WK 7 | OCT. 25, 2026

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VIKINGS



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87

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USE YOUR SMARTPHONE TO SCAN AND START YOUR CHAT WITH 'ASK VIK,' THE VIKINGS VIRTUAL ASSISTANT.

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EDITOR: Craig Peters

COPY EDITOR: Lindsey Young

WRITERS: Rob Kleifield, Craig Peters & Lindsey Young

ART DIRECTION & DESIGN: Elizabeth Douglas, John Paul Nguyen, Joey Snippes, Alicia Dreyer, Andrea Malacas, Matthew Van Dyke, and Jacqueline Ramacher

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OCT. 25, 2026 | U.S. BANK STADIUM

Welcome to today's game between the Minnesota Vikings and Indianapolis Colts, the 29th between the franchises, which includes 27 regular-season contests and one playoff game in 1968. The Vikings are hosting the Colts for the third time since 2022 and trying to extend their win streak in the series to three games while improving to 6-0 this season.

In-game elements include the following:

COLOR GUARD: A Joint Services guard representing all military branches will present the colors.

NATIONAL ANTHEM: Brooklyn Marie, an emerging singer-songwriter from Alexandria, Minnesota, will sing *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Marie recently garnered national attention as a contestant on Season 30 of NBC's *The Voice*, where she earned a spot on Kelly Clarkson's team and advanced beyond the blind auditions round.

MILLER MILITARY SPOTLITE: Please welcome Helen Leqve, a 104-year-old from Kasson, Minnesota, to today's game. Born in Utah but raised mostly in Northern Minnesota, Leqve set aside her dream of a nursing career and became a "Rosie the Riveter" to support America's efforts in World War II. At just 19 years old, Leqve moved to California and helped build B-17 Flying Fortress aircraft. Earlier this year, Leqve was honored by the National World War II Museum and recognized by the Minnesota Senate for her contributions.

HALFTIME: Viktor and his mascot friends from around the state will face the Caswell Sports youth football team from North Mankato.

TODAY'S GAME PRESENTED BY

LAND O LAKES®

In partnership with Land O'Lakes, the Vikings will recognize Rebeckah Schroeder, a fifth-generation dairy farmer from Caledonia, Minnesota. Schroeder recovered from a near-fatal car accident in 2022 to resume her dairy farming.

2026 TEAM STATS

YARDS PER GAME / ALLOWED

	RUSH	PASS	
MIN OFF	116.0	167.0	283 | 27TH IN THE NFL
IND DEF	122.5	228.7	351.2 | 25TH IN THE NFL
IND OFF	111.5	199.8	332.2 | 16TH IN THE NFL
MIN DEF	86.6	173.2	259.8 | 2ND IN THE NFL

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CONCESSIONS

AT TODAY'S GAME >>>




FALEN
COLT & JENNY
KDWB 101.3
THEY'RE NOT AS COOL AS YOU
BUT... THEY'RE TRYING
MORNINGS 6:00-10:00am 101.3 KDWB

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 offer details.

VIKINGS ZONE

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

SCORE FREE KING'S HAWAIIAN® CINNAMON BITES

Calling all Vikings fans! This season, YOU have a chance to try NEW King's Hawaiian Soft Swirl Cinnamon Bites for FREE at your local Hy-Vee! Simply scan the QR code to sign up for the rebate, then head to your local Hy-Vee and purchase King's Hawaiian Cinnamon Bites in the Deli. Load your receipt for reimbursement via PayPal or Venmo. See rebate site for details, terms and conditions.

King's Hawaiian

BOGO BALL

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: BOGOBALL26 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.

Caribou COFFEE®

GAME-DAY GLOW GIVEAWAY

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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OFFICIAL CASINO OF THE MINNESOTA VIKINGS

01	09.13	vs GB	W 39-22
02	09.20	@ CHI	W 9-3
03	09.27	@ TB	W 23-16
04	10.04	vs MIA	W 15-10
05	10.11	@ NO	W 23-13
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	
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	

FLEX SCHEDULING BEGAN WEEK 5



JOSHUA METELLUS

SAFETY | 5'11" | 208 LBS | 7TH SEASON | MICHIGAN

METELLUS PLAYED HIS 100TH REGULAR-SEASON GAME FOR THE VIKINGS IN WEEK 4, AND HE'S GRATEFUL TO CONTINUE EXTENDING THAT NUMBER.

