245	25	4	Tulane	67	Justin Skule	T	6-6	315	28	7	Vanderbilt	
18	Justin Jefferson	WR	6-1	195	26	6	LSU	68	Henry Byrd	G	6-5	310	26	2	Princeton	
19	Dontae Fleming	WR	6-2	180	23	R	Tulane	69	Matt Nelson	OL	6-7	315	29	4	Iowa	
20	Reddy Steward	CB	5-11	178	24	1	Troy	71	Christian Darrisaw	T	6-5	315	26	5	Virginia Tech	
21	Jeff Okudah	CB	6-1	205	26	6	Ohio State	72	Leroy Watson IV	T	6-4	311	27	3	Texas-San Antonio	
22	Harrison Smith	S	6-2	211	36	14	Notre Dame	73	Walter Rouse	T	6-6	313	24	2	Oklahoma	
23	Ambry Thomas	CB	6-0	190	25	5	Michigan	74	Donovan Jackson	OL	6-4	315	22	R	Ohio State	
24	Jay Ward	S	6-1	188	25	3	LSU	75	Brian O'Neill	T	6-7	310	29	8	Pittsburgh	
25	Kahlef Hailassie	CB	6-1	194	24	2	Western Kentucky	76	Will Fries	G	6-6	305	27	5	Penn State	
26	Theo Jackson	S	6-1	198	26	4	Tennessee	78	Ryan Kelly	C	6-4	307	32	10	Alabama	
27	Jordan Mason	RB	5-11	223	26	4	Georgia Tech	81	Lucky Jackson	WR	6-0	186	28	3	Western Kentucky	
29	Dwight McGlothern	CB	6-2	185	23	2	Arkansas	82	Jeshaun Jones	WR	6-1	188	25	1	Maryland	
30	C.J. Ham	FB	5-11	250	32	9	Augustana	83	Silas Bolden	WR	5-8	160	23	R	Texas	
31	Myles Price	WR	5-9	183	23	R	Indiana	84	Josh Oliver	TE	6-5	259	28	7	San Jose State	
32	Ty Chandler	RB	5-11	204	27	4	North Carolina	85	Robert Lewis	WR	5-10	188	23	R	Auburn	
33	Aaron Jones Sr.	RB	5-10	208	30	9	UTEP	87	T.J. Hockenson	TE	6-5	248	28	7	Iowa	
34	Zemaiah Vaughn	CB	6-3	187	23	R	Utah	89	Thayer Thomas	WR	6-0	195	27	2	N.C. State	
35	Keenan Garber	CB	6-0	188	25	R	Kansas State	90	Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins	DL	6-5	276	22	R	Georgia	
36	Zavier Scott	RB	6-1	219	26	2	Maine	92	Jonathan Harris	DL	6-5	295	29	6	Lindenwood	
37	Tavierre Thomas	DB	5-10	205	29	8	Ferris State	93	Jonathan Allen	DL	6-3	300	30	9	Alabama	
38	Tre Stewart	RB	5-8	186	22	R	Jacksonville State	94	Taki Taimani	DL	6-1	309	25	2	Oregon	
39	Gervarius Owens	S	6-0	200	25	3	Houston	95	Travis Bell	DL	6-0	310	26	2	Kennesaw State	
40	Mishael Powell	S	6-1	210	24	R	Miami	96	Tyler Batty	OLB	6-6	271	26	R	BYU	
41	Kobe King	LB	6-1	236	22	R	Penn State	97	Harrison Phillips	DL	6-3	307	29	8	Stanford	
42	Andrew DePaola	LS	6-1	229	38	11	Rutgers	98	Javon Hargrave	DL	6-2	305	32	10	South Carolina State	
43	Andrew Van Ginkel	OLB	6-4	242	30	7	Wisconsin	99	Elijah Williams	DL	6-3	270	22	R	Morgan State	
44	Joshua Metellus	S	5-11	207	27	6	Michigan	INACTIVE/PHYSICALLY UNABLE TO PERFORM								
45	Nick Vannett	TE	6-5	257	32	10	Ohio State	86	Gavin Bartholomew	TE	6-5	246	22	R	Pittsburgh	
46	Bryson Nesbit	TE	6-5	238	22	R	North Carolina	INTERNATIONAL PLAYER PATHWAY EXEMPTION (1)								
48	Ben Yurosek	TE	6-4	245	23	R	Georgia	91	Oscar Chapman	P	6-3	211	26	R	Auburn	
49	Giovanni Ricci	TE	6-3	240	28	4	Western Michigan									

MINNESOTA VIKINGS COACHING STAFF

Head Coach: Kevin O'Connell	Game Management Coord./Passing Game Specialist: Ryan Cordell	Wide Receivers: Keenan McCardell
Asst. Head Coach: Mike Pettine	Defensive Line: Marcus Dixon	Quarterbacks: Josh McCown
Special Teams Coordinator: Matt Daniels	Offensive Asst.: Ben Ellefson	Running Game Coord./Running Backs: Curtis Modkins
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Flores	Defensive Asst.: Charlie Frye	Quality Control - Offense: Derron Montgomery
Offensive Coordinator: Wes Phillips	Quality Control - Defense: Chenzo Funari	Senior Offensive Asst.: Chris O'Hara
Asst. Defensive Line: Imarjaye Albury Sr.	Asst. Special Teams: Dalmin Gibson	Asst. to the Head Coach: Henry Schneider IV
Passing Game Coord./Tight Ends: Brian Angelichio	Asst. Outside Linebackers: Patrick Hill	Inside Linebackers: Mike Siravo
Outside Linebackers: Thad Bogardus	Safeties: Michael Hutchings	Asst. Wide Receivers: Tony Sorrentino
Asst. Offensive Line: Keith Carter	Passing Game Coord./Defensive Backs: Daronte Jones	Asst. Offensive Coord./Asst. Quarterbacks: Jordan Traylor
	Offensive Line: Chris Kuper	

* ROSTER AS OF PRINT DEADLINE (8.5.25)

LINEBACKER 0	 Ivan Pace Jr.	WIDE RECEIVER 1	 Jalen Nailor	CORNERBACK 2	 Isaiah Rodgers	WIDE RECEIVER 3	 Jordan Addison	WIDE RECEIVER 4	 Rondale Moore	CORNERBACK 5	 Mekhi Blackmon
LINEBACKER 6	 Brian Asamoah II	CORNERBACK 7	 Byron Murphy Jr.	QUARTERBACK 8	 Sam Howell	QUARTERBACK 9	 J.J. McCarthy	QUARTERBACK 11	 Brett Rypien	QUARTERBACK 12	 Max Brosmer
WIDE RECEIVER 13	 Tai Felton	WIDE RECEIVER 14	 Tim Jones	OUTSIDE LINEBACKER 15	 Dallas Turner	KICKER 16	 Will Reichard	PUNTER 17	 Ryan Wright	WIDE RECEIVER 18	 Justin Jefferson
WIDE RECEIVER 19	 Dontae Fleming	CORNERBACK 20	 Reddy Steward	CORNERBACK 21	 Jeff Okudah	SAFETY 22	 Harrison Smith	CORNERBACK 23	 Ambry Thomas	SAFETY 24	 Jay Ward
CORNERBACK 25	 Kahlel Haillassie	SAFETY 26	 Theo Jackson	RUNNING BACK 27	 Jordan Mason	CORNERBACK 29	 Dwight McGlothern	FULLBACK 30	 C.J. Ham	WIDE RECEIVER 31	 Myles Price

