



2026 HOME OPENER



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Classic Game

MINNESOTA

VIKINGS



GREEN BAY PACKERS

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VIKES!



SUN



SEPT. 13



2026

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(Knees & Toes.)



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Vikings

CLASSIC GAME



SEPT. 13, 2026 | U.S. BANK STADIUM

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COMPLY CAN RESULT IN REMOVAL FROM THE STADIUM.**

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6-10am MORNINGS



TODAY'S *Promotions*

VIKINGS ZONE

Presented by Kwik Trip

Vikings Fans, you could win VIP Vikings experiences all season long in the KwikTrip Rewards Vikings Zone! Head to kwiktrip.com/sweepstakes for more details.

KWIK TRIP

SACKS FOR WINGS

Presented by Buffalo Wild 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 offer details.



HY-VEE PERKS CARD

Presented by Hy-Vee

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.

HyVee

BOGO BALL

Presented by Caribou Coffee

Whenever the Minnesota Vikings intercept the ball, earn buy one, get one free drink (BOGO) in all participating Minnesota Caribou Coffee® locations. Three ways to redeem:

1. BOGO is valid in-store at participating Minnesota Caribou Coffee® locations to guests who present proof of offer at time of purchase
2. OR, guest must be a Caribou Perks® member and enter promo code: BOGOBALL25 in the Caribou Coffee app to redeem this offer
3. OR, guest may click the direct link to BOGO reward and redeem in the Caribou Coffee app.

Offer is valid once per eligible day, per guest. Offer is valid only the day after eligible game. Not to be combined with any other coupons, offers or discounts. Offers are not valid on Uber Eats or DoorDash. This offer may be withdrawn, amended or canceled at any time.



FOOTBALL FANATICS SWEEPSTAKES

Presented by Jameson

Showcase your football fandom by submitting your photo as the Jameson Football Fanatic of the Week! Fans will have a chance to win a Vikings and Jameson weekly prize pack, and one fanatic will be named the Jameson Football Fanatic of the 2026 Season, winning co-branded gear and more! Submit your fan photo today.

JAMESON

IRISH WHISKEY

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Presented by Palm Beach Tan

Palm Beach Tan is a proud partner of the Minnesota Vikings Cheerleaders! Get game-day ready and try any Palm Beach Tan service for just \$10. Choose Sun, Spray, Red Light or Sauna. Redeem now:



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GAME-DAY GLOW

Giveaway

Presented by
Pure Lux Medspa

Scan this QR code to enter to win a \$1,000 gift card to Pure Lux Medspa, the preferred medspa of the Minnesota Vikings Cheerleaders. One grand prize winner will be selected at the end of the season!



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2026 SEASON SCHEDULE

01 09.13 vs **GB**

02 09.20 @ **CHI**

03 09.27 @ **TB**

04 10.04 vs **MIA**

05 10.11 @ **NO**

06 **BYE WEEK**

07 10.25 vs **IND**

08 11.01 @ **DET**

09 11.09 vs **BUF**

10 11.15 @ **GB**

11 11.22 @ **SF** MEXICO CITY

12 11.29 vs **ATL**

13 12.06 vs **CAR**

14 12.10 @ **NE**

15 12.20 vs **DET**

16 TBD vs **WAS**

17 01.03 @ **NYJ**

18 TBD vs **CHI**



KYLER MURRAY

QUARTERBACK | 5'10" | 207 LBS | 8TH SEASON | OKLAHOMA

Murray first played for a Vikings squad in his home state of Texas and became a Vikings fan at age 7.

An accomplished high school and college career, which included winning the Heisman Trophy in 2018, was followed by Murray becoming the only player ever drafted in the top 10 of an NFL and MLB Draft. He opted for the gridiron instead of the diamond and joined Minnesota this spring after seven seasons with the Arizona Cardinals, who selected him No.1 overall in 2019. The 29-year-old will make his debut for the Minnesota

Vikings today in the Border Battle against the Packers.

Through Air & By Land

Beyond excelling at two sports, Murray is known as a dual-threat QB. He is one of two players, along with Buffalo's Josh Allen, to amass at least 20,000 passing and 3,000 rushing yards in his first 85 NFL games. Allen reached the mark in 84, one before Murray. Those two, along with Cam Newton and Vikings Legend Daunte Culpepper, are the first four NFL players with 90+ passing touchdowns and 25+ rushing touchdowns in their first five seasons.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS ROSTER



No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College	Hometown
0	Ivan Pace Jr.	LB	5-10	236	25	4	Cincinnati	Cincinnati, OH
1	Kyler Murray	QB	5-10	207	29	8	Oklahoma	Allen, TX
2	Isaiah Rodgers	CB	5-10	180	28	6	Massachusetts	Tampa, FL
3	Jordan Addison	WR	5-11	179	24	4	USC	Frederick, MD
4	Myles Price	WR	5-9	183	24	2	Indiana	Dallas, TX
5	Zemaiah Vaughn	CB	6-3	180	24	1	Utah	Beaumont, TX
7	Byron Murphy Jr.	CB	5-11	190	28	8	Washington	Scottsdale, AZ
8	Jakobe Thomas	S	6-1	211	23	R	Miami	Tullahoma, TN
9	J.J. McCarthy	QB	6-3	219	23	3	Michigan	La Grange Park, IL
11	Carson Wentz	QB	6-5	237	33	11	North Dakota State	Bismarck, ND
13	Tai Felton	WR	6-1	186	23	2	Maryland	Ashburn, VA
14	Jauan Jennings	WR	6-3	212	29	6	Tennessee	Murfreesboro, TN
15	Dallas Turner	OLB	6-3	247	23	3	Alabama	Fort Lauderdale, FL
16	Will Reichard	K	6-1	190	25	3	Alabama	Hoover, AL
18	Justin Jefferson	WR	6-1	195	27	7	LSU	St. Rose, LA
19	Brett Thorson	P	6-1	237	26	R	Georgia	Melbourne, Australia
20	Chuck Demmings	CB	6-1	193	23	R	Stephen F. Austin	Mesquite, TX
21	Demond Claiborne	RB	5-10	188	22	R	Wake Forest	Aylett, VA
22	Harrison Smith	S	6-2	211	37	15	Notre Dame	Knoxville, TN
23	James Pierre	CB	6-2	185	29	7	Florida Atlantic	Deerfield Beach, FL
24	Jay Ward	S	6-1	190	26	4	LSU	Moultrie, GA
26	Theo Jackson	S	6-1	205	27	5	Tennessee	Nashville, TN
27	Jordan Mason	RB	5-11	230	27	5	Georgia Tech	Gallatin, TN
29	Jacob Thomas	S	6-1	212	22	R	James Madison	Ashburn, VA
32	Chaz Chambliss	OLB	6-1	244	23	2	Georgia	Carrollton, GA
33	Aaron Jones Sr.	RB	5-10	208	31	10	UTEP	El Paso, TX
41	Jake Goliday	LB	6-4	240	23	R	Cincinnati	Arlington, TN
42	Andrew DePaola	LS	6-1	227	39	12	Rutgers	Parkton, MD
43	Andrew Van Ginkel	OLB	6-4	242	31	8	Wisconsin	Rock Valley, IA
44	Joshua Metellus	S	5-11	208	28	7	Michigan	Pembroke Pines, FL
45	Max Bredeson	FB	6-2	252	23	R	Michigan	Hartland, WI
50	Levi Drake Rodriguez	DL	6-2	307	26	3	East Texas A&M	Georgetown, TX
51	Blake Cashman	LB	6-1	235	30	8	Minnesota	Eden Prairie, MN
55	Eric Wilson	LB	6-1	231	31	10	Cincinnati	Redford, MI
60	Joe Huber	G	6-5	310	24	2	Wisconsin	Dublin, OH
61	Jalen Redmond	DL	6-3	305	27	3	Oklahoma	Midwest City, OK
62	Nick Samac	C	6-4	317	25	2	Michigan State	Mentor, OH
64	Blake Brandel	C	6-6	315	29	6	Oregon State	Milwaukie, OR
69	Trevor Keegan	G	6-6	315	26	2	Michigan	Crystal Lake, IL
71	Christian Darrisaw	T	6-5	315	27	6	Virginia Tech	Upper Marlboro, MD
72	Ryan Van Demark	T	6-7	307	28	4	Connecticut	Wayne, NJ
74	Donovan Jackson	G	6-4	324	23	2	Ohio State	Cypress, TX
75	Brian O'Neill	T	6-7	310	30	9	Pittsburgh	Wilmington, DE
76	Will Fries	G	6-6	321	28	6	Penn State	Cranford, NJ
78	Caleb Tiernan	OL	6-7	323	23	R	Northwestern	Livonia, MI
84	Josh Oliver	TE	6-5	264	29	8	San Jose State	Paso Robles, CA
86	Gavin Bartholomew	TE	6-5	249	23	1	Pittsburgh	Schuylkill Haven, PA
87	T.J. Hockenson	TE	6-5	248	29	8	Iowa	Chariton, IA
90	Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins	DL	6-5	290	23	2	Georgia	Gaffney, SC
95	Caleb Banks	DL	6-6	327	23	R	Florida	Detroit, MI
97	Domonique Orange	DL	6-2	322	22	R	Iowa State	Kansas City, MO
98	Bo Richter	OLB	6-1	248	26	3	Air Force	Naperville, IL
99	Elijah Williams	DL	6-3	298	24	2	Morgan State	Jersey City, NJ

PRACTICE SQUAD

12	Max Brosmer	QB
17	Kyle Van Noy	OLB
30	Trayvon Rudolph	WR
31	DeeJay Dallas	RB
35	Bryce Phillips	CB
37	Tavierre Thomas	S
38	Da'Veawn Armstead	CB
52	Jihad Ward	OLB
59	Bangally Kamara	LB
68	Henry Byrd	G
79	Jack Nelson	OL
81	Michael Briscoe	WR
83	Cam Grandy	TE
89	Dillon Bell	WR
91	Naquan Jones	DL
96	Jahvaree Ritzie	DL