The 28-year-old entered today's game against Indianapolis with 30 tackles, one-half sack, a QB hit and three passes defensed this season. Metellus is still looking for his first interception of the year and will seek to nab it from former Vikings teammate Daniel Jones. The Colts quarterback spent the final six weeks of the 2024 season on the Vikings practice squad. Metellus will also help Minnesota's defense work to contain Jonathan Taylor and Indy's run game. Through the first six weeks of this season, Taylor ranks sixth in the league with 492 yards on the ground.

SWISS ARMY KNIFE

Vikings Defensive Coordinator Brian Flores consistently utilizes Metellus in numerous ways, and "Telly's" high football I.Q. makes him a valuable tool in the system. Though he's most often played the free safety role this season (130 snaps), Metellus also has taken 102 snaps in the box and has lined up on the line (17 snaps), at nickel back and a handful of times at outside corner. And don't forget about his leadership role off the field, as well. In his fourth season under Flores and as a full-season team captain, Metellus continues to be a vocal leader for not only Minnesota's defense but the entire locker room.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS ROSTER

#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE
0	Ivan Pace Jr.	LB	5-10	236	25	4	Cincinnati
1	Kyler Murray	QB	5-10	207	29	8	Oklahoma
2	Isaiah Rodgers	CB	5-10	180	28	6	Massachusetts
3	Jordan Addison	WR	5-11	179	24	4	USC
4	Myles Price	WR	5-9	183	24	2	Indiana
5	Zemaiah Vaughn	CB	6-3	180	24	1	Utah
7	Byron Murphy Jr.	CB	5-11	190	28	8	Washington
8	Jakobe Thomas	S	6-1	211	23	R	Miami
11	Carson Wentz	QB	6-5	237	33	11	North Dakota State
12	Max Brosmer	QB	6-2	218	25	2	Minnesota
13	Tai Felton	WR	6-1	186	23	2	Maryland
14	Jauan Jennings	WR	6-3	212	29	6	Tennessee
15	Dallas Turner	OLB	6-3	247	23	3	Alabama
16	Will Reichard	K	6-1	190	25	3	Alabama
17	Kyle Van Noy	OLB	6-3	255	35	13	BYU
18	Justin Jefferson	WR	6-1	195	27	7	LSU
19	Brett Thorson	P	6-1	237	26	R	Georgia
20	Chuck Demmings	CB	6-1	193	23	R	Stephen F. Austin
21	Demond Claiborne	RB	5-10	188	23	R	Wake Forest
22	Harrison Smith	S	6-2	211	37	15	Notre Dame
23	James Pierre	CB	6-2	185	30	7	Florida Atlantic
24	Jay Ward	S	6-1	190	26	4	LSU
26	Theo Jackson	S	6-1	205	28	5	Tennessee
29	Jacob Thomas	S	6-1	212	22	R	James Madison
31	DeeJay Dallas	RB	5-10	225	28	7	Miami
32	Chaz Chambliss	OLB	6-1	244	24	2	Georgia
33	Aaron Jones Sr.	RB	5-10	208	31	10	UTEP
41	Jake Golday	LB	6-4	240	23	R	Cincinnati
42	Andrew DePaola	LS	6-1	227	39	12	Rutgers
43	Andrew Van Ginkel	OLB	6-4	242	31	8	Wisconsin
44	Joshua Metellus	S	5-11	208	28	7	Michigan
45	Max Bredeson	FB	6-2	252	24	R	Michigan
50	Levi Drake Rodriguez	DL	6-2	307	26	3	East Texas A&M
51	Blake Cashman	LB	6-1	235	30	8	Minnesota
55	Eric Wilson	LB	6-1	231	31	10	Cincinnati
60	Joe Huber	G	6-5	310	24	2	Wisconsin
61	Jalen Redmond	DL	6-3	305	27	3	Oklahoma
64	Blake Brandel	C	6-6	315	29	6	Oregon State
65	Michael Jurgens	C	6-5	311	26	3	Wake Forest
69	Trevor Keegan	G	6-6	315	26	2	Michigan
71	Christian Darrisaw	T	6-5	315	27	6	Virginia Tech
72	Ryan Van Demark	T	6-7	307	28	4	Connecticut
75	Brian O'Neill	T	6-7	310	31	9	Pittsburgh
76	Will Fries	G	6-6	321	28	6	Penn State
78	Caleb Tiernan	T	6-7	323	23	R	Northwestern
85	Ben Yurosek	TE	6-4	251	24	2	Georgia
86	Gavin Bartholomew	TE	6-5	249	23	1	Pittsburgh
87	T.J. Hockenson	TE	6-5	248	29	8	Iowa
90	Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins	DL	6-5	290	23	2	Georgia
95	Caleb Banks	DL	6-6	327	23	R	Florida
97	Domonique Orange	DL	6-2	322	22	R	Iowa State
98	Bo Richter	OLB	6-1	248	26	3	Air Force
99	Elijah Williams	DL	6-3	298	24	2	Morgan State