RUNNING BACK

**32** Ty Chandler

RUNNING BACK

**33** Aaron Jones Sr.

CORNERBACK

**34** Zemaiah Vaughn

CORNERBACK

**35** Keenan Garber

RUNNING BACK

**36** Xavier Scott

DEFENSIVE BACK

**37** Tavierre Thomas

RUNNING BACK

**38** Tre Stewart

SAFETY

**39** Gervarius Owens

SAFETY

**40** Mishael Powell

LINEBACKER

**41** Kobe King

LONG SNAPPER

**42** Andrew DePaola

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**43** Andrew Van Ginkel

SAFETY

**44** Joshua Metellus

TIGHT END

**45** Nick Vannett

TIGHT END

**46** Bryson Nesbit

TIGHT END

**48** Ben Yurosek

TIGHT END

**49** Giovanni Ricci

DEFENSIVE LINE

**50** Levi Drake Rodriguez

LINEBACKER

**51** Blake Cashman

LINEBACKER

**52** Dorian Mauti

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**54** Bo Richter

LINEBACKER

**55** Eric Wilson

LINEBACKER

**56** Austin Keys

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**57** Chaz Chambliss

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**58** Jonathan Greenard

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**59** Gabriel Murphy

GUARD

**60** Joe Huber

DEFENSIVE LINE

**61** Jalen Redmond

OFFENSIVE LINE

**62** Logan Brown

OFFENSIVE LINE

**63** Zeke Correll

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GUARD

**64** Blake Brandel

GUARD

**65** Michael Jurgens

OFFENSIVE LINE

**66** Vershon Lee

TACKLE

**67** Justin Skule

GUARD

**68** Henry Byrd

OFFENSIVE LINE

**69** Matt Nelson

TACKLE

**71** Christian Darrisaw

TACKLE

**72** Leroy Watson IV

TACKLE

**73** Walter Rouse

OFFENSIVE LINE

**74** Donovan Jackson

TACKLE

**75** Brian O'Neill

GUARD

**76** Will Fries

CENTER

**78** Ryan Kelly

WIDE RECEIVER

**81** Lucky Jackson

WIDE RECEIVER

**82** Jeshawn Jones

WIDE RECEIVER

**83** Silas Bolden

TIGHT END

**84** Josh Oliver

WIDE RECEIVER

**85** Robert Lewis

TIGHT END

**86** Gavin Bartholomew

TIGHT END

**87** T.J. Hockenson

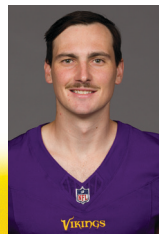
WIDE RECEIVER

**89** Thayer Thomas

DEFENSIVE LINE

**90** Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins

PUNTER

**91** Oscar Chapman

DEFENSIVE LINE

**92** Jonathan Harris

DEFENSIVE LINE

**93** Jonathan Allen

DEFENSIVE LINE

**94** Taki Taimani

DEFENSIVE LINE

**95** Travis Bell

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**96** Tyler Batty

DEFENSIVE LINE

**97** Harrison Phillips

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

**98** Javon Hargrave

DEFENSIVE LINE

**99** Elijah Williams

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TEXANS ROSTER

DEPTH
CHART



#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE	#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE
0	Azeez Al-Shaair	LB	6-2	228	27	7	Florida Atlantic	53	Junior Tafuna	DT	6-3	305	24	R	Utah
2	Calen Bullock	S	6-3	190	22	2	USC	54	Jarrett Patterson	C/G	6-4	310	25	3	Notre Dame
4	Kamari Lassiter	CB	6-0	180	22	2	Georgia	55	Danielle Hunter	DE	6-5	263	30	10	LSU
5	Jalen Pitre	S	6-0	200	26	4	Baylor	56	Jamal Hill	LB	6-0	227	24	2	Oregon
6	Tommy Townsend	P	6-1	191	28	6	Florida	57	Blake Fisher	T	6-6	312	22	2	Notre Dame
7	C.J. Stroud	QB	6-3	218	23	3	Ohio State	60	Jake Andrews	C	6-3	308	25	2	Troy
8	John Metchie III	WR	6-0	195	25	3	Alabama	65	Eli Cox	C	6-4	309	24	R	Kentucky
9	Brevin Jordan	TE	6-3	245	25	4	Miami	69	Ed Ingram	G	6-3	307	26	4	LSU
10	Davis Mills	QB	6-4	225	26	5	Stanford	70	Juice Scruggs	C/G	6-3	310	25	3	Penn State
11	Tremont Smith	CB	5-11	190	29	8	Central Arkansas	71	Tytus Howard	T	6-5	322	29	7	Alabama State
12	Nico Collins	WR	6-4	222	26	5	Michigan	72	Jaylon Thomas	T	6-5	311	25	1	SMU
13	Christian Kirk	WR	5-11	200	28	8	Texas A&M	72	Tommy Togiai	DT	6-2	296	25	4	Ohio State
14	Jared Wayne	WR	6-3	210	24	2	Pittsburgh	73	LaDarius Henderson	G	6-4	309	23	1	Michigan
15	Ka'imi Fairbairn	K	6-0	183	31	9	UCLA	74	Cam Robinson	T	6-6	335	29	9	Alabama
16	Kedon Slovis	QB	6-3	223	24	1	BYU	75	Laken Tomlinson	G	6-3	323	33	11	Duke
17	Braxton Berrios	WR	5-9	185	29	7	Miami	76	Austin Deculus	T	6-5	321	26	2	LSU
18	Graham Mertz	QB	6-2	216	24	R	Florida	78	Zach Thomas	T	6-5	308	27	4	San Diego State
19	Xavier Hutchinson	WR	6-3	210	25	3	Iowa State	79	Aireontae Erserly	T	6-6	330	23	R	Minnesota
21	Nick Chubb	RB	5-11	227	29	8	Georgia	81	Jayden Higgins	WR	6-4	215	22	R	Iowa State
22o	Jawhar Jordan	RB	5-10	185	25	1	Louisville	82	Jaylin Noel	WR	5-11	201	22	R	Iowa State
22d	Arthur Maulet	CB	5-10	190	32	10	Memphis	83	Irv Smith Jr.	TE	6-2	240	26	6	Alabama
23	C.J. Gardner-Johnson	S	5-11	208	27	7	Florida	84	Justin Watson	WR	6-2	215	29	8	Pennsylvania
24	Derek Stingley Jr.	CB	6-1	195	24	4	LSU	85	Daniel Jackson	WR	6-0	195	23	R	Minnesota
25	Russ Yeast	S	5-10	195	26	4	Kansas State	86	Dalton Schultz	TE	6-5	242	29	8	Stanford
26	J.J. Taylor	RB	5-6	185	27	4	Arizona	87	Cade Stover	TE	6-4	251	25	2	Ohio State
27	Myles Bryant	CB	5-9	192	27	6	Washington	88	Johnny Johnson III	WR	6-1	199	26	1	Oregon
27	Woody Marks	RB	5-10	208	24	R	USC	89	Xavier Johnson	WR	6-1	204	26	1	Ohio State
29	M.J. Stewart	S	5-11	205	29	8	North Carolina	90	Sheldon Rankins	DT	6-2	305	31	10	Louisville
30	Jaylin Smith	CB	5-11	190	21	R	USC	92	Dylan Horton	DE	6-4	275	24	3	TCU
32	Nick Niemann	LB	6-3	234	27	5	Iowa	94	Casey Toohill	DE	6-5	250	28	6	Stanford
33	Dare Ogunbowale	RB	5-10	205	31	7	Wisconsin	97	Mario Edwards Jr.	DT	6-3	280	31	10	Florida State
34	Jaylen Reed	S	6-0	212	22	R	Penn State	98	Tim Settle Jr.	DT	6-3	313	28	8	Virginia Tech
35	Jake Hansen	LB	6-1	230	27	4	Illinois	NON-FOOTBALL INJURY							
37	D'Angelo Ross	CB	5-9	190	28	4	New Mexico	28	Joe Mixon	RB	6-1	220	29	9	Oklahoma
39	Henry To'oTo'o	LB	6-2	228	24	3	Alabama	36	Alijah Huzzie	CB	5-10	195	24	R	North Carolina
40	Austin Brinkman	LS	6-4	241	23	R	West Virginia	INJURED RESERVE							
41	Damon Arnette	CB	6-0	195	29	3	Ohio State	58	Kyonte Hamilton	DT	6-4	304	22	R	Rutgers
42	Luke Lachey	TE	6-6	247	24	R	Iowa	ACTIVE/PHYSICALLY UNABLE TO PERFORM							
43	Jakob Johnson	FB	6-3	255	30	7	Tennessee	3	Tank Dell	WR	5-10	165	25	3	Houston
44	British Brooks	RB	5-11	225	25	2	North Carolina	20	Jimmie Ward	S	5-11	193	34	12	Northern Illinois
45	E.J. Speed	LB	6-4	227	30	7	Tarleton State	31	Dameon Pierce	RB	5-10	215	25	4	Florida
46	Jackson Woodard	LB	6-2	230	22	R	UNLV	77	Trent Brown	T	6-8	380	32	11	Florida
47	K.C. Ossai	LB	6-1	240	22	R	Louisiana	91	Folorunso Fatukasi	DT	6-4	318	30	7	Connecticut
48	Christian Harris	LB	6-2	232	24	4	Alabama	93	Kurt Hinish	DT	6-1	296	26	4	Notre Dame
50	Solomon Byrd	DE	6-3	250	25	1	USC	95	Derek Barnett	DE	6-3	259	29	8	Tennessee
51	Will Anderson Jr.	DE	6-4	243	23	3	Alabama	96	Denico Autry	DE	6-5	285	35	12	Mississippi State
52	Darrell Taylor	DE	6-4	255	28	5	Tennessee								