INJURED RESERVE

17	Jermar Jefferson	RB
28	Tyreek Chappell	CB
29	Marcus Allen	CB
32	Jamal Adams	LB
85	Ben Yurosek	TE
92	Tyler Batty	OLB
94	Taki Taimani	DL

INJURED RESERVE-DESIGNATED FOR RETURN

65	Michael Jurgens	C
----	-----------------	---

RESERVE/SUSPENDED

82	Jeshaun Jones	WR
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GAME ON?



GET ON!

metrotransit.org/vikings



PACKERS ON THE DEFENSE



51-Dennis-Sutton
99-Sorrell
Edge

96-Ford
98-Hargrave
**Defensive
Tackle**

57-Cox Jr.
90-Van Ness
Edge



Left Tackle
71-Darrisaw
72-Van Demark

Center
64-Brandel
65-Jurgens [DFR]
62-Samac

Right Tackle
75-O'Neill
78-Tiernan

Wide Receiver 3-Addison

VIKINGS ON THE OFFENSE

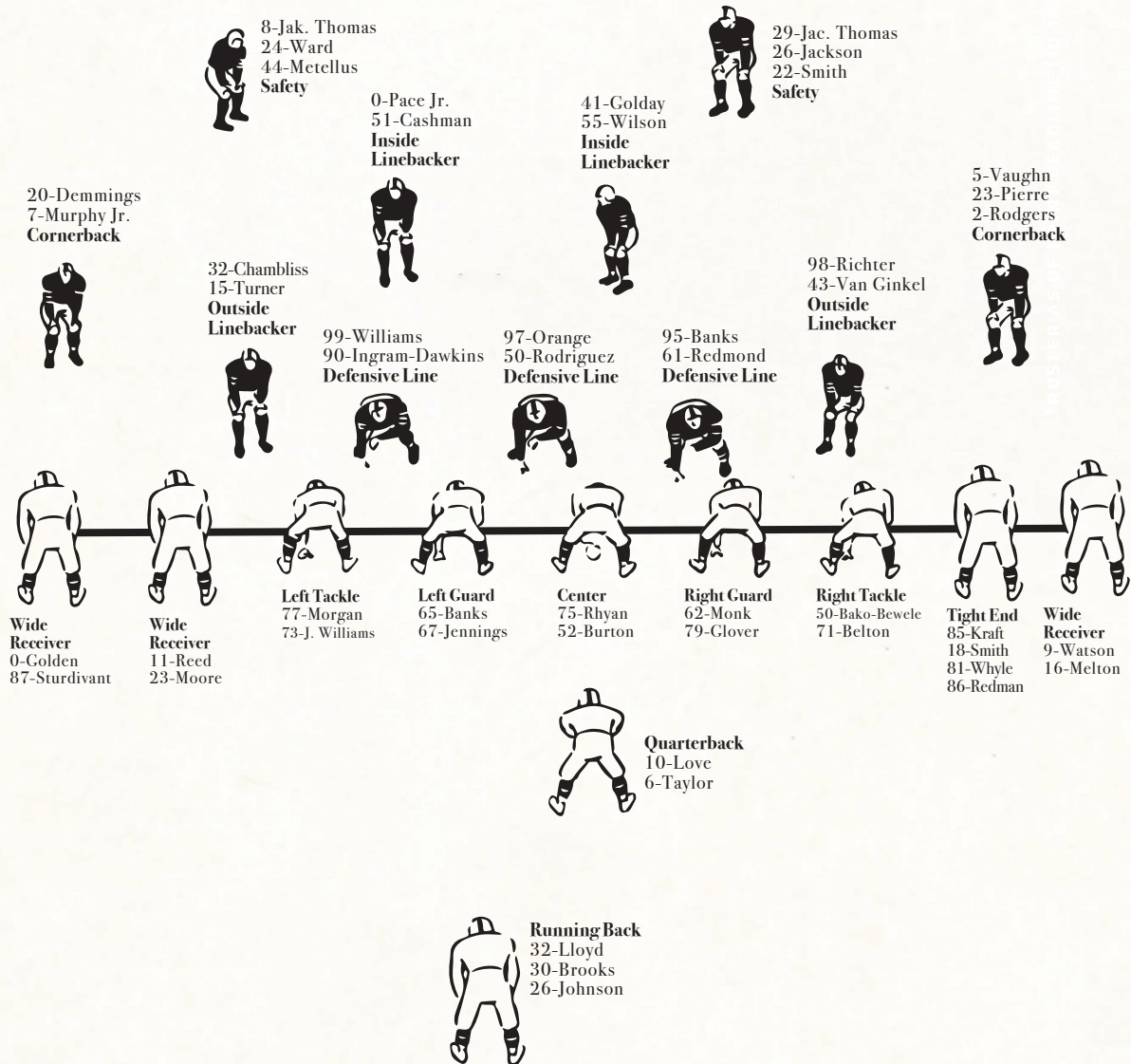


SPECIAL TEAMS

Kick Returner
4-Price
13-Felton
21-Claiborne

Kick Returner
4-Price
13-Felton
21-Claiborne

VIKINGS ON THE DEFENSE



PACKERS ON THE OFFENSE



SPECIAL TEAMS

Kicker	Punter	Long Snapper	Kick Returner	Punt Returner
17-McManus	19-Whelan	42-Orzech	23-Moore 16-Melton	23-Moore 11-Reed

Unofficial Depth Chart as of 9/9 Print Deadline

OMNI VIKING LAKES



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PRACTICE SQUAD

17	Kedon Slovis	QB
20	Domani Jackson	CB
22	Pierre Strong Jr.	RB
37	Chris Hilton Jr.	WR
38	Lenny Krieg*	K
39	Murvin Kenion III	S
46	Scott Daly	LS
47	Nyjalik Kelly	EDGE
49	Drake Dabney	TE
53	Arron Mosby	EDGE
54	Kristian Welch	LB
63	Jaden Crumedy	DT
68	Dillon Wade	G
78	Josh Gesky	G
78	Dalton Cooper	T
80	Isaiah Neyor	WR

*International Player Pathway participant

IR/ DESIGNATED TO RETURN

45	Collin Oliver	EDGE
83	Savion Williams	WR

INJURED RESERVE

35	Trey Dean III	S
37	Johnathan Baldwin II	S
46	Marlon Jones	CB
84	Thomas Yassmin	TE

RESERVE/ PHYSICALLY UNABLE TO PERFORM

1	Micah Parsons	EDGE
88	Luke Musgrave	TE
97	Jordon Riley	DT

COMMISSIONER EXEMPT

8	Josh Jacobs	RB
---	-------------	----

GREEN BAY PACKERS ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College	Hometown
0	Matthew Golden	WR	5-11	191	23	2	Texas	Klein, TX
2	Brandon Cisse	CB	6-0	189	21	R	South Carolina	Sumter, SC
6	Tyrod Taylor	QB	6-1	217	37	16	Virginia Tech	Hampton, VA
7	Javon Bullard	S	5-10	198	24	3	Georgia	Milledgeville, GA
9	Christian Watson	WR	6-4	215	27	5	North Dakota State	Tampa, FL
10	Jordan Love	QB	6-4	219	27	7	Utah State	Bakersfield, CA
11	Jayden Reed	WR	5-11	187	26	4	Michigan State	Naperville, IL
16	Bo Melton	CB	5-11	189	27	3	Rutgers	Egg Harbor City, NJ
18	Jonnu Smith	TE	6-3	248	31	10	Florida International	Philadelphia, PA
19	Daniel Whelan	P	6-5	216	27	4	UC Davis	Rancho Mirage, CA
21	Benjamin St-Juste	CB	6-3	200	29	6	Minnesota	Montreal, Quebec, CANADA
23	Sky Moore	WR	5-10	195	26	5	Western Michigan	Fox Chapel, PA
24	Carrington Valentine	CB	6-0	189	25	4	Kentucky	Cincinnati, OH
25	Keisean Nixon	CB	5-10	200	29	8	South Carolina	Los Angeles, CA
26	Kaleb Johnson	RB	6-1	224	23	2	Iowa	Cincinnati, OH
27	Kitan Oladapo	S	6-2	216	25	3	Oregon State	Portland, OR
28	Trey Smack	K	6-1	188	23	R	Florida	Severna Park, MD
29	Xavier McKinney	S	6-0	201	27	7	Alabama	Roswell, GA
30	Chris Brooks	RB	6-1	219	26	4	BYU	Oceanside, CA
31	Nick Niemann	LB	6-3	234	28	6	Iowa	Sycamore, IL
32	MarShawn Lloyd	RB	5-9	220	25	3	USC	Hyattsville, MD
33	Evan Williams	S	5-11	200	25	3	Oregon	Mountain View, CA
36	Kamal Hadden	CB	6-1	192	25	2	Tennessee	River Rouge, MI
42	Matt Orzech	LS	6-3	245	31	7	Azusa Pacific	Menifee, CA
44	Zaire Franklin	LB	6-0	235	30	9	Syracuse	Wyndmoor, PA
50	Zach Bako-Bewe	OL	6-4	304	27	5	Wake Forest	Baton Rouge, LA
51	Dani Dennis-Sutton	EDGE	6-5	256	22	R	Penn State	Owings Mills, MD
52	Jager Burton	C/G	6-4	312	24	R	Kentucky	Lexington, KY
55	Chris McClellan	DT	6-3	313	22	R	Missouri	Owasso, OK
56	Edgerrin Cooper	LB	6-2	229	24	3	Texas A&M	Covington, LA
57	Brenton Cox Jr.	EDGE	6-4	250	26	4	Florida	Stockbridge, GA
58	Isaiah McDuffie	LB	6-1	227	27	6	Boston College	Buffalo, NY
59	Ty'Ron Hopper	LB	6-2	228	25	3	Missouri	Roswell, GA
62	Jacob Monk	C/G	6-3	308	25	3	Duke	Wendell, NC
65	Aaron Banks	G	6-5	325	29	6	Notre Dame	El Cerrito, CA
67	Donovan Jennings	G/T	6-4	323	26	2	South Florida	Tampa, FL
71	Anthony Belton	G/T	6-6	336	25	2	N.C. State	Tallahassee, FL
73	John Williams	G	6-4	322	24	2	Cincinnati	Bolingbrook, IL
75	Sean Rhyan	C/G	6-5	321	25	5	UCLA	San Juan Capistrano, CA
77	Jordan Morgan	T/G	6-5	311	25	3	Arizona	Tucson, AZ
79	Travis Glover	T	6-6	317	26	3	Georgia State	Vienna, GA
81	Josh Whyte	TE	6-7	248	27	4	Cincinnati	Cincinnati, OH
85	Tucker Kraft	TE	6-5	259	25	4	South Dakota State	Timber Lake, SD
86	Mark Redman	TE	6-5	258	24	1	Louisville	Newport Beach, CA
87	J. Michael Sturdivant	WR	6-3	207	24	R	Florida	Flower Mound, TX
90	Lukas Van Ness	EDGE	6-5	272	25	4	Iowa	Barrington, IL
91	Warren Brinson	DT	6-5	315	24	2	Georgia	Bradenton, FL
93	Anthony Campbell	DT	6-6	307	25	1	Miami	Bartow, FL
94	Karl Brooks	DT	6-3	296	26	4	Bowling Green	Lansing, MI
95	Devonte Wyatt	DT	6-3	304	28	5	Georgia	Dacula, GA
96	Jonathan Ford	DT	6-5	338	27	4	Miami	Fort Lauderdale, FL
98	Javon Hargrave	DT	6-2	307	33	11	South Carolina State	Spencer, NC
99	Barry Sorrell	EDGE	6-3	256	23	2	Texas	New Orleans, LA