INJURED RESERVE

#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE
32	Jamal Adams	LB	6-1	213	31	10	LSU
62	Nick Samac	C	6-4	317	25	2	Michigan State
74	Donovan Jackson	G	6-4	324	23	2	Ohio State
84	Josh Oliver	TE	6-5	264	29	8	San Jose State
92	Tyler Batty	OLB	6-6	271	27	2	BYU

RESERVE/DESIGNATED FOR RETURN

#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE
27	Jordan Mason	RB	5-11	230	27	5	Georgia Tech

PRACTICE SQUAD

#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE
9	Odell Beckham Jr.	WR	5-11	198	33	11	LSU
35	Natrone Brooks	CB	5-11	175	26	3	Southern Miss
36	Maceo Beard*	S	6-1	206	26	1	(From Paris, France)
37	Tavierre Thomas	S	5-10	212	30	9	Ferris State
38	Da'Veawn Armstead	CB	6-1	183	23	R	North Texas
54	Kenny Dyson Jr.	OLB	6-3	235	25	1	Bryant
57	Keyshawn Banks	OLB	6-3	255	26	2	San Diego State
59	Bangally Kamara	LB	6-2	235	25	R	Kansas
63	Tristan Leigh	T	6-4	312	23	R	Clemson
67	Josh Priebe	G	6-5	300	25	1	Michigan
68	Henry Byrd	G	6-5	314	27	3	Princeton
79	Jack Nelson	T	6-7	314	24	2	Wisconsin
81	Michael Briscoe	WR	6-2	209	24	R	Cal Poly
82	Jeshaun Jones	WR	6-1	188	26	2	Maryland
83	Cam Grandy	TE	6-5	253	26	3	Illinois State
89	Dillon Bell	WR	6-0	209	22	R	Georgia
96	Jahvaree Ritzie	DL	6-4	290	23	1	North Carolina

**International Player Pathway participant*

MINNESOTA VIKINGS DEPTH CHART

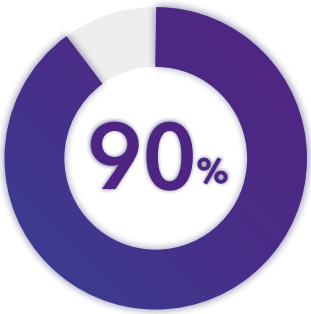
OFFENSE	1	2	3	DEFENSE	1	2	3
WR	Jefferson	Felton		OLB	Turner	Van Noy	Chambliss
LT	Darrisaw	Van Demark		DL	Redmond	Banks	
LG	Huber			DL	Rodriguez	Orange	
C	Kelly	Jurgens		DL	Ingram-Dawkins	Williams	
RG	Fries	Keegan		OLB	Van Ginkel	Richter	
RT	O'Neill	Tiernan		LB	Cashman	Pace Jr.	
TE	Hockenson	Bartholomew	Yurosek	LB	Wilson	Golday	
WR	Addison			CB	Murphy Jr.	Demmings	
WR	Jennings	Price		CB	Rodgers	Pierre	Vaughn
QB	Murray	Wentz	Brosmer	S	Smith	Jackson	Jac. Thomas
RB	Jones Sr.	Mason [DFR]	Claiborne; Dallas	S	Metellus	Ward	Jak. Thomas
FB	Bredeson						

*ROSTER AND AGES AS OF PRINT DEADLINE (10.21.26)

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of former NFL players have high blood pressure.[2]



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Learn more about the Symplicity procedure, including its benefits and risks.

The Symplicity blood pressure procedure is intended to work alongside your current blood pressure medications. Side effects may include headache, back pain, bruising, and hematoma.