HOUSTON TEXANS COACHING STAFF

Head Coach: DeMeco Ryans	Linebackers: Bill Davis	Senior Offensive Asst./Pass Game Specialist: Jerry Schuplinski
Asst. Head Coach/Running Backs: Danny Barrett	Quarterbacks: Jerrod Johnson	Offensive Asst.: Mike Snyder
Defensive Coordinator: Matt Burke	Senior Offensive Asst.: Bill Lazor	Defensive Passing Game Coord.: Cory Undlin
Offensive Coordinator: Nick Caley	Wide Receivers/Offensive Passing Game Coord.: Ben McDaniels	Defensive Backs: Dino Vasso
Special Teams Coordinator: Frank Ross	Tight Ends: Jake Moreland	Defensive Asst.: Cole Weeks
Safeties: Stephen Adedokun	Asst. Defensive Line: Frank Okam	Defensive Line: Rod Wright
Special Teams/Defensive Asst.: Sean Baker	Offensive Line/Offensive Run Game Coord.: Cole Popovich	Asst. Offensive Line: Zach Yenser
Asst. Linebackers: Ben Bolling	Offensive Asst.: Pat Reilly	Asst. to the Head Coach: Jake Olson
Asst. Special Teams: Will Burnham	Offensive Asst.: Asauni Rufus	

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OCT. 26 **SF**

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NOV. 16

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NOV. 20 **BUF**

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NOV. 30

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DEC. 7

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DEC. 14 **ARI**

WK16
DEC. 21 **LV**

@LAC **WK17**
TBD

WK18
TBD **GB**



DANIELLE HUNTER

THE VIKINGS WILL SEE A FAMILIAR FACE AT TODAY'S GAME IN DANIELLE HUNTER.

Though it's unlikely the veteran defensive end will see much (or any) playing time for Houston in the teams' first preseason action, Hunter will once again occupy a sideline of U.S. Bank Stadium ... just the opposite side Minnesota fans are used to.

Hunter started his pro career in Purple, when the Vikings tabbed him in the third round of the 2015 NFL Draft. He ascended

into the top-tier pass rusher he's revered as across the league today, recording double-digit sacks on five occasions and earning four of his five Pro Bowl nods as a Viking.

Hunter spent his first nine seasons in Minnesota before signing with his hometown Texans as a free agent in March 2024. He started all 17 regular-season games last season and tallied 46 tackles, 12 sacks, 17 tackles for loss, a forced fumble and three passes defended. He faced his former team in Week 3, when he had two tackles and two QB hits in a 34-7 loss to the Vikings.

SERIES HISTORY



ALL-TIME RESULTS

REGULAR SEASON & POSTSEASON

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ALL-TIME
(6-0 IN REGULAR SEASON)

LONGEST WIN STREAKS

6 GAMES BY VIKINGS
(Began Oct. 10, 2004)

FIRST MEETING

OCT. 10, 2004 | AT HOU | VIKINGS 34, TEXANS 28

Daunte Culpepper threw for 396 yards and five touchdowns, including a 50-yarder to Marcus Robinson in overtime to end a game that lasted 3 hours, 43 minutes. Robinson racked up nine catches for 150 yards and two touchdowns, and Randy Moss added 90 yards and two touchdowns on five catches. RB Mewelde Moore totaled 182 scrimmage yards. Texans WR Andre Johnson countered with 170 yards and two touchdowns from David Carr.

PREVIOUS MEETING

SEPT. 22, 2024 | IN MIN | VIKINGS 34, TEXANS 7

Facing his former team for the first time, Jonathan Greenard drew a holding penalty on the first snap of the game, and former Texan Kamu Grugier-Hill recorded an interception on the next snap. Minnesota's offense capitalized on the momentum with a 6-yard TD pass from Sam Darnold to Justin Jefferson. Darnold added three more scores on short passes to Aaron Jones, Sr., Jalen Nailor and Johnny Mundt. Will Reichard added field goals of 35 and 58 yards for Minnesota. Running back Cam Akers, who later rejoined the Vikings, provided the lone score for Houston.

THROWBACK MOMENT

TRIPLE-DIGIT TRIO | OCT. 4, 2020

Adam Thielen (114 yards and a TD) and Justin Jefferson (103) hit the triple-digit mark together for the first time as teammates, and Dalvin Cook rushed for 130 yards and two scores. Minnesota led 31-16 with 10:50 remaining, but Kenny Stills caught a 24-yard TD with 5:52 to go. The Texans drove to the

Minnesota 1 in the game's final minutes before an aborted snap on third-and-goal was followed by an incompletion.

Vikings OLB Jonathan Greenard made his NFL debut in this game as a Texans rookie. He played five snaps on defense and 16 on special teams.

TOP 2 AGAINST TEXANS

RUSHING YARDS

139 Adrian Peterson on 25 attempts in Minnesota (Nov. 2, 2008)

130 Dalvin Cook on 27 attempts at Houston (Oct. 4, 2020)

PASSING YARDS

396 Daunte Culpepper on 36-of-50 passing at Houston (Oct. 10, 2004)

271 Sam Bradford on 22-of-30 passing in Minnesota (Oct. 9, 2016)

RECEIVING YARDS

150 Marcus Robinson on nine catches at Houston (Oct. 10, 2004)

127 Adam Thielen on seven catches in Minnesota (Oct. 9, 2016)

AGAINST VIKINGS

RUSHING YARDS

63 David Johnson on 16 attempts at Houston (Oct. 4, 2020)

62 Steve Slaton, on 16 attempts in Minnesota (Nov. 2, 2008)

PASSING YARDS

372 David Carr on 27-of-42 passing at Houston (Oct. 10, 2004)

300 Deshaun Watson on 20-of-33 passing at Houston (Oct. 4, 2020)

RECEIVING YARDS

170 Andre Johnson on 12 catches at Houston (Oct. 10, 2004)

133 Owen Daniels on 11 catches in Minnesota (Nov. 2, 2008)

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Q&A **JEFF OKUDAH**

COVERS FASHION & NFC NORTH STYLE

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

Jeff Okudah is back to four distinct seasons, Great Lakes territory and the grittiness of NFC North football.

After spending his first three NFL seasons in Detroit, the 2020 first-round draft pick played for Atlanta in 2023 and Houston last season before this spring joining the Vikings as a free agent.

"It's an explosive division with a mix of toughness in there, too," Okudah told Vikings.com. "It's not just all finesse. It's like, you do see a lot of high-powered offenses, but there's also an element of toughness that every team possesses. I think it makes for really fascinating games."

Born in New Jersey, Okudah's family relocated to Grand Prairie, Texas, when he was 11 years old. It was that move that fully immersed him in the game of football. He went on to star at Grand Prairie High School and then Ohio State University.

Since being drafted No. 3 overall by the Lions, the cornerback's pro journey has been anything but linear. Okudah navigated injuries and other challenges throughout his first five seasons but is thrilled for a fresh start and opportunity to make an impact in the game he's never stopped loving.

"I think for me, the fun comes from understanding – it's taking a step back and understanding the blessing that I have to be here," he said. "Getting older, you see guys that you've started the journey with, whether in high school or college or even the NFL that are no

longer playing, and they've transitioned to other careers or endeavors. So be able to come in here every single day and do this, you know, I have a lot of gratitude."

Okudah is entering his debut Vikings season with 44 career games (31 starts) under his belt. Okudah has recorded 177 total tackles (including two on special teams), seven tackles for loss, 14 passes defended, two interceptions and one defensive touchdown. He also contributed heavily on special teams last season for the Texans.

But who is Jeff Okudah beyond his stat line, now-Purple helmet and his No. 21 jersey?

We're glad you asked.