Roster as of 9/9 Print Deadline



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2026 SEASON SCHEDULE

01 09.13 @ **MIN**

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04 10.04 @ **TB**

05 10.11 vs **CHI**

06 10.18 vs **DAL**

07 10.25 @ **DET**

08 10.29 vs **CAR**

09 11.08 @ **NE**

10 11.15 vs **MIN**

11 **BYE WEEK**

12 11.25 @ **LAR**

13 12.06 @ **NO**

14 12.13 vs **BUF**

15 12.20 vs **MIA**

16 12.25 @ **CHI**

17 01.04 vs **HOU**

18 TBD vs **DET**



JORDAN LOVE

QUARTERBACK | 6'4" | 219 LBS | 7TH SEASON | UTAH STATE

Love is set to start a Border Battle for the sixth time.

Since becoming Green Bay's starting QB in 2023, Love ranks sixth in the NFL with 80 TD passes, seventh in passing-TD percentage (5.5) and eighth in passing yards (10,929) and yards per attempt (7.57). His 102 passes of 25-plus yards rank second in the NFL in that time, making good on his first-round pedigree. Prior to his selection in 2020, Love finished his college career ranked second in school history in passing yards (8,600), completions (689) and attempts (1,125) despite playing just three seasons. His 60 TD passes for the Aggies tied for second all-time.

Safe & Sound

Love is one of three NFL QBs (joining Lamar Jackson and Matthew Stafford) to throw 20-plus TD passes and fewer than 12 INTs in each of the past three seasons, proving to be safe and sound with the football while showing the ability to score. He ranks fourth in the NFL since 2023 in games with multiple TD passes and zero interceptions (18 occurrences in 47 games played). Minnesota, however, intercepted Love thrice at Green Bay in 2024 (Byron Murphy, Jr., Shaq Griffin and Kamu Grugier-Hill).

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ITEM OF THE GAME



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SERIES HISTORY

MINNESOTA Vikings VS. GREEN BAY PACKERS



NFL WEEK 1 | CLASSIC



FLASHBACK

DEC. 5, 1976

VIKINGS 20, PACKERS 9

Chuck Foreman rushed for two 1-yard touchdowns in the fourth quarter, Robert Miller led all rushers with 95 yards, and Fran Tarkenton passed for 195 yards as Minnesota pulled away late on a snowy, 18-degree day with a wind chill of 8 at Metropolitan Stadium. The Vikings totaled 414 yards, including 218 on the ground, and limited the Packers to 144 net yards, eight completions (on 26 pass attempts) and eight first downs. Minnesota recorded four sacks of Carlos Brown.



PREVIOUS MEETING

JAN. 4, 2026 | IN MIN
VIKINGS 16, PACKERS 3

Will Reichard made field goals of 43, 25 and 37 yards, and C.J. Ham scored from 1 yard out before the retiring fullback was recognized by the crowd at U.S. Bank Stadium. Justin Jefferson led all players with 101 yards on eight catches, finishing with more than 1,000 receiving yards for the sixth time in as many seasons. Green Bay opted to rest starters because the game did not affect the Packers position in the playoffs. Clayton Tune was limited to 34 gross passing yards and finished with a net of minus-7 thanks to 41 yards lost on sacks by Dallas Turner (2.0), Blake Cashman and Theo Jackson (1.0 each).

TOP 2

AGAINST PACKERS

RUSHING YARDS

- 210** Adrian Peterson on 21 attempts at GB (12.2.12)
- 199** Adrian Peterson on 34 attempts in MIN (12.30.12)

PASSING YARDS

- 442** Randall Cunningham on 20-of-32 passing at GB (10.05.98)
- 425** Kirk Cousins on 35-of-48 passing at GB (09.16.18)

RECEIVING YARDS

- 202** Adam Thielen on 12 catches at GB (12.24.16)
- 190** Randy Moss on five catches at GB (10.05.98)

AGAINST VIKINGS

RUSHING YARDS

- 161** Ahman Green on 25 attempts in MIN (12.17.00)
- 154** Aaron Jones, Sr., on 23 attempts in MIN (12.23.19)

PASSING YARDS

- 389** Jordan Love on 32-of-54 passing at GB (09.29.24)
- 385** Aaron Rodgers on 23-of-33 passing in MIN (11.21.21)

RECEIVING YARDS

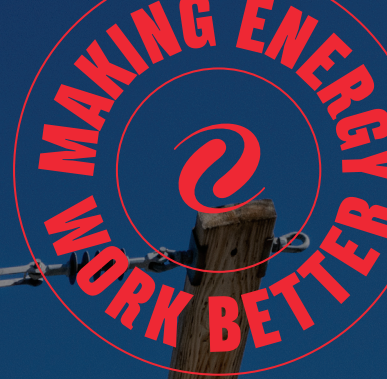
- 191** Donald Driver on six catches in MIN (11.12.06)
- 162** Donald Driver on 11 catches in MIN (12.24.04)

ALL-TIME RESULTS

Vikings are 61-67-3 in 131 games (60-66-3 in regular season; 1-1 in postseason)

LONGEST WIN STREAK

7 games by Minnesota (Nov. 2, 1975 – Oct. 22, 1978)



LINEMAN VS LINEMAN

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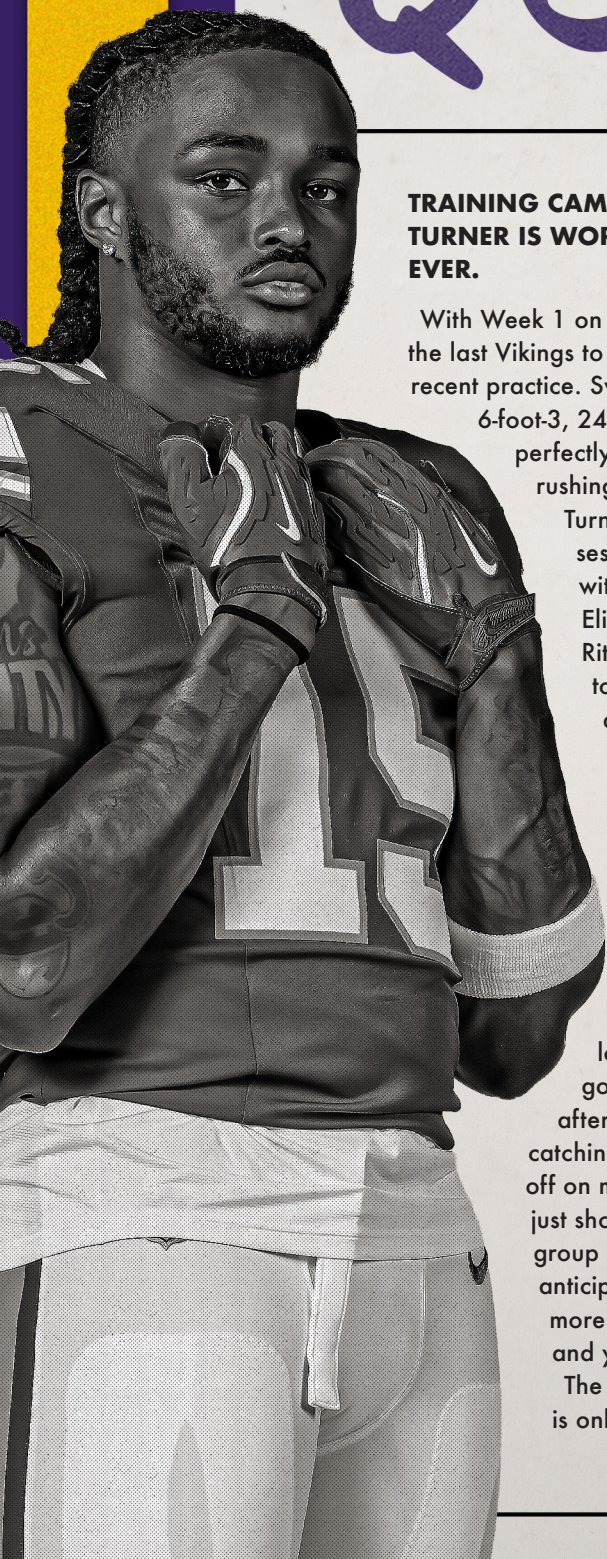


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Q&A

DALLAS TURNER

BY ROB KLEIFIELD



TRAINING CAMP IS OVER, BUT DALLAS TURNER IS WORKING AS HARD AS EVER.