1. American Heart Association. What is High Blood Pressure? Available at: https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/the-facts-about-high-blood-pressure. Updated August 14, 2025. Accessed July 28, 2026.
2. Okoh AK, Amponsah MKD, Cheffet-Walsh S, et al. Prevalence of cardiovascular disease and risk factors among former National Football League players. *J Am Coll Cardiol*. 2024;83(19):1827–1837.
3. Kandzari DE, Townsend R, Kario K, et al. Safety and efficacy of renal denervation in patients taking antihypertensive medication. *J Am Coll Cardiol*. 2023;82(19):1809–1823.
4. Böhm M, Kario K, Kandzari DE, et al. Efficacy of catheter-based renal denervation in the absence of antihypertensive medications (SPYRAL HTN-OFF MED Pivotal): a multicentre, randomised, sham-controlled trial. *Lancet*. 2020;395(10234):1444-1451.

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GAME ON?
GET ON!
metrotransit.org/vikings

FIRST TEAMS



45 FULLBACK MAX BREDESON



1 QUARTERBACK KYLER MURRAY



33 RUNNING BACK AARON JONES SR.



3 WIDE RECEIVER JORDAN ADDISON



87 TIGHT END T.J. HOCKENSON



75 RIGHT TACKLE BRIAN O'NEILL



76 RIGHT GUARD WILL FRIES



64 CENTER BLAKE BRANDEL



60 LEFT GUARD JOE HUBER



71 LEFT TACKLE CHRISTIAN DARRISAW



14 WIDE RECEIVER JAUAN JENNINGS



18 WIDE RECEIVER JUSTIN JEFFERSON

VIKINGS OFFENSE

COLTS DEFENSE



7 CORNERBACK CHARVARIUS WARD SR.



91 DEFENSIVE END JAYLAHN TUIMOLOAU



99 DEFENSIVE TACKLE DEFOREST BUCKNER



90 NOSE TACKLE GROVER STEWART



97 DEFENSIVE END LAIATU LATU



1 CORNERBACK SAUCE GARDNER



27 NICKEL BACK JUSTIN WALLEY



25 STRONG SAFETY A.J. HAULCY



51 MIDDLE LINEBACKER AKEEM DAVIS-GAITHER



0 FREE SAFETY CAM BYNUM



57 WEAKSIDE LINEBACKER JAYLON CARLIES

VIKINGS SPECIAL TEAMS



16 KICKER WILL REICHARD



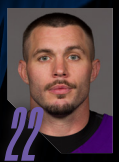
19 PUNTER BRETT THORSON



42 LONG SNAPPER ANDREW DEPAOLA



4 PUNT & KICK RETURNER MYLES PRICE



22 SAFETY HARRISON SMITH



51 LINEBACKER BLAKE CASHMAN



55 LINEBACKER ERIC WILSON



44 SAFETY JOSHUA METELLUS



7 CORNERBACK BYRON MURPHY JR.



15 OUTSIDE LINEBACKER DALLAS TURNER



61 DEFENSIVE LINE JALEN REDMOND



50 DEFENSIVE LINE LEVI DRAKE RODRIGUEZ



90 DEFENSIVE LINE TYRION INGRAM-DAWKINS



43 OUTSIDE LINEBACKER ANDREW VAN GINKEL



2 CORNERBACK ISAIAH RODGERS

VIKINGS DEFENSE

COLTS OFFENSE



13 WIDE RECEIVER LAQUON TREADWELL



2 WIDE RECEIVER JOSH DOWNS



79 LEFT TACKLE BERNHARD RAIMANN



56 LEFT GUARD QUENTON NELSON



60 CENTER TANOR BORTOLINI



71 RIGHT GUARD MATT GONCALVES



75 RIGHT TACKLE JALEN TRAVIS



84 TIGHT END TYLER WARREN



10 WIDE RECEIVER KEENAN ALLEN



17 QUARTERBACK DANIEL JONES



28 RUNNING BACK JONATHAN TAYLOR

COLTS SPECIAL TEAMS



3 KICKER SPENCER SHRADER



8 PUNTER RIGOBERTO SANCHEZ



46 LONG SNAPPER LUKE RHODES



6 PUNT RETURNER ANTHONY GOULD



16 KICK RETURNER ASHTON DULIN

UNOFFICIAL DEPTH CHARTS AS OF PRINT DEADLINE [10.21.26]