Q: WHEN YOU WERE COMING INTO THE LEAGUE, THE NFL DRAFT WAS ALL VIRTUAL THAT YEAR BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND I REMEMBER YOU MADE THE NEWS FOR HOW SHARPLY YOU WERE DRESSED DESPITE HAVING TO BE AT HOME. HAS FASHION ALWAYS BEEN IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A: "I think I just really like the details. I was looking forward to going to the draft. I had met with Thom Browne, and we had this whole draft outfit we were going to do in Las Vegas. But when everything got moved virtually, we had to kind of pivot – and think of something that was going to be going to be kind of fly but, like, not overdo because we're at the house. I think they did a really great job of styling me there."

Q: ARE THERE ANY FASHION ICONS THAT INSPIRE YOUR LOOK, OR DO YOU PREFER TO BE INDEPENDENT THAT WAY?

A: "I like to create my own look and wear clothes as an expression, kind of have the autonomy to wear what I want to wear. I know some guys might hire people to style them, but I just go in my closet and put things together. It's kind of cool to just see how it all comes together sometimes."

Q: DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE GAME-DAY LOOK THUS FAR?

A: "You know, I've only worn a suit one time to a game, and I got a pick six that game. So, maybe I should wear some more suits."

Q: OUTSIDE OF FASHION, DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES? WHAT GIVES YOU JOY OUTSIDE OF PLAYING FOOTBALL?

A: "I like reading. I like learning about financial literacy. This past year, I've been sharpening my financial literacy, doing different courses, reading different books."

Q: THAT'S REALLY COOL; WHERE DOES THAT INTEREST COME FROM?

A: "When I suffered an injury last year, having that extra time to yourself, I realized that the financial literacy aspect was a piece that probably is neglected by a lot of people, and not just athletes ... So I just took the time to change the content I was consuming and [be intentional with] beneficial content."

Q: DO YOU EVER OPT TO PICK UP A NOVEL?

A: "I could read fiction, but if it's not a financial literacy thing, it'll probably still be some type of self-help. I read *The Alchemist*, which is a fiction book but also somewhat of a self-help, so it was the best of both worlds, in a way."

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS?

A: "I don't have any pets. My daughter really wants a dog, but it's a lot of work. I've had a dog before and know it's a lot of work, so I want to be really ready for that if I ever get another one."

Q: HOW OLD IS YOUR DAUGHTER? WHAT DOES SHE THINK OF MINNESOTA?

A: "She's 7. We went to the Mall of America, and she thought that was pretty cool. And she's like, 'There's a lot of trees out here.' For me, it's really cool for her to see the world and different places I've played at, to be part of that experience and a part of the journey however she can."

Q: DOES SHE RECOGNIZE HOW COOL DAD'S JOB IS?

A: "She realizes a little bit, probably because of her classmates, you know, 'Your dad is so-and-so!' But I asked her recently, 'Do you like the football games?' And she's like, 'I really like going to the concession stands.' (Laughs) I know she also doesn't like to sit still for a long time watching things. So when she's at a game, she's talking about eating churros, watching the cheerleaders. I don't think she's at that age yet where she's totally locked in or understands the magnitude of [the NFL]. ... I did show her the SKOL Chant; we watched, like, two or three SKOL videos where everyone's clapping, and she thought that was pretty awesome. She's looking forward to that. And me too, honestly."

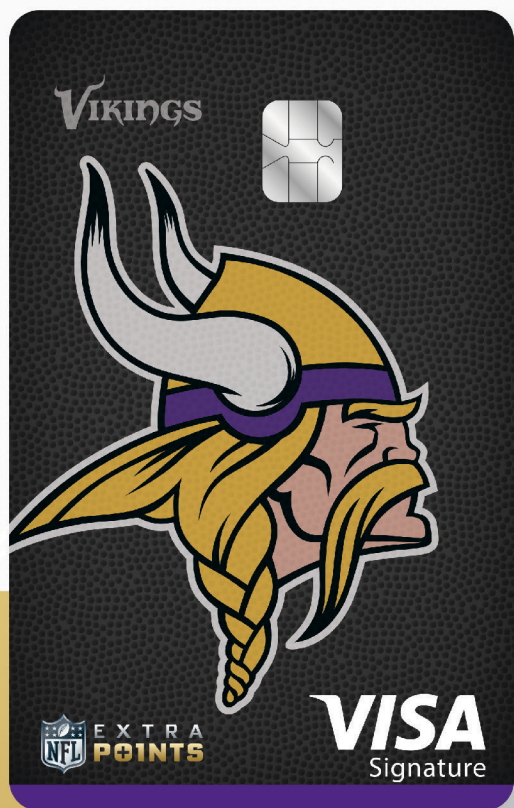
Q: ARE YOU EXCITED TO PLAY IN U.S. BANK STADIUM AS THE HOME TEAM? I'M BIASED, BUT THE ATMOSPHERE IS AWESOME.

A: "Oh, it definitely is. Even though the South is known for great football, I do love up North, like, Midwest football. Fans and the culture are second to none. ... The fans are gonna come, winning season, losing season, and as a player, you can really appreciate the people."



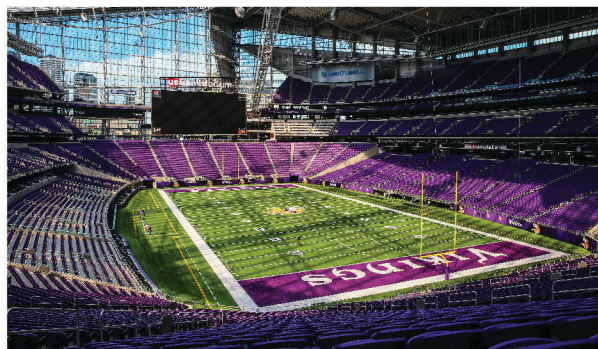
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Scoop

A DISTINCTLY
VIKINGS
VOYAGE

by Lindsey Young

Back like he never left. Eric Wilson walks through the halls at TCO Performance Center and across the Vikings practice fields wearing his signature grin.

No, really. He might *always* be smiling.

The linebacker who started his career in Minnesota as an undrafted rookie in 2017 re-joined the Vikings this spring and continues to have a positive impact on the field and locker room alike.

"Eric being back has been great," fullback C.J. Ham said. "Like, the dude is a heck of a player. He's a dog. Me and him had some great years together the first time around, too.

"He just loves the game," Ham continued. "If you ever have any nerves or anxiety before games, he's one of the guys I could look at before kickoff, and he just had a great big smile on his face. When you see guys with that type of energy, everything's cool. It's gonna be great."

Vikings Defensive Coordinator Brian Flores hasn't coached Wilson, who spent 2017-20 in Minnesota, prior to this season. But he admired the dynamic defender from afar and quickly has become a fan.

Flores recently told Twin Cities media members Wilson is "just a guy you want to be around." He noted players in all three phases gravitate toward the almost-31-year-old.

Flores emphasized the need for players of Wilson's nature, saying he fits seamlessly on a unit of blue-collar defenders.

"People use the term 'glue guy'; I think he's got the makings of that," Flores said.

Asked what he thought of the 'glue guy' compliment, Wilson tilts his head before letting out a loud laugh.

"I'm not sure I know what that means," he chuckles. "Glue?"

I translate a bit: "People are drawn to you. You unify a group."

For just a moment, Wilson looks the slightest taken aback – in a good way. His smile reappears, softly.

"Wow, I appreciate that," he said. "I just love what I do. I try to maybe bring that out of other people, to find what makes them go and to help them be better at it."

TRAVELING TEAMMATES

Wherever Wilson goes, he easily creates close relationships. It's why he's still incredibly close with former Vikings teammates Danielle Hunter, who last year joined the Texans in free agency, and Ifeadi Odenigbo. The trio stays in close touch despite being spread across the country – and they also enjoy trotting the globe together.

Wilson, Hunter and Odenigbo first traveled internationally together in 2019 when they joined teammates Anthony Barr and Eric Kendricks, along with Kendricks' now-wife Ally, in visiting Tokyo.

The trip still tops Wilson's list, from sightseeing and museum tours to eating dinner at Gonpachi, the restaurant that inspired one of Quentin Tarantino's famous *Kill Bill* fight scenes.

"We were so lucky to have Ally," Wilson said. "She planned everything; we just had to show up. We tagged along."

He did point out, though, that Odenigbo handled lodging responsibilities for half the group – and subsequently had the privileges jokingly revoked.