With Week 1 on his mind, he was one of the last Vikings to leave the field after a recent practice. Sweat beads drenched his 6-foot-3, 247-pound frame that is built perfectly for one thing above all: rushing the quarterback.

Turner stayed late after this session to run wind sprints with young defensive linemen Elijah Williams and Jahvaree Ritzie. He's determined to be in tip-top shape for an expanded role after Jonathan Greenard was traded to Philadelphia during the NFL Draft — and he wants to lead.

"[J.G.] definitely played a big role leadership-wise and vocally while he was here in Minnesota, and it rubbed off on a lot of people in a very good way," Turner said after fetching a Gatorade and catching his breath. "It rubbed off on me in a good way, too, just showing me how to lead a group of men the right way. So, I anticipate just stepping up, being more of a leader as the games and years progress."

The 17th overall pick of 2024 is only 23 years old. He brings

11 sacks in 10 career starts and 33 games into 2026. In total, Turner has produced 86 tackles, 20 QB hits, four forced fumbles and an interception. Impressively, he's flashed tremendous potential while juggling unique roles.

Turner had to learn Greenard's position — the "rush" edge — as well as Andrew Van Ginkel's dual drop-into-coverage-or-attack mode so he could sub for either if necessary. Now, he can zero in...

On assignments in Brian Flores' scheme, which excels with high-IQ players — and on quarterbacks.

Among other things, D.T. reflected on his development to be great and his Vikings mentors in this Q&A.

Q: WHAT IS A SKILL YOU HAVE HONED DURING YOUR TIME HERE?

A: I feel like what I developed the most is an awareness sense, playing on defense, kind of knowing what to anticipate by formation, situation and just overall awareness of the game of football.

Q: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CONFIDENCE LEVEL RIGHT NOW?

A: As long as I put my mind to it and work for it and am prepared for any situation, I [believe] that a win is inevitable. So, honestly, I'm just focusing on being more consistent at the good things and getting rid of the bad things off my tape — and just fitting the defense as well as I possibly can.

Q: HAS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FLO' GROWN SINCE YOU WERE A ROOKIE?

A: There's definitely a big difference in my relationship with Flo'. You know, just proving to him and proving to the team that I can be a key contributor to this defense and just building unique relationships, like he tells us every single day, and I listen a lot to what he's saying, and also apply what he's saying too. Just going up there talking to him, we'll laugh sometimes — like, my rookie season we weren't really laughing — so nowadays we're laughing, joking, having good conversations, and I really feel like it's a blessing to be coached by a person like that just because of the fact that his standard is so high. When you have a coach that has high standards and you have a player that has high standards, the synergy and togetherness, it's just something that's unbreakable when you have a coach and player relationship that looks eye-to-eye. So, I really feel confident as a player having Flo' as my coach. It's really just a blessing to be under his wing.

Q: HOW DID GREENARD HELP YOU COME INTO YOUR OWN IN 2024-25?

A: If I didn't have J.G. my rookie year, I probably wouldn't be where I am mentally, physically and spiritually. I feel like he played a big role in my career — honestly, just being a big brother for me that I never really had before. He put me onto a lot of game (tips and tricks) when it comes to being in the NFL and just specifically being a young player in the NFL trying to make a name for myself.

Q: THE OTHER VET YOU'VE LEARNED A LOT FROM ... WHAT MAKES GINK' ONE OF THE GREATS?

A: Gink's special as hell. Gink' is very smart — the highest of the highest awareness when it comes to the game of football. Always one step ahead. Always prepared for anything that you throw at him. It's kind of ironic. When I was in college, I used to watch [film of] Gink' a lot — Gink' and J.G.

I just so happened to be on the same team as the two players I used to watch primarily when I was in college. So, I'd be stupid not to be a sponge and just pick his brain. We sit next to each other in the locker room every day. We joke, laugh and talk ball all the time. I really feel like just being a part of his career is very special and very honoring and humbling in my point of view. Having that type of ball knowledge, as a resource and as a teammate more importantly, you know, just when I line up and I look over there and I see him, I just know that he's got my back. Just like how I got his back.

LET'S WRAP WITH TWO FUN ONES.

Q: WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT THE VIKINGS-PACKERS RIVALRY?

A: It's similar to an SEC rivalry. It's a mutual respect thing. They're a very well-coached team, a very talented team, and it's a lot of competition. Week 1 at U.S. Bank Stadium, you know, it's going to be rocking. It's going to be a lot of noise, a lot of atmosphere. It's going to be deep. I feel like the rivalry might be bigger here than it is in college, to be honest, with the Alabama-Auburn, Alabama-Tennessee, and games like that. It's that same feeling. But it's a higher magnitude because we play in the National Football League.

Q: LASTLY, WHAT UNIFORM IS YOUR FAVORITE TO WEAR?

A: The Classics, for sure. Since I've been here, they are my favorite. I actually want the Classics to be the main uniforms, if you ask me. I really feel like that purple with the gray facemask and the yellow flares, I feel like you really can't beat it.



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CASH & E-WIL

BACKERS WHO THRIVE

GOING FORWARD

The air is thick and warm, practice wrapped about 15 minutes ago on a steamy late-summer day, and there's a pair of linebackers running half-gassers, one after the other, across a field.

One of them, Blake Cashman, had just been voted one of eight Vikings season-long captains. It's a significant honor for the Eden Prairie native, but he is humble and insists there are many players worthy of the distinction.

It takes 10 more minutes for the second 'backer, Eric Wilson, to sit next to Cashman on a low concrete wall near the locker room. In the interim, Cashman expresses great joy for the forthcoming season: his third in his home state, eighth overall in the NFL and first as a father. Moments will be a smile sweeter for the former Minnesota Gophers star. After conditioning, Wilson used the JUGS machine, then practiced holding field

goals for All-Pro specialists.

"I don't think this guy gets tired," Cash' says, touting 'E-Wil' as an "anomaly."

One year ago, they formed a sensational duo.

Specifically, Cashman and Wilson fed and led the beast bred by Brian Flores, an undiagnosable defense that attacks teams like a virus, scrambling senses and zapping bodily functions, aka offensive call sheets.

"I think it's just fun, honestly," Wilson says coolly, contrasting the chaos he creates.

"We're not only playing in Flo's defense. We kind of make it our (the players') defense as well, and we definitely buy in."

That's an aspect Cashman and Wilson appreciate and reiterate is unique to systems around the league. They are well-sourced, after all. Cashman played under five defensive coordinators in his first five NFL seasons: Gregg Williams, Frank Bush and Jeff Ulbrich with the Jets, and Lovie Smith and Matt Burke with the Texans

Wilson learned from three, including one campaign with co-coordinators, with the Vikings from 2017-20, and then five across four more seasons in stops with four separate clubs from 2021-24. That latter stint started with current Packers Defensive Coordinator Jonathan Gannon in Philadelphia and ended in Green Bay with new Dolphins Head Coach Jeff Hafley.

The stewardship in Flores' scheme requires smart players and confident communicators. It invites innovation and freedom, and rains firestorms, and keeps offenses guessing in heavy-pressure formats.

"It is pure joy when you get up there on the line of scrimmage and these guys are wide-eyed, like, 'What the hell is going on?' " Cashman says excitedly, as Wilson nods along. "They're arguing with the quarterback on how they should set the protection, and we know as players in this defense that when we get offenses like that, it's going to be a long game for them,

and we're going to find a lot of success."

Nos. 51 and 55 look like action figures, and last season they played like action heroes.

Cashman assailed quarterbacks 9.1 times per game in 13 appearances, acting from three alignments (thrice off the edge; 41 times from off-ball distance; and 74 times showing and going after he was walked up as a "DL"), according to Next Gen Stats, and he generated eight of 18 QB pressures in less than 2.5 seconds.

The homegrown Viking increased his blitzing percentage from 27.8% in 2024 to 29.9% last year and awed with a workmanlike rush plan, refusing to be denied on first, second and sometimes third efforts.

His pursuit partner, Wilson, started 16 of 17 contests and more than doubled his prior high for pass rushes in one season. E-Wil chased prey 10.6 times per game, and from four spots on the field: once hanging over the slot; 41 times aligned off the ball; 46 times as an edge; and 92 times mugging

the tackle box. Amazingly, he notched more than half his 40 QB pressures in a wink (23 under 2.5 seconds).

Each man's success often stems from teamwork — and conversation up until the ball is snapped.

"Just throughout the weeks of practice, and constantly bouncing ideas off each other," Cashman says. "And he did a great job all season, either beating the back or pushing the back into the



quarterback's lap and getting him off the spot. We bounce those ideas off each other, work different things in practice, try to test those things. And then on game day, sometimes, it's just feel."

"Playing linebacker in our defense is a lot of making sure everybody's on the same page," Wilson adds. "We do a good job of splitting up that role and breaking up the communication on any given play. ... We're not necessarily waiting on one or the other to say something.

"We have a lot of things inside where we have to play off of one another in the run game or in the pass game," he continues. "And I just remember one time, I think he made a pick for me, and I came off in there and made a sack and I'm not even celebrating for myself. I'm just trying to find him and celebrate."

Wilson reset his single-season high blitz rate to 39.4%, a staggering increase from his old one of 16.7% in 2022 when he appeared on defense just twice in 13 games — that's crazy, right?

His entire career arc is of the sort. E-Wil

refers to it as "an evolution" and prides his versatility.

"We blitz — regardless of who it is — a lot," he comments. "I've played many different parts of this defense, and I kind of embrace that regardless of what it is. I just make sure I get it done. That's kind of my M.O. — just figure out a way and get it done, regardless of where I'm at. So, if I'm blitzing, I'm going to make it work. If I'm in coverage, I'm going to make it work."

Cashman is smiling while Wilson downplays his success, because his roles are liberating but demanding.

"I would say since I've been here, whether it be a young player or a vet that's new, he's picked up the defense quicker than anybody else I've seen come through these doors in the past three years," Cashman points out. "I think the coaches recognize that and they put him in a bunch of different spots, and when it comes to some of the blitzing stuff, he was taking advantage of those opportunities.

"Flo' always talks about feeding a hot hand or, you know, we're a bunch of chess pieces in there," Cash' elaborates, "and we want to put guys in favorable positions; we want guys playing to their strengths. [Flo'] was doing such a great job, just keeping him going and letting it rip, and it gave us a lot of success."

Nine years ago, Wilson joined the Vikings as an undrafted rookie and was used, exclusively, on special teams. He was a spot-starter in 2018 and '19 and broke into the

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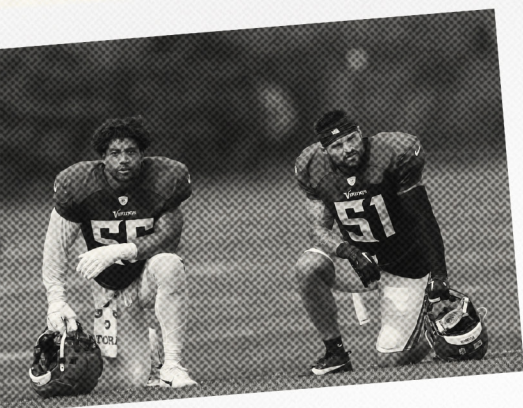
regular lineup in '20 after Anthony Barr tore a pectoral muscle in Week 2. Wilson served then as the "Green Dot," the title Cashman holds now.

After that, Wilson was part of four clubs — Philadelphia, Houston, New Orleans and Green Bay — in 12 months. He started his Packers tenure mid-season in 2022 much like his Vikings one — in the third phase and a reserve on defense. His playing time finally surged, again, in 2024 when he started 12 of 17 games.

He performed well, especially in Week 17 at U.S. Bank Stadium when he collected nine tackles and Cashman tied for a game-high 11. Their relationship dates to when they trained together and with other NFL players during the pandemic; Cashman admits he was stunned the Packers didn't lock up their own before the Vikings consummated a reunion. The rest is recent history; E-Wil subbed for Cash' early last year when he left Week 1 with a hamstring injury and joined forces when Cash' returned.

Together, they flourished.

"It was really the second half of the season because we started showing a lot of mug looks where both of us are in the A gaps or both of us are in the B gaps, and we're





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bringing pressure, but it's also a read, so we don't know who's going to be the blitz," Cash' details the on-the-fly adjustments.

Their ascension seemed incessant.

Cashman and Wilson were one of 10 duos — one of five sets of 'backers — in 2025 in on 115 or more tackles apiece. Three of the other LB tandems have since separated, so the only other at the threshold back together in 2026 is Pittsburgh's Patrick Queen, who is 27, and Payton Wilson, 26.

The Vikings pair is peerless, however, when it comes to their combination of production and experience. SEE: They

were the only NFL teammates in their seventh season or later in '25 to record 115-plus tackles.

Triple digits don't capture the everything-everywhere-all-at-once impacts of Cashman and Wilson, though. There are few statistics — but many scenes — that do. One transpired on *Sunday Night Football*.

In the 34-26 win at AT&T Stadium last Dec. 14, Cashman and Wilson leaned on brains, brawn and a clue perceived in film review to make misery, and cause the Cowboys offense to go 2-for-12 on third downs.

They combined for 30 pass rushes, and seven flustered Dak Prescott.

"There were times where we knew the protection and E-Wil's just like, 'I can beat this guy. Let me just go,'" says Cashman, who would play his part. "It's funny, when we're presenting all these pressures, it's full-on conversation the entire time."

"A lot can change" in the games within the game, he notes, "and we just want to help each other out."

The fact a couple of well-traveled linebackers are playing the best ball of their careers is special. But, far from unbelievable. Cashman, 30, and Wilson, who will turn 32 Sept. 26, are superiorly positioned to thrive in these circumstances — under Flores, with myriad responsibilities, at this stage of their journeys.

Wilson is setting out to complete a decade in the NFL and hasn't yet reached 3,750 defensive snaps. Cash', as he launches his 30s, is flirting with 3,000, after missing a swath of games when he was younger. So, the co-commander-in-chiefs of Minnesota's "D" have been

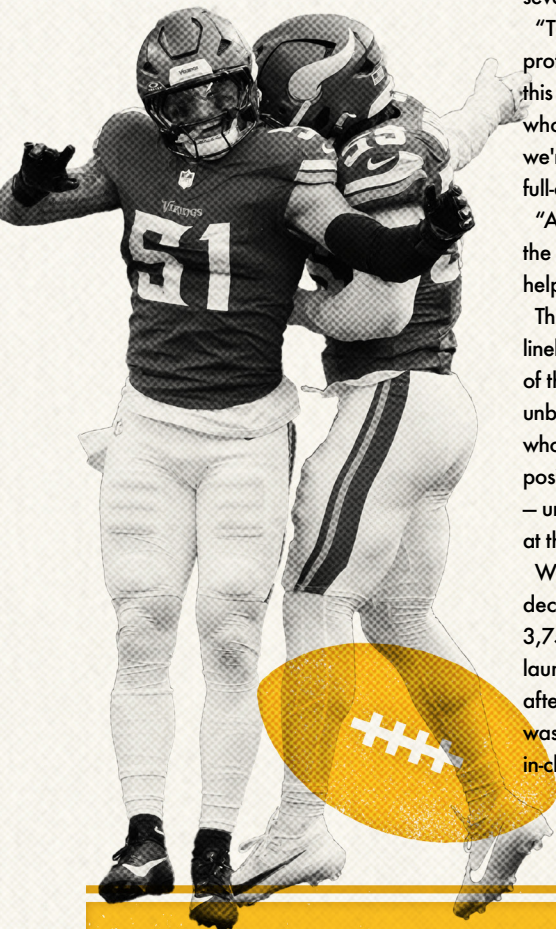
gaining insights and aptitude, advancing their savvy and programming their bodies for peaks that may make anyone who forgot, remember them.

"My argument is if we didn't play a lot of defensive snaps early on or at a certain point in our career, that's time we didn't put that physicality on our bodies, and you can make it up on the backend," Cashman asserts. "I think both of us have been flying around through training camp. And I would say in terms of the knowledge of the game — coming here, I feel like my football intelligence has exponentially grown. And I think a big part of that is just how the coaches teach it, because Flo's defense is so exotic in a way where it limits a team's menu, and the best way to know this defense is understanding how teams can attack it. ... It's knowing those things that allow you to anticipate plays and play faster out there."

"Some old guys will say, 'You may lose a step, a physical step, but you gain half a step because of the IQ.'"

Their love for the game has peaked in Purple, as well, and "fellowship with the guys" is a big reason why.

"The relationships and connectivity in this locker room are different than anywhere else I've been," Cashman states. "E-Wil brings that, in terms of creating those relationships and memories outside the building and off the field. ... I'm a guy that's always interested and eager to bring guys together whether it be the LBs going over to someone's house and ordering food and watching the Monday night game or Thursday night dinner and cards. Whatever it is, [E-Wil is] a guy that's always trying to incorporate that."





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Gaining Ground:

VIKINGS ROLLING OUT REVAMPED RUN GAME

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

There's nothing quite like the feeling of taking a handoff and hitting open space.

Vikings running back Aaron Jones, Sr., grinned widely just thinking about it — envisioning hitting a hole on game day and seeing unoccupied turf (or grass) ahead of him.

"Your eyes get big. Excitement, like, 'Oh man.' Especially when you go untouched," Jones said following a Vikings practice session last week. "You're like, 'What did I do to earn this?' There's not many of them where you'll find a huge, gaping hole. When you see that it's like ... 'Thank you for this space. I'm gonna take it and make the most of it.' "

Following such a gain, Jones sometimes jogs back to the sideline to ask running backs coach Curtis Modkins what allowed the big break. The blocking teammate in question — an offensive linemen, tight end or even receiver — will then receive some love from Jones.

"I'll go up to him, 'Thank you, bro. We needed that,' " Jones smiled.

The Vikings are confident in their revamped run game and hope to see it come to life starting in today's Border Battle.

What if opponents feared Minnesota's run the same way they fear Justin Jefferson?

Because that's exactly what Brian O'Neill is aiming for this season.

Minnesota's right tackle spoke during his January exit interview with media about Vikings up-and-down performance in the run game — while emphasizing that when they did have success on the ground, they generally had more success in the game.

Minnesota finished the 2025 campaign 9-8. In games where the team logged more than 100 rushing yards, the Vikings were 7-2. They were 9-3 in games with at least one Minnesota rushing score (this included four instances of J.J. McCarthy crossing the goal line with the ball in wins).

Throughout the 2026 offseason programming, training camp and preseason, there's been a comprehensive commitment to running the rock.

That mentality has shown up in roster construction by new Vikings General Manager Nolan Teasley, who has been "really pleased" with the team's progress and claimed offensive linemen Trevor Keegan and Nick Samac after the NFL's roster reduction deadline, emphasizing depth up front.

From Teasley and O'Connell to players throughout the

locker room, there's alignment.