"Ifeadi's like, 'Guys, I found this great place, super cheap for everybody, huge, plenty of space. It has this huge projector screen to watch movies and stuff.' That sounds pretty cool," Wilson recalled. "So we found our way through the train station ... to get there. It was like walking through Times Square. We had no idea where we were, but we figured it out. 'Got to the place and it was like a studio apartment shack. It was very compact,'" he quipped. "There were four of us – one, two, three, four – laying up in a studio apartment. We were on top of each other. We had to, like, crouch down in the shower. It was funny. But it was cool. It brought us much closer, for sure."

Wilson, Hunter and Odenigbo met up for another trip in March 2023, when they made the marathon trip across the globe to Australia. The group toured Sydney, Melbourne and the Gold Coast, collecting more memories and anecdotes along the way.

"The thing about Eric is that he's just a free spirit, man; he's always positive," Hunter said. "If there ever is a negative situation, he always finds a positive in it. I don't think I've ever seen Eric mad, angry, anything. In any situation, whether during a game or traveling together, he's always finding the positive."



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"[The Vikings Museums] provide extra context to our Vikings. The shields we have everywhere, the chants we do ... it's pretty dang cool."

Eric Wilson

A few months ago, Wilson got a phone call from Hunter inviting him to return to Japan and this time also visit China.

"Sure, sounds fun! When?"

"In two days."

"BRO."

Wilson cracks up while conveying the story. He's certainly not opposed to spontaneity, he assures, but even he needs more than a couple days' notice.

There's another trip option, though. Hunter offers for Wilson to join him and Odenigbo on a post-OTAs excursion to Copenhagen, Denmark, and Stockholm, Sweden.

"I was like, 'All right, bet.' I had, like, over a month to find a flight, find hotels and whatnot," Wilson said. "They had been to Norway before, so these were also on their list."

The three friends traded off who was in charge of booking various museums or dinner reservations, and they explored a Vikings (the authentic variety, not the NFL variety) museum in each capital city.

Wilson found himself enamored with the history of the Vikings and connecting it to some of the modern parallels drawn by the team he's now played for twice.

He especially enjoyed learning about the Vikings longships, which are believed to have been invented in the 8th century. The strong, slender and flexible boats most notably featured a draft that, even when filled with troops, equipment and plunder, sat shallowly in the water. The longships' unique design made it possible for Vikings to sail faster than any other water vessel of that time and to navigate seaports, shallow coves and even rivers.

"That was really cool to learn about. Really interesting," Wilson said.

"It provides extra context to [our Vikings]," he later added. "The shields we have everywhere, the chants that we do ... it's pretty dang cool. Sounding the Gjallarhorn before the game, put it all out there to take what we want. It's really cool."

During their five-day stay in Sweden, the group visited The Royal Palace of Stockholm, the official residence of the royal monarch, where they admired giant marble columns, grand archways and stunning original artwork – including the breathtaking ceiling of Karl IX's Gallery.

In Denmark, he and his former teammates visited the Rosenborg Castle, where they were able to see the Crown of Christian IV, the older (1596) of just two surviving crowns of Denmark; the Rubjerg Knude Lighthouse on the coast of the North Sea and Amalienborg Palace, the official residence of the Danish royal family.

"When you go overseas, for whatever reason when you go somewhere brand new, that's when you want to visit a museum. I've checked out more museums overseas than here in America," Wilson laughed. "But the art there is fascinating to me. It's old school, it's traditional. ... You know, murals on all the ceilings, every piece of the walls is covered with something. And it's all done in this [high-quality], beautiful way."

It wasn't all castles and regality, though.

Wilson of course made sure to mix in a few goofy photos during such sophisticated tours, and the trio one evening took a boat ride to a Swedish island, had a quick burger, and boated back.

He also took a spontaneous dip one day in Denmark.

Hunter described bicycling past multiple people swimming in the river. Though the activity certainly looked refreshing, the friends hadn't brought swimming trunks or a change of clothes on their outing.





No problem for Wilson.

"Eric was like, 'Man, I'm about to go in.' And he just, like, took his [outer layer] off and jumped in," Hunter laughed. "Ifeadi and I did not go in. We went to get food and came back later; he'd been swimming for hours. He was just vibing. Eric's a guy that knows how to have conversation with people; by the time we got back, he was friends with the whole group."

In addition to chatting up the locals, Wilson makes a point to seek out neighborhood, hole-in-the-wall food establishments. This vacation was no different, as he leaned on Google maps and patron reviews to track down "something that feels like a homecooked meal."

"I found some spots that had some really good homemade-style, authentic to the town, authentic to the country," Wilson explained. "Lingonberries, a meatloaf and mashed-potato dish. Gravy. It sounds like something so common, but the flavor profile is just a little different there, and it was amazing."

Wilson appreciates the vacation approach he, Hunter and Odenigbo take, finding a perfect balance of relaxation and tourism. He specifically enjoyed their time in Copenhagen, where they solely walked or utilized bicycles — one of the primary modes of transportation there.

"We were there for a week and didn't even touch a car. It's fascinating," Wilson said.

"It's a very laid-back city, more so than Stockholm, and people are incredibly kind," added Wilson, who even happened to be recognized by an enthusiastic Vikings fan in Denmark.

"It was hilarious," he said. "It was great."

FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME

Get to know Wilson, and it's no surprise he'd formed such strong bonds with those he's played football with.

Vikings coaches and teammates alike praise his demeanor, his ability to connect and his willingness to help bring along younger players.

"This guy's done nothing but come in and be a second coach for us," Vikings Special Teams Coordinator Matt Daniels said during minicamp. "You know, I just came over here and he's got this entire rookie group, they're going over punt protection, I mean, he's running a full-on drill."

"The addition of Eric has just been huge," Daniels added.

Blake Cashman didn't play with the Vikings during Wilson's

first stint but actually got to know him in 2020 when the two linebackers ended up training together. He said it's "been a blast" having Wilson in the position group this spring and summer.

"I think E-Wil is one of the most versatile linebackers, honestly, I've played with. A guy with a lot of experience," Cashman said. "He's already added so much value just with how he sees things and how smart he is, his reads on the field. He's got experience on me, and I can lean on him, ask him how he sees playing this certain concept so I can improve my game. For a guy that's versatile, you can plug him into any spot, and he's a perfect fit for this defense."

True to his nature, Wilson is ready and willing to do whatever the team asks of him, whether on defense or special teams. He's hard at work every day to make an impact, and he's building on connections with new and old teammates alike.

It's what makes football so great, he noted.

"It brings together guys from all different backgrounds, from all over the world. I mean, he's from freaking Australia right there," Wilson chuckled, pointing as punter Oscar Chapman walked by. "People from all over the world come together for the love of the game, and then through that process, you really get to know one another for the rest of your lives."

"It's a pretty cool thing because you have these brothers," he added. "You have these brothers for the rest of your life ... guys you can trust in, guys you can confide in."

Wilson referenced Ham, with whom he shares a similar journey of adversity to the NFL.

"I show up every day with a passion for the way that I play," he said "Me and C.J. get along so well because, you know, we go out there and we're competing to win every single rep. It doesn't even matter. It could be a walk-through, wherever, you know, we're talking to each other. Try to find little ways to get under each other's skin. I just love what I do."

And now back in Minnesota, doing it in Purple? There's nothing better.

"It feels amazing. Back where it first started," Wilson said. "I've got so much love for everybody here. The city, the team, the fans, everybody. I love it."

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STATE OF THE VIKINGS

BY CRAIG PETERS

The Vikings are entering their fourth season under General Manager Kwesi Adofo-Mensah and Head Coach Kevin O'Connell. Minnesota signed each to a contract extension this offseason. The two continued their collaboration in a free agency period that was highly active for the second consecutive year and added more newcomers during the 2025 NFL Draft. This is the State of the 2025 Vikings.

QUARTERBACKS

RETURNEES:

J.J. McCarthy (rookie season on IR) and Brett Rypien (backup in 2024)

NEWCOMERS:

Veteran Sam Howell (acquired from Seahawks) and undrafted free agent (UDFA) Max Brosmer

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Vikings are prepping to have a new Week 1 starter for the third consecutive season. McCarthy, the No. 10 overall pick of 2024, watched and learned as a rookie while rehabbing a knee injury he suffered last August. He showed during spring practices that he maximized his opportunity to grow in the system. Rypien, who was acquired just before the season, received credit for leading Minnesota's scout team in 2024. Howell was added via a draft-day trade with Seattle. Brosmer, the former Golden Gopher, stayed in town by signing as an undrafted free agent.