"There's complete buy-in from top to bottom," O'Neill said. "We've been challenged to make it better and are encouraged by where it is now, but it doesn't really mean anything until we go out and do it week after week."

The Vikings are expected to incorporate the wide zone more often in 2026. The scheme relies on an athletic offensive line that can move horizontally in unison to stretch the defense, as opposed to relying on 1-on-1 power.

And Minnesota's o-line is built for running off the wide zone.

"Everybody up front, they can move. As big as they look, those guys can go," Jones said. "My steps have to be on their steps

— but I'm also waiting on the quarterback,

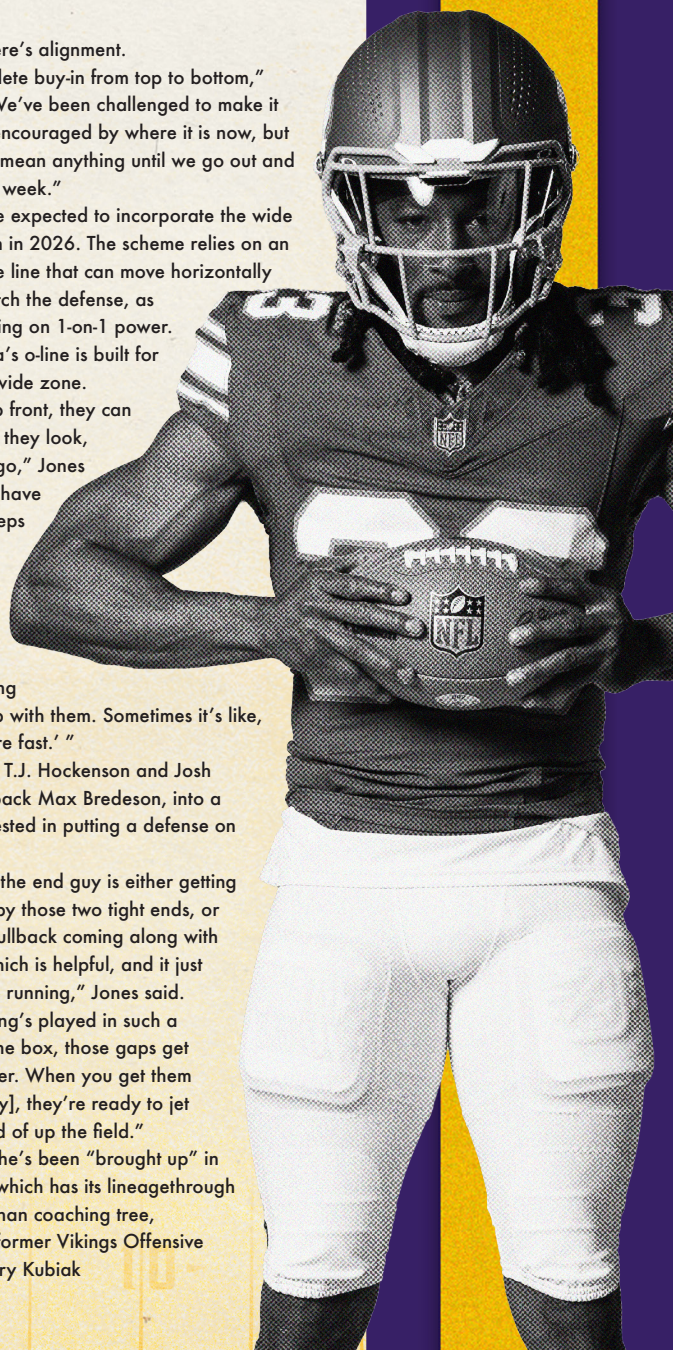
to catch the ball and then go, and I'm trying

to catch back up with them. Sometimes it's like, 'Yo, you guys are fast.' "

Add tight ends T.J. Hockenson and Josh Oliver, plus fullback Max Bredeon, into a mix that is interested in putting a defense on its heels.

"A lot of times the end guy is either getting double-teamed by those two tight ends, or you've got the fullback coming along with the tight end, which is helpful, and it just gets the defense running," Jones said. "When everything's played in such a window inside the box, those gaps get tighter and tighter. When you get them running [laterally], they're ready to jet sideways instead of up the field."

O'Neill noted he's been "brought up" in the wide zone, which has its lineage through the Mike Shanahan coaching tree, which included former Vikings Offensive Coordinator Gary Kubiak



as well as O'Connell, who learned under Sean McVay. The Rams incorporated mid zone.

"For me it's been like, 'Let's get back to some things I used to do, and I think I do them pretty well,'" O'Neill said. "C.D. (Christian Darrisaw) can do pretty much anything; he really can. And Blake [Brandel] grew up in the Kubiak system here, too, in a way. And Donnie (Donovan Jackson) is still a really young guy who can be molded into anything — and he has the physical tools. Same with Will [Fries]. They both have those tools to do it really well."

Part of the Vikings struggles in the run game last season stemmed from injuries to the offensive line and inconsistency at the position.

Entering the 2026 campaign, the Vikings are grateful to be back at full strength. A fully healthy Darrisaw anchoring the left side of the line, and a second-year Jackson next to him, has a significant impact on Minnesota's ability to gain ground.

Darrisaw's teammates have noticed a change in the left tackle this spring and summer that goes beyond a recovered knee.

"Just from a confidence standpoint, you see C.D. in a much, much, much better place. This is the C.D. I know," O'Neill said.

"He feels like himself and is confident and is playing great.

"People who haven't been here long enough to know what he's really about, I'm excited they're going to see what we all know him as," O'Neill added.

Vikings defensive lineman Levi Drake Rodriguez interrupted this interview to offer his personal endorsement — as someone who sees him daily on the practice field — of Darrisaw.

"C.D.'s been a dawg," Rodriguez drawled. "He's a freaking dog on the o-line. He's been working his tail end off."

In a training camp interview with media members last month, Darrisaw said "it's gonna be fun" continuing to work with this group of linemen. He additionally emphasized Jackson's growth a year-plus out from being drafted 24th overall.

Darrisaw noted the game is slowing down for Jackson, who has inherent athletic and physical ability.

"Year 2 is gonna be good for him," Darrisaw said.

"And I wasn't with him every game last

season, but we were still in each other's ear. And from the spring until now, we've been able to play off each other. We know how to hit certain blocks and what we're thinking. It's going to be exciting to play next to him this year."

O'Connell's commitment to the run game has shaped his 2026 coaching staff, which included the hiring of Assistant Head Coach Frank Smith and elevation of Keith Carter to offensive line coach (Carter signed as the position's assistant in 2025).

Vikings Offensive

Coordinator Wes Phillips pointed out Carter has been successful with wide zone at past stops in his football journey and is key in the process.

"It's just a different style per se, from maybe some other line coaches across the league, but I think it really fits what we want to do overall, and the schemes that have run the ball this way," Phillips said.

Smith, a fellow offshoot of the Shanahan coaching tree, is a conduit of the team-wide acceptance O'Neill referenced.

"He's helped drive how important it is we get this right," O'Neill said. "The philosophy of it, getting the collective buy-in. Showing us, 'Look, when we're running off the ball and we're all in-sync, this is really hard to defend.'

"But it's like a coordinated dance. It can't just be the line. It can't just be tight ends. It can't just be receivers," O'Neill added. "He emphasizes how important it is for us to do two things — to be completely in unison and trust each other, and to play fast. ... You have to set your landmark and run."

If the Vikings blocking can get the running back in a 1-on-1 situation with the opposing safety, Smith reminds, "That's why those backs are here. To make somebody miss."

Jones and Jordan Mason recognize their responsibility and are energized by the renewed emphasis.

"If you're able to run the ball well, I mean, we have formations where you can't tell if we're running or throwing it," Jones said, "and if you've been running the ball well, the defense will try to load the box and take [that away], and then we can pass it. It's all going hand-in-hand. The biggest thing is staying out of second-and-long and third-and-long, being efficient with our carries."

O'Neill and the rest of Minnesota's o-line equally embrace the challenge of enriching the Vikings offensive identity. They understand O'Connell — as a former QB — has a natural affinity for the passing game but needs to see more well-rounded production.

"One of the things we're talking about in our room is, 'Let's fully earn the trust if this is what we want to do,'" O'Neill said. "We want

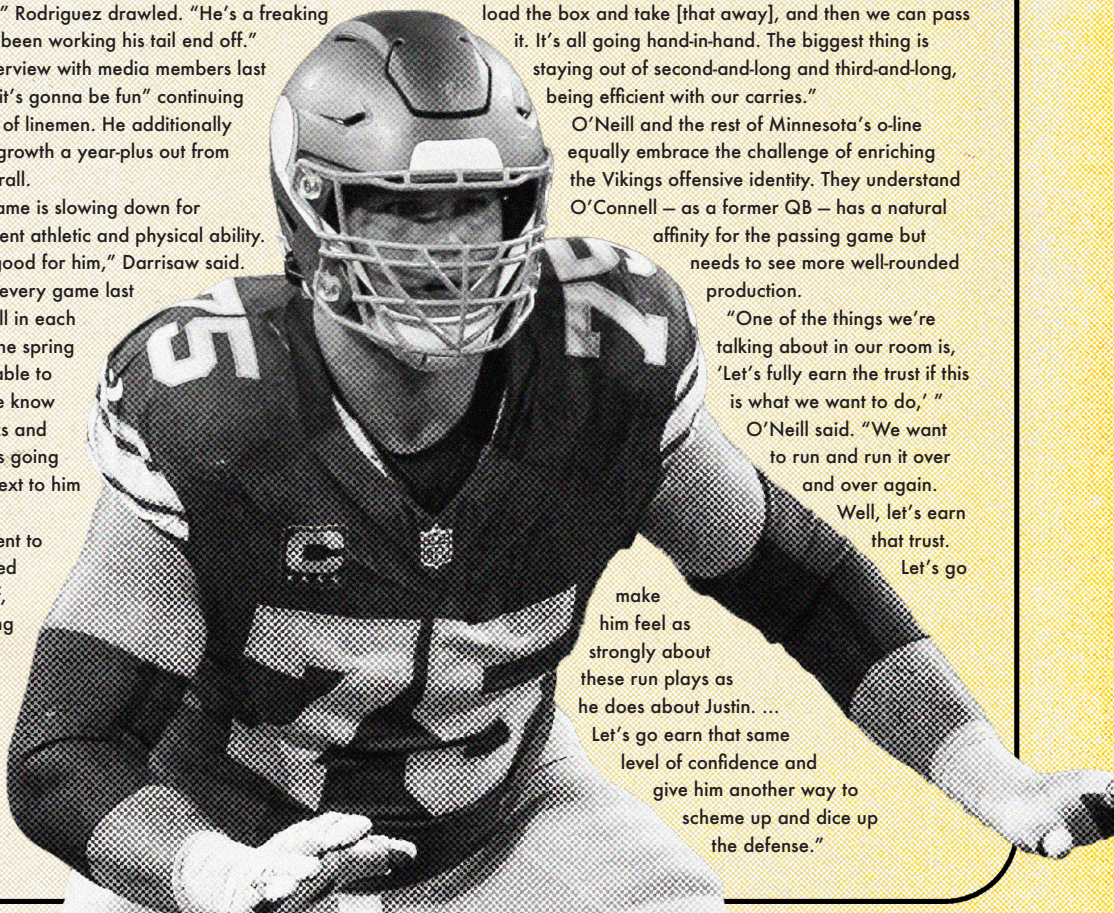
to run and run it over and over again.

Well, let's earn that trust.

Let's go

make him feel as strongly about these run plays as he does about Justin. ...

Let's go earn that same level of confidence and give him another way to scheme up and dice up the defense."





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RESOUNDING WORDS HELP TELL

Alan Page's STORY

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

The chapters of Alan Page's story are plentiful. The words to describe him carry magnitude.

We asked Vikings Legends to reflect on their time playing with Page, who was drafted by Minnesota in 1967 and went on to spend 11-plus seasons in Purple. Limited to one word to describe their former teammate, those Legends provide a myriad of responses.

Introspective, says Ron Yary. Bobby Bryant goes with *Superior*.

In all caps from fellow Hall of Famer Paul Krause: *STEADY*.

Dave Osborn, who practiced opposite Page for nine seasons, sums up the defensive tackle in four letters: *Fast*.

Smart from Ed White and *Inventive* from fellow Purple People Eater Carl Eller.

And Gary Larsen, a fellow Purple People Eater who helped Page, Eller and Jim Marshall by anchoring Minnesota's famed defensive line?

Fantastisk, he sends. Norwegian for "awesome"!

Before today's season opener, in which the Vikings will don their Classic Uniforms in homage to Legends past, Page will sound the Gjallarhorn to signal "The Vikings are coming." He becomes just the third person in franchise history to sound the horn three times, joining the late Bud Grant and Hall of Famer Jared Allen.

Page left an indelible impact on the Vikings organization, to be sure, as well as on the State of Minnesota and all those who know and love him, not

only via his football career but through a life of service dedicated to others.

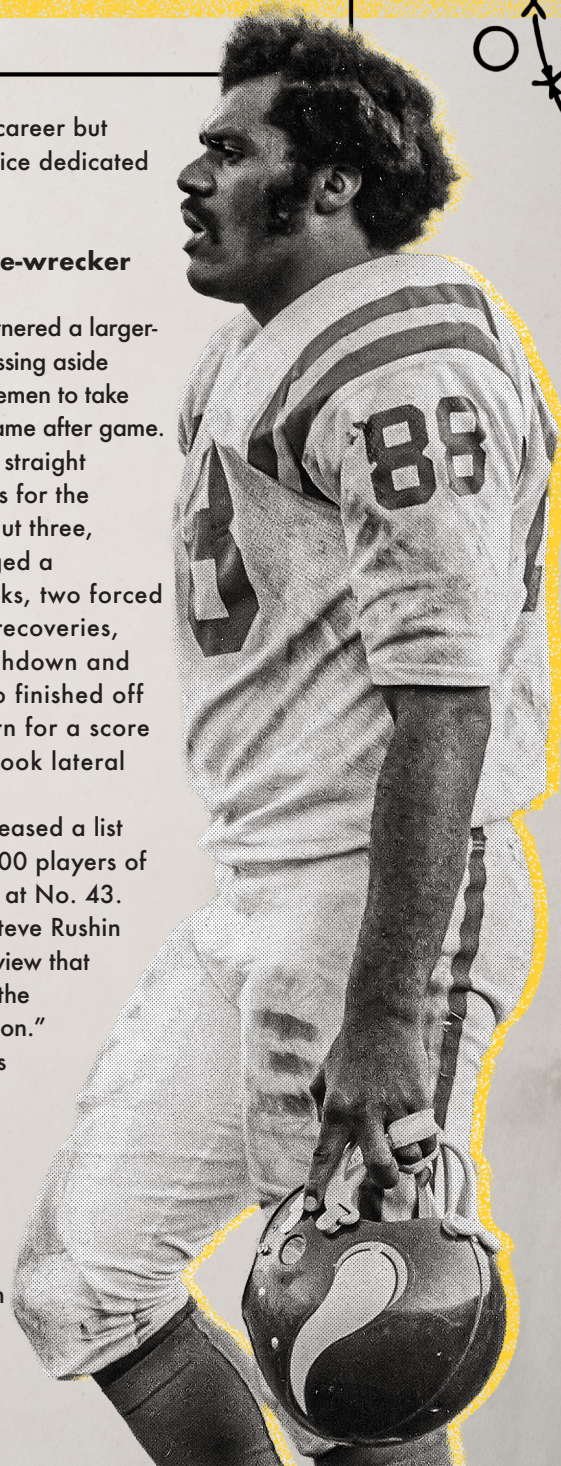
Hall of Fame game-wrecker

On the field, Page garnered a larger-than-life reputation, tossing aside opposing offensive linemen to take down quarterbacks game after game.

Page played in 160 straight regular-season games for the Vikings, starting all but three, during which he logged a whopping 108.5 sacks, two forced fumbles, 19 fumble recoveries, a fumble return touchdown and two safeties. He also finished off an interception return for a score after catching a no-look lateral from Marshall.

The NFL in 2010 released a list of the league's top 100 players of all time, slating Page at No. 43. Longtime journalist Steve Rushin noted during an interview that Page "revolutionized the defensive tackle position."

"He said the coaches wanted him to kind of man this one-square yard of space, his lane. He never found that particularly interesting, so you'd see him going through all different kinds of gaps. You'd see him



swimming around two [opponents] at the same time," Rushin said. "He looked just huge in his uniform with those pads on, but out of uniform, he was a fairly skinny guy [who ran] marathons; you wouldn't think he was one of the greatest players in the history of the National Football League."

And yet, Page was exactly that. He became the first defensive player to win NFL MVP, taking home the award following the 1971 season, and Lawrence Taylor (1986) is the only other defensive player to win MVP. Page played in all four of Minnesota's Super Bowl appearances (IV, VIII, IX, XI), earned All-Pro honors five times and received nine Pro Bowl nods.

Page played against the Packers and Lions 29 times apiece in his career with Minnesota (1967-78) and Chicago (1978-81), more than any other team. In career Border Battles, he helped the Vikings go 18-4 against the Packers.

Page was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1988, and his 88 is one of just six Vikings jerseys to be retired.

Voice for the voiceless

No matter how many accolades Page acquired on the gridiron, the athletic limelight never truly captivated him.

He's cared deeply, rather, about bettering the world around him and advocating for marginalized communities. Page began pursuing his law degree even while playing for the Vikings, often studying legal textbooks in the locker room and attending law classes after practice. Page earned his Juris Doctor in

1978 and in 1992 was elected to an open seat as an associate justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court — becoming the first African American to serve on the state's high court. He was reelected in 1998, 2004 and 2010, before state mandates required him to retire at the age of 70.

It wasn't only through his judicial career that Page made a difference.

He and his late wife Diane in 1988 established the Page Education Foundation, with a goal to "encourage, motivate and assist Minnesota's students of color in the pursuit of post-secondary education and, in the process, change the future." In 1988, the Foundation supported 10 Page Scholars; the nonprofit now annually aids more than 500 and has awarded more than \$16 million in education grants.

Page was presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest honor for a civilian, in November 2018.

"No matter who they are, no matter what field they've chosen, they continue to do great things," Page said of scholars in 2025. "They continue to make this world a better place. They continue to contribute to who we are as a people and as a community."

Friend and family

There are many words Marshall may have used to describe his longtime teammate, with whom he remained close through his passing in June 2025.

We asked Marshall's wife, Susan, to define Page in a single word; she

thought carefully before selecting *Friend*.

"He and Jim, they had such a lovely relationship," Susan said. "For six decades, they were loyal to each other. They really were. Through anything and everything.

"I'm so lucky because I get to have him for a friend," she added, voice breaking. "I feel close to Jim when I'm around him."

Like everything he's accomplished in his life, Page loves well.

He cherished Diane through 45 years of marriage until her passing in 2018, together raising their children and later pouring into their grandchildren. His legacy is his family's legacy.

Page cares deeply for the countless young people he has invested in, whether Page scholars, students at Justice Page Middle School or the readers of five children's books he and his daughter Kamie have co-written.

He loves his teammates and their families, and he loves the state that's been his home since 1967. Whether walking around Lake of the Isles, tapping for maple syrup on the shores of Lake Washburn or cheering on runners of the Twin Cities Marathon, Page somehow epitomizes Minnesota.