WHAT TO WATCH:

There's no class like time on the grass, especially at the sport's most difficult position – and when facing a tough defense. Be sure to appreciate accuracy and arm strength on passes but also observe some of the intangibles of playing the position like the ability to connect with teammates and move past a good or bad play.



RECEIVERS

RETURNING STARTERS:

Jordan Addison, Justin Jefferson and Jalen Nailor

OTHER RETURNEES:

Lucky Jackson, Jeshawn Jones and Thayer Thomas (all on 2024 practice squad)

NEWCOMERS:

Veterans Tim Jones and Rondale Moore; draft pick Tai Felton; UDFA's Silas Bolden, Dontae Fleming, Robert Lewis and Myles Price

NEXT MILESTONES:

Jefferson, the first person with at least 7,000 receiving yards in his first five NFL seasons, needs five receptions to reach the 500-catch mark. He needs four to pass Steve Jordan for fourth in team history and 40 to overtake former teammate Adam Thielen, who recorded 534 for Minnesota. After that, Jefferson will be chasing only Randy Moss (587) and Cris Carter (1,004).

BE SURE TO CATCH:

The way receivers track the football and make something that can be difficult look so smooth.

TIGHT ENDS

RETURNEES:

T.J. Hockenson and Josh Oliver

NEWCOMERS:

Draft pick Gavin Bartholomew; UDFA's Bryson Nesbit and Ben Yurosek; free agents Giovanni Ricci and Nick Vannett

READY TO ROCK 'N' ROLL:

Hockenson racked up 41 catches and 455 yards after returning to action in Week 9. Oliver showed he can impact the passing game while Hockenson was out, as well as his blocking prowess.

SUCCESSION PLAN:

The Vikings heavily leaned on Johnny Mundt for the past three seasons, but he signed with Jacksonville. Bartholomew has since stepped into the Purple 86 jersey formerly donned by Mundt. The Vikings like multifaceted tight ends.

RUNNING BACKS/FULLBACK

RETURNING STARTERS:

RB Aaron Jones, Sr., and FB C.J. Ham

OTHER RETURNEES:

RBs Ty Chandler (reserve in 2024) and Xavier Scott (PS in 2024)

NEWCOMERS:

Veteran RB Jordan Mason (acquired from 49ers) and UDFA Tre Stewart

PLAN 1A-1B:

Jones excelled in his first season with the Vikings, rushing for career highs in carries (255) and yards (1,138). The Vikings added Mason through a trade with the goal of reducing some of the workload for Jones, who turned 30 in December.

POINT OF EMPHASIS:

The Vikings committed multiple resources in the offseason to boost their results in short-yardage situations. Since the Vikings are unlikely to tackle to the ground at camp practices, the preseason games could provide a better indicator on how the plan is working.



OFFENSIVE LINE

RETURNEES:

Blake Brandel, Henry Byrd (PS in 2024), Christian Darrisaw, Michael Jurgens, Brian O'Neill, Walter Rouse and Leroy Watson IV (PS in 2024)

NEWCOMERS:

Veterans Will Fries, Ryan Kelly and Justin Skule; draft pick Donovan Jackson; UDFA's Logan Brown, Zeke Correll, Joe Huber and Vershon Lee

MOVING COMPANY MAKEOVER:

The Vikings overhauled their moving company with the quick signing of former Colts teammates Kelly and Fries. Minnesota followed by using its first draft pick of 2025 to select Jackson.

BE SURE TO CATCH:

An encouraging development during spring practices was the sight of Darrisaw participating in individual position drills as he works his way back from a Week 8 injury. The Vikings will be smart and patient with his return and added experienced depth at tackle with the signing of Skule.

DEFENSIVE LINE

RETURNEES:

Travis Bell (PS in 2024), Jonathan Harris (PS in 2024), Harrison Phillips, Jalen Redmond, Levi Drake Rodriguez and Taki Taimani

NEWCOMERS:

Veterans Jonathan Allen and Javon Hargrave; draft pick Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins; UDFA Elijah Williams

DISRUPTORS UNITE:

Allen and Hargrave were signed in Minnesota's initial free agency splash, and the Vikings expect the players with 42 and 45.5 career sacks, respectively, to continue being disruptive forces.

TRACK YOUNG BUCKS:

Redmond, Rodriguez and Taimani all flashed bright spots during last year's camp and preseason to secure spots on the Initial 53. Keep an eye on how the young bucks are progressing.

OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS

RETURNEES:

Andrew Van Ginkel, Jonathan Greenard, Gabriel Murphy, Bo Richter and Dallas Turner

NEWCOMERS:

UDFA's Tyler Batty and Chaz Chambliss

FORWARD PROGRESS:

Van Ginkel and Greenard made the Pro Bowl in their first season together and were the NFL's only set of teammates to each record 11.5-plus sacks in 2024. They'll look to slingshot off their strong season.

TAKING A TURN:

Turner, a super-athletic second-year pro, is projected to be more involved in 2025. Murphy and Richter performed well as undrafted free agents in last year's camp and wound up playing a bit in 2024.





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LINEBACKERS

RETURNEES:

Brian Asamoah II, Blake Cashman and Ivan Pace, Jr.

NEWCOMERS:

Veteran Eric Wilson (was with Vikings from 2017-20); draft pick Kobe King; UDFA's Austin Keys and Dorian Mausii

COMMUNICATIVE COMBO:

Cashman stepped straight into "green dot" duties during his first season with the Vikings, and Pace filled in when the Eden Prairie native missed time. They worked well together, with Cashman showing speed and prowess in coverage and Pace demonstrating fearless heat-seeking attributes.

WELCOME BACK EWIL:

Wilson is one of the early success stories the Vikings have been able to build on with undrafted players in the past decade. He brings valuable experience on defense and spunk on special teams.

CORNERBACKS

RETURNEES:

Mekhi Blackmon, Byron Murphy, Jr., and Dwight McGlothern

NEWCOMERS:

Veterans Kahlef Hailassie, Jeff Okudah, Isaiah Rodgers, Reddy Stewart, Ambry Thomas; UDFA's Keenan Garber and Zemaiah Vaughn

PRIORITY RE-SIGNING:

The Vikings placed a directed emphasis on re-signing Murphy, whose career-best six interceptions in 2024 brought his career total to 14 and earned his first Pro Bowl trip.

RESTOCK EFFORT:

Rodgers has been on Defensive Coordinator Brian Flores' radar since the former played at Massachusetts and the latter was with the Patriots. Okudah has battled through injuries early in his career but could help Minnesota's restocking efforts at corner.

SAFETIES

RETURNEES:

Theo Jackson, Joshua Metellus, Harrison Smith and Jay Ward

NEWCOMERS:

Veterans Tavierre Thomas (listed as a DB), Gervarius Owens and UDFA Mishael Powell

HIT-MAN-ME AGAIN:

Smith is up to 192 career games (191 starts) over 13 seasons, and The Hitman is ready to impact games again.

ACTION TIME FOR JACKSON:

Vikings fans have seen Metellus deployed in so many ways, and they've also seen Jackson deliver some big moments even though his opportunities have been limited. If spring practices are an indicator, he's on course for more opportunities.

SPECIALISTS

RETURNEES:

LS Andrew DePaola; K Will Reichard; P Ryan Wright

NEWCOMERS:

P Oscar Chapman (International Player Pathway)

ENCORE ACT:

DePaola is the first long snapper in league history to make three consecutive Pro Bowls. His consistency helped Reichard in a strong rookie season.

COACHING

O'Connell was named 2024 NFL Coach of the Year by *The Associated Press*, becoming the first Vikings leader to receive the honor since Bud Grant in 1969. His staff has enjoyed a solid degree of continuity with Offensive Coordinator Wes Phillips and Special Teams Coordinator Matt Daniels back for their fourth seasons and Defensive Coordinator Brian Flores entering his third season in Minnesota.

NFLPA REPORT CARD

The Vikings facilities, coaching and support staff and operations received the second-best marks on the 2025 NFLPA Report Cards that were announced by the NFL Players Association in February.

The Vikings ranked No. 1 in 2023 and have ranked No. 2 behind the Dolphins in the past two years.

The report cards compiled players' ratings on aspects of the organizations that included quality of team facilities and programming to treatment of families, coaching and ownership.

NFLPA REPORT CARD FOR VIKINGS

CATEGORY	GRADE	RANK OUT OF 32	
Treatment of Families	A+		1 ST
Food/Cafeteria	A-		9 TH
Nutritionist/Dietitian	B+		15 TH
Weight Room	A-		10 TH
Strength Staff	A		2 ND
Training Room	A-		4 TH
Training Staff	A		2 ND
Locker Room	A+		1 ST
Travel	A		3 RD
Head Coach	A+		3 RD
Ownership	A+		2 ND

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PLANTING & GROWING FLAG FOOTBALL

THE SEEDS OF SUPPORT FOR AND PARTICIPATION IN FLAG FOOTBALL ARE
CREATING MORE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA AND BEYOND.

GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

A dozen girls high school flag football teams competed as the Vikings hosted the inaugural state title, which Mahtomedi claimed with a 36-20 victory over La Crescent-Hokah at TCO Stadium on June 9.

Young women on the sideline sprinted to meet their teammates on the field in a celebratory mob, lifting the black-and-silver trophy above their heads in triumph. “This means everything for them,” Mahtomedi Head Coach Nick Sullivan said. “Everything

that we do, and all the success, it’s for them.”

Trailblazers. It’s true of the Zephyrs, who became the first team in state history to officially win the girls high school flag football championship, an initiative supported through a \$600,000 contribution by the Vikings.

It’s true also, though, of 50 – 50! – other teams that competed this season. After helping launch a pilot program in 2024 with four teams (La Crescent-Hokah, Rosemount, Houston and Pine Island), the Vikings in 2025 looked to expand to a full league – and expand they did.

“It’s just been so cool to see the growth,” La Crescent-Hokah senior Savanah Klinski said prior to the final game. “The number of people who have been out here today, it’s just been amazing. Last year we were just a small little group, and now the bleachers are filled. It’s incredible.”

Klinski caught two touchdown passes and a 2-point conversion in the championship game; she earlier helped lead the Lancers to wins over Two Rivers (33-12) and Centennial (24-6). The Zephyrs, quarterbacked by Rylee Bogren, defeated Bloomington and Park (in Cottage Grove) with identical scores of 32-0 en route to facing La Crescent-Hokah.

Mahtomedi senior Presley Albers scored the Zephyrs final touchdown of the evening.

“We all grew up watching football with our family, and just to see women [playing football and] little girls can look up to them and know they can do whatever they want, it’s special,” Albers said.

The Vikings announced in late May a partnership with the Minnesota Star Tribune to continue growing girls flag football. The Star Tribune created a dedicated page on its MN Football Hub and streamed the tournament live.



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WOMEN'S COLLEGE LEAGUE

Second-half comeback, red-zone fourth down, overtime and double elimination under the lights.

Minnesota's inaugural collegiate women's flag football season couldn't have had a better concluding tournament.



The Vikings helped seven NCAA institutions make history this spring when they launched the first-of-its kind league. The inaugural season featured Saturday jamborees at the University of Northwestern – St. Paul and the University of Wisconsin-Stout, and culminated April 26 with a championship tournament at TCO Stadium.

"It's such an amazing experience for girls to not only experience what typically people stereotype as a 'men's sport,' but I also think it's been a great opportunity to grow and push ourselves to do things maybe we weren't able to do in high school," Augustana senior Mia Frank said.

Frank was part of a resilient Augustana University team that lost its first game to UW-Stout but then defeated Bethel University and Concordia Moorhead to work through the consolation bracket and rematch against Stout in the championship.

Frank helped lead the Augustana Vikings on a second-half comeback to force the game into overtime and secure a nail-biting win; because the tournament was double-elimination, however, Augustana and Stout had to immediately play each other a third time against a setting sun.



Ultimately, the Blue Devils pulled away with the title.

Vikings Vice President of Social Impact Brett Taber, who took in the jamboree along with his 7-year-old son, called the inaugural season a "resounding success" with tremendous potential for growth.

"The Minnesota Vikings are proud to help create opportunities for these athletes, and collectively, they put on an incredible display of passion and athleticism," Taber said. "The championship tournament at TCO Stadium was exhilarating on every play, and it is clear that flag football in our region has only just begun."



NFL PLAYERS ELIGIBLE FOR FLAG FOOTBALL AT 2028 OLYMPICS

Justin Jefferson and Brian Asamoah II have lived out their dreams of making it to the NFL.

The Vikings receiver and linebacker in May took a step toward another dream – becoming an Olympian.

NFL owners at the Spring League Meeting at Omni Viking Lakes approved a resolution to allow NFL players to participate in flag football during the 2028 Olympics, which will introduce the sport to its lineup in Los Angeles. Negotiations with the NFL Players Association will follow.

Jefferson, Asamoah, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, NFL EVP of Football Operations Troy Vincent and EVP of Club Business and League Events Peter O'Reilly shared their excitement for the news during a press conference.

"The membership today made a bold move," Vincent said. "America's game is now on the world stage."

Jefferson was announced as a Global Flag Ambassador in June 2023 and has been sharing his electrifying enthusiasm for growing the game.

"Reverting back to being a kid and watching the track and field meets, watching basketball win the gold medal, that's something that as a kid I always wanted to be a part of, but football wasn't global, so now we're expanding the game, it's pretty cool," Jefferson said.

Asamoah has been sponsoring youth flag teams in Ghana through his BA (Be Authentic) Foundation, further connecting with his heritage. This spring, he traveled there with Vikings running back Aaron Jones, Sr., and receiver Jordan Addison to support the "Road to LA28" program in Accra. Nearly 100 athletes tried out at the University of Ghana's Rugby Field to be selected for the 50-player pool that will begin training to represent Ghana at the Olympics.

Asamoah's parents moved to the United States in 2000, shortly before he was born in Newark, New Jersey. Asamoah then grew up in Columbus, Ohio. He visited Ghana when he was 10 years old and tried to explain American football to his peers.

"I just can't wait to see the excitement and joy that everybody's going to be able to see out of the players, the fans and each country being able to say I have an opportunity to compete in the highest games, LA28, and an opportunity to bring the gold back to the Gold Coast," Asamoah said.

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6 TAKEAWAYS

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09.08 @ **CHI** 

7:20 PM >>>>

09.14 vs **ATL** 

NOON >>>>

09.21 vs **CIN** 

8:30 AM >>>>

09.28 @ **PIT** 

8:30 AM >>>>

10.05 @ **CLE** **BYE WEEK**

NOON >>>>

10.19 vs **PHI** 

7:15 PM >>>>

10.23 @ **LAC** 

NOON >>>>

11.02 @ **DET** 

NOON >>>>

11.09 vs **BAL** 

NOON >>>>

11.16 vs **CHI** 

NOON >>>>

11.23 @ **GB** 

3:05 PM >>>>

11.30 @ **SEA** 

NOON >>>>

12.07 vs **WAS** 

7:20 PM >>>>

12.14 @ **DAL** 

NOON >>>>

12.21 @ **NYG** 

3:30 PM >>>>

12.25 vs **DET** 

TBD >>>>

TBD vs **GB** 

MINNESOTA

VIKINGS

2025

SCHEDULE

>>>>

Minnesota's 2025 slate is full of historical significance, including rarities of opening with back-to-back prime-time games (at Chicago and against Atlanta) and playing on Christmas Day for just the fifth time in franchise history (hosting Detroit).

The Vikings also will become the first NFL team to play in back-to-back international games in two different countries.

Here are six takeaways from the Vikings 2025 schedule:

1 HISTORIC DOUBLE DIPS BEFORE BYE

The Vikings will open on the road at the Chicago Bears for a *Monday Night Football* contest and follow by hosting the Atlanta Falcons in Week 2 on *Sunday Night Football*.

Minnesota has only opened one season (1981) with back-to-back games in prime time with a Saturday night game at Tampa Bay and a Monday night game against the Raiders.

Minnesota has gone 4-0 in regular-season games played in London and will try to chalk a victory over Pittsburgh in Ireland in Week 4 before returning to the UK to face the Cleveland Browns. Interestingly, Minnesota is the only team Pittsburgh and Cleveland have played in a regular-season game on international soil.

2 MCCARTHY & YOUNG QBS TAKE CENTER STAGE EARLY

The Vikings era with J.J. McCarthy at quarterback will begin in the second-year pro's hometown.

The No. 10 overall pick of 2024 is poised to face that year's top selection, Caleb Williams.