From the football field, to the courthouse, to his relationships through and beyond the Land of 10,000 Lakes, he is special.

There are many pages to his story. There is, however, only one Justice Alan Page — and he is a *Classic*.

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Aaron Jones, Sr.

AND FAMILY DONATE FRESH KICKS
AT UNITED HEROES LEAGUE

BY CRAIG PETERS

Youth from 500 families have pep in their step as they head back to school in fresh kicks, thanks to a shoe donation by the A&A All the Way Foundation established by Vikings running back Aaron Jones, Sr., and his twin brother Alvin Jones, Jr. Their sister Chelsi and mother Vurgess were also on hand at United Heroes League last month for the giveaway.

A&A All the Way's leading cause is supporting military families in honor of the service of Vurgess Jones (1990-2016) and the late Alvin Jones, Sr., who served from 1984-2012.

Those commitments and shared family sacrifices shaped the Jones children, influencing their upbringing and enabling them to understand what youth go through while parents are serving.

"One year I didn't play football because both of my parents were deployed," Aaron recalled when speaking with media members. "Every two or three years, I had to go and prove myself in different areas — Virginia, Texas, Tennessee — but I feel like it established me for today's world and the structure in the NFL."

Staff Sgt. Jason Einberger is entering his 12th year of service. He and his wife Mykaela appreciated the opportunity to bring their sons, Ole (7) and Adler (4), to the United Heroes League headquarters for the fun event that included activities for youth, photo opportunities with Aaron and snacks and drinks provided by Vikings Table.

"It's nice to have the support for the family of a service member," said SSG Einberger, who has previously deployed to Egypt and Djibouti.

Mykaela added: "This was amazing. One thing we run into is, there's not a lot of events for military kids under the age of 10, so having the opportunity to bring these two for a once-in-a-lifetime meeting of an NFL player is really great."



Aaron enjoyed greeting families in the photo line and seeing smiling faces.

"When a parent serves, the spouse and the children serve," he said. "They all face those hardships and have to deal with them as a family and get through it."

Aaron and his family have sincerely appreciated multiple visits to UHL, as well as the Vikings gifting of two bricks in honor of Vurgess and her late husband on the "Heroes Wall."

"It's been an amazing partnership," Aaron said. "My dad has a brick here, so my heart is here. It's a special place, and I love what they're doing."

HOPE KIDS WELCOMED



"Nice sombrero," I said, flagging down another family to ask about their day.

"Yeah," 10-year-old Brady Swanson replied smoothly from under the broad, purple brim.

"Everybody says that to us," his 5-year-old sister Rylan said as she bounced up and down.

Their mom Shayla Swanson explained she received it as a Christmas gift, fulfilling her wish.

"I'm a huge Vikings fan but fell in love with Aaron the first year he was here," Shayla said. "It seems like he's out in the community doing a lot, and so are the Vikings."

Also with the group, 7-year-old Oakley was a source of inspiration to thousands last October during halftime of Minnesota's Crucial Catch game. Oakley was diagnosed with B-Cell ALL Leukemia on Feb. 21, 2023, and completed chemotherapy on June 22, 2025.

The Swanson family and others with chronically ill children supported by Hope Kids were also invited to the event.



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5 FAVES

Perhaps their favorite childhood movies foreshadowed that Isaiah Rodgers and Byron Murphy, Jr., would be menaces on the football field — though hardly in a diminutive way.

Asked about the film they most enjoyed watching as a youngster, Rodgers tabbed *The Little Rascals* and Murphy reminisced over *The Little Vampire*, a charming family flick released when Murphy was 2 years old.

Two-plus decades later, Rodgers and Murphy prove real threats to opposing offenses. The Vikings corners combined last season for 137 tackles, three interceptions, seven tackles for loss, 11 passes defended and a pair of fumble recoveries.

Here are five of Murphy's and Rodgers' other faves:



	ISAIAH RODGERS	BYRON MURPHY JR.
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TV SHOW	POWER	POWER

THE NFL TODAY

BY CRAIG PETERS

The Vikings Legacy Ship outside U.S. Bank Stadium provided the perfect setting for *THE NFL TODAY*'s launch of its 2026 season.

It was quite apropos with Minnesota wearing its Classic uniforms that Vikings Legend Nate Burleson is on the broadcast team and continued his "second" career that was inspired by Vikings Ring of Honor receiver Ahmad Rashad.

Rashad joined the Vikings in 1976 and went on to post four Pro Bowl seasons with Minnesota. Burleson, who turned 45 in August, remembered Rashad more for his studio success that centered on covering the NBA.

"Ahmad Rashad was literally my first ever motivating factor to think that I could be on TV," Burleson told Vikings.com in 2023. "How in the hell does a football player, one that was damn good at his job, all of a sudden start doing a basketball show, and he's kicking it with M.J. (Michael Jordan)? For as long as I can remember, he has always

been a guy that I looked at and have kind of chased. That's why you see me in all these different spaces: football, basketball, entertainment, politics, news, societal issues. It's all because I saw Ahmad Rashad switch sports."

Burleson has flourished and had fun along the way. He and *THE NFL TODAY* turned back the clock in Week 3 last season, dressing in period attire from 1975.

Today, he joined host James Brown, Hall of Fame Head Coach Bill Cowher, Super Bowl champion QB Russell Wilson and All-Pro T Kyle Long at the Legacy Ship to open the 2026 slate.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CBS

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Kiki

GRATEFUL FOR MVC IMPACT PAST AND PRESENT

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

It feels fitting for Kiki to kick off Season 5 wearing the MVC Classic uniforms.

"The Classic uniform will always hold a special place in my heart," said Kiki, who has been dancing since the age of 3.

When she first made the Minnesota Vikings Cheerleaders team in 2022, Kiki never could have imagined the journey — sometimes quite literally — that followed. From her rookie season to her current veteran role as a respected team captain, Kiki is thankful not only for her experiences but for the women who came before her and honoring them at today's game.

"I think it's so special that we get to represent the MVC's legacy and look back at where it all began," Kiki said. "So much has evolved over the years, but it's such an honor to carry on the tradition and represent all the incredible cheerleaders who wore this uniform before me."

Kiki credits dancing for helping her test the waters beyond her comfort zone, especially as a shy and timid youngster. She developed self-confidence, a strong work ethic and qualities of being a supportive teammate. Many lifelong friendships have also grown through dance opportunities that included Northern Force Dance Company, the University of Minnesota Duluth dance team and one year on the University of Minnesota Premier Team.

Some of Kiki's most memorable MVC moments have taken place during the Vikings international trips, both on and off the field. She recalled a rainy 2024 game day at Tottenham Stadium in London, an eventual Vikings defeat of the Jets, when fans sang along to "Mr. Brightside,"

as well as the Vikings youth football camp hosted in Dublin last October.

"Since the youth there aren't as familiar with the NFL, it was fun getting to teach them about what we do here in the U.S. But even more special was getting to learn about the sports they love and the games they play," Kiki said. "They were so excited to meet us and learn about the Vikings, and their energy made the whole experience so memorable. It was such a great reminder that while sports can look different everywhere, the excitement and connection they create are universal."

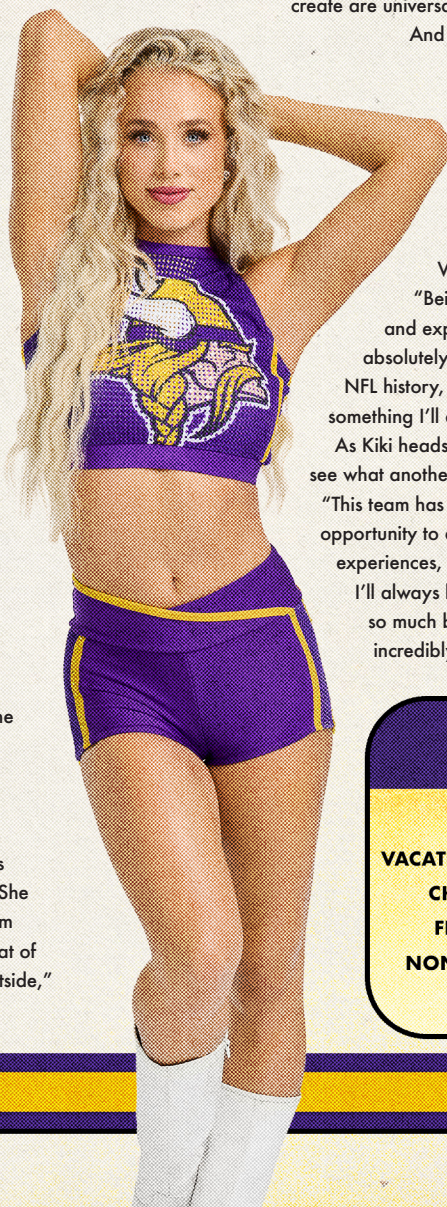
And she'll never take for granted numerous electric game days at U.S. Bank Stadium, from competitive Border Battles such as today's contest to big-time plays and dramatic wins.

"I vividly remember Greg Joseph making the 40-yard field goal to beat the Colts in overtime," she said of the Vikings record effort in the 2022 game.

"Being on the sidelines for that comeback and experiencing the energy in the stadium was absolutely insane. It was the biggest comeback in NFL history, and being able to witness it firsthand is something I'll always remember!"

As Kiki heads into the 2026 season, she's excited to see what another year with the MVC holds.

"This team has given me so much more than the opportunity to dance," she said. "It's given me experiences, friendships, confidence and memories I'll always be grateful for. MVC truly is something so much bigger than just dancing, and I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of it."



KIKI'S FAVES

MUSIC ARTIST: SZA

VACATION DESTINATION: MALAGA, SPAIN

CHILDHOOD MOVIE: INSIDE OUT

FEMALE ATHLETE: SIMONE BILES

NON-DANCE HOBBY: SPENDING TIME
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