The young QB comparisons will flow into Week 2, including the anticipated matchup with 2024 No. 8 overall pick Michael Penix, Jr., who started three games last season after Atlanta pivoted from former Vikings QB Kirk Cousins. Washington's visit (Week 14) will provide an opportunity to face 2024 No. 2 pick Jayden Daniels.

3 ROLLING 7: EXCLUSIVE-WINDOW GAMES

Consider it a sign of respect.

The Vikings are scheduled to participate in seven "exclusive-window games."

In addition to Weeks 1-2 and 4-5, the Vikings also are scheduled for a Thursday night game at the Los Angeles Chargers on Prime Video, a Sunday night game at Dallas on NBC and the Christmas Day game, which will be streamed by Netflix at 3:30 p.m. (CT).

4 DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN

Stop us if you've heard this before.

The Vikings play in London in Week 5, have a Week 6 bye, a really tough home game in Week 7 and a trip to Los Angeles for a Thursday game in Week 8.

The late, great Yogi Berra would sum that up as "déjà vu all over again" and wouldn't have to dip too far into the past for a reference. The 2024 slate was Week 5 vs. Jets in London, Week 6 Bye, Week 7 vs. Lions, Week 8 at L.A. Rams on a Thursday.

5 A FEARSOME FOURSOME

No, the Rams aren't on the schedule. No need to worry about the legacy of Deacon Jones, Merlin Olsen, Rosey Grier or Lamar Lundy reincarnate.

But the stretch against the Eagles, Chargers, Lions and Ravens is a four-game run against teams that were a combined 52-16 during the 2024 regular season.

6 DOUBLE DROUGHTS OF HOME GAMES

It has been common in each of the past six seasons for the Vikings to be away from U.S. Bank Stadium for the middle part of the season. This year, there will be two such instances.

- **2019:** One home game between Oct. 14 and Nov. 17
 - **2020:** One home game between Oct. 19 and Nov. 22
 - **2021:** One home game between Oct. 11 and Nov. 21
 - **2022:** One home game between Oct. 10 and Nov. 20
 - **2023:** One home game between Oct. 24 and Nov. 27
 - **2024:** One home game between Oct. 21 and Dec. 1
 - **2025:** One home game between Sept. 22 and Nov. 9
- AND one home game between Nov. 17 and Dec. 25



J.J. MCCARTHY HELPS VIKINGS TABLE DELIVER 100,000TH MEAL

J.J. McCarthy successfully made his first handoffs – and provided his first highlight – of 2025.

The Vikings second-year quarterback and his fiancée Katya joined the Vikings Table food truck, powered by Xcel Energy, at YouthLink's Drop-In Center to distribute meals to teens and young adults in March.

The meals distributed included some that were packaged for later use, including one in a gold bag to commemorate the 100,000th meal delivered since Vikings Table's mission launched in summer 2019. Those meals were delivered to YouthLink in a new refrigerated van that increased flexibility for continuing to reach people who can benefit from a good meal.

McCarthy then lined up alongside Xcel Energy Senior Vice President/Chief Communications Officer Rob Clark to serve Southwest-themed bowls featuring a choice of chicken, spicy chicken, beef or vegetarian options from Vikings Table.

"The handoffs were great," McCarthy said. "I believe the recipients of the handoffs were even better."

Clark said the event was a wonderful way to continue the partnership between Xcel Energy and the Minnesota Vikings Foundation.

"[The 100,000th meal] is a great milestone. It's a very visible sign of the great partnership we have," Clark said. "Unfortunately, what it means is we've got food insecurity issues in our community. We're going to continue to be focused on that. We've re-upped our partnership to do this."

"We want to make sure we continue to serve those in the community that need it," Clark added. "We would love to see food insecurity go away entirely, but until then, we're going to continue to do what we can to make sure

people have access to food they need."

Less than a year after Minnesota selected McCarthy with the 10th overall pick of the 2024 NFL Draft, he's expanded his efforts to make a difference in this community.

"It's really special, being a Midwest kid," McCarthy said. "It's really awesome to be able to build those relationships and that connection to the city, a real heartbeat of the city. It's awesome every opportunity I get, and I relish every moment."

YouthLink serves young people aged 16 to 24 who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities.

Darian Rosenthal, a YouthLink client, enjoyed meeting McCarthy. He exuded enthusiasm at the opportunity to talk football with the QB.

"It's been an honor, a blessing," Rosenthal said. "He's going to do good this year. I have faith in him. I was just giving him congratulations on his season."

Rosenthal said YouthLink "helps me achieve things I couldn't do on my own" by providing "a stable environment to live through and build from."

And it provided him with a memory and a memento. McCarthy removed his No. 9 jersey, autographed it and presented it to Rosenthal, adding to the ways he connected with YouthLink clients and staff.

YouthLink Drop-In Center Youth Services Director Ko Quaye said the optional space serves more than 120 teens and young adults daily at its 41 North 12th Street location in Minneapolis.

"Last year about 20,000 came through our doors," Quaye said. "It's amazing we can do that work at that capacity, but it's

also alarming that we see that many young people in a calendar year. Partnerships like the Minnesota Vikings Foundation make it doable for us."

Quaye took great joy in seeing the interaction between McCarthy and Rosenthal, saying, "To see a highlight like that happen here is phenomenal."



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2025 MVC ROOKIES

Meet the

The Minnesota Vikings Cheerleaders are welcoming eight talented rookies for the 2025 season.

These standouts started their journey among 125 MVC hopefuls at open auditions in March. Audition participants were evaluated on their athleticism, style and performance through four competitive rounds, after which judges narrowed the field to 54 finalists.

That group then went through interviews with Vikings

staff and took part in a three-day MVC training camp, where they worked closely with coaches and staff in a rehearsal setting to prepare for the 2025 MVC Final Auditions, held at Mall of America on April 29.

Congratulations to Blaize, Brianna, Jenna, Louie, Payton, Sabrina, Taylor F. and Zoe for being selected to join this season's MVC team! Learn a fun fact about each of them below.



Blaize
FARGO, ND

First male dancer at both Fargo South High School and NDSU



Brianna
NEW BERLIN, WI

Volunteers at an elementary after school program to teach dance every week



Jenna
ST. CLOUD, MN

Attended a Spanish immersion elementary school



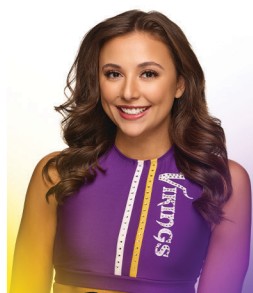
Louie
BETTENDORF, IA

Won a gold medal for tumbling at the Junior Olympics at age 10



Payton
MAPLE GROVE, MN

Was a national soloist title winner in 2021



Sabrina
EAGAN, MN

Has been skydiving three times



Taylor F.
PRIOR LAKE, MN

Was an MVC Junior Cheerleader in 2010 and 2011



Zoe
WAYZATA, MN

Studied animal behavior in Costa Rica for one month; got to see favorite animal (sloth)



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VIKINGS & U.S. BANK STADIUM RECOGNIZED AS NFL'S BEST

The fans have spoken, and they've ranked the U.S. Bank Stadium game-day experience as the best in the NFL.

The Vikings in February announced results of the 2024 "Voice of the Fan" NFL-wide survey, which ranked the Vikings and U.S. Bank Stadium as the best in "Overall Game-Day Satisfaction" last season. The team set an NFL record with the highest score the league's ever recorded in the overall category.

The Vikings also finished No. 1 and No. 2 in multiple areas, including Game Entertainment and Game-Day Staff.

The "Voice of the Fan" survey measures NFL Season Ticket Member experiences and game attendees' satisfaction with their game-day experience. Each team's fans are surveyed throughout the regular season.



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PLAYBOOK EXTRA: VIKINGS ANNUAL EMPLOYEE AWARDS

The Minnesota Vikings annually recognize employees through a series of peer-voted awards. Here is a look at the 2025 honorees.

MVP AWARD:

CARLY BONK

Recognizes the most significant impact on the organization's performance.



DENNIS RYAN

**VIKINGS VALUES
AWARD:**

ROB BRZEZINSKI

Demonstrates living Vikings Values throughout the year.



SHARON LOHMAR

LEGACY SKOL

SERVICE AWARD:

ALYSSA ERDMAN

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YEAR: NAOMI EVANS

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