OMNI VIKING LAKES



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STAY IN *The Game* WITH US

OMNIHOTELS.COM/VIKINGLAKES

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS ROSTER

#	NAME	POS	HT	WT	AGE	EXP	COLLEGE
0	Cam Bynum	S	6-0	200	28	6	California
1	Sauce Gardner	CB	6-3	190	25	5	Cincinnati
2	Josh Downs	WR	5-9	171	25	4	North Carolina
3	Spencer Shrader	K	6-2	201	27	3	Notre Dame
5	Anthony Richardson Sr.	QB	6-4	244	24	4	Florida
6	Anthony Gould	WR	5-8	174	25	3	Oregon State
7	Charvarius Ward Sr.	CB	6-1	196	30	9	Middle Tenn. State
8	Rigoberto Sanchez	P	6-0	195	32	10	Hawaii
10	Keenan Allen	WR	6-2	211	34	14	California
13	Laquon Treadwell	WR	6-2	215	31	11	Mississippi
15	Riley Leonard	QB	6-4	213	24	2	Notre Dame
16	Ashton Dulin	WR	6-2	215	29	8	Malone
17	Daniel Jones	QB	6-5	230	29	8	Duke
20	Seth McGowan	RB	6-0	223	25	R	Kentucky
21	DJ Giddens	RB	6-0	212	23	2	Kansas State
25	A.J. Haulcy	S	6-0	215	22	R	LSU
27	Justin Walley	CB	5-10	190	24	2	Minnesota
28	Jonathan Taylor	RB	5-10	226	27	7	Wisconsin
29	Cam Taylor-Britt	CB	5-11	200	27	5	Nebraska
30	Hunter Wohler	S	6-2	213	23	2	Wisconsin
34	Kapena Gushiken	CB	5-9	189	24	R	Mississippi
38	Jonathan Owens	S	5-11	204	31	8	Missouri Western State
44	Tahj Chambers	LB	6-2	231	26	R	Mississippi
46	Luke Rhodes	LS	6-2	238	33	11	William & Mary
49	Pharaoh Brown	TE	6-5	246	32	10	Oregon
50	Bryce Boettcher	LB	6-1	230	24	R	Oregon
51	Akeem Davis-Gaither	LB	6-2	238	29	7	Appalachian State
52	George Gumbs Jr.	DE	6-4	245	24	R	Florida
53	CJ Allen	LB	6-1	233	21	R	Georgia
55	Caden Curry	DE	6-3	260	23	R	Ohio State
56	Quenton Nelson	G	6-5	330	30	9	Notre Dame
57	Jaylon Carlies	LB	6-3	227	25	3	Missouri
58	Austin Ajiake	LB	6-1	223	26	3	UNLV
60	Tanor Bortolini	C	6-4	303	24	3	Wisconsin
62	Jalen Farmer	G	6-5	312	22	R	Kentucky
63	Sedrick Van Pran-Granger	C	6-4	315	25	3	Georgia
67	Luke Tenuta	T	6-8	314	27	4	Virginia Tech
68	Dalton Tucker	G	6-6	307	26	3	Marshall
71	Matt Goncalves	G	6-6	317	25	3	Pittsburgh
75	Jalen Travis	T	6-8	339	24	2	Iowa State
79	Bernhard Raimann	T	6-6	303	29	5	Central Michigan
80	Deion Burks	WR	5-10	180	23	R	Oklahoma
81	Mo Alie-Cox	TE	6-5	267	33	10	Virginia Commonwealth
84	Tyler Warren	TE	6-6	256	24	2	Penn State
85	Drew Ogletree	TE	6-5	260	28	5	Youngstown State
86	Will Mallory	TE	6-4	239	27	4	Miami
90	Grover Stewart	DT	6-4	314	33	10	Albany State
91	Jaylahn Tuimoloau	DE	6-4	264	23	2	Ohio State
93	Tim Smith	DT	6-4	306	24	2	Alabama
94	Jerry Tillery	DT	6-6	295	30	8	Notre Dame
95	Adetomiwa Adebawore	DT	6-2	282	25	4	Northwestern
97	Laiatu Latu	DE	6-5	265	25	3	UCLA
99	DeForest Buckner	DT	6-7	295	32	11	Oregon
	INJURED RESERVE						
3	D.J. Montgomery	WR	6-1	201	29	5	Austin Peay
14	Alec Pierce	WR	6-3	211	26	5	Cincinnati
43	Cameron Mitchell	CB	5-11	191	25	4	Northwestern
45	Carson Towt	TE	6-7	242	25	R	Notre Dame
72	Micheal Clemons	DE	6-5	274	29	5	Texas A&M
98	Arden Key	DE	6-5	250	30	9	LSU
	PRACTICE SQUAD						
4	Thomas Morstead	P	6-4	225	40	18	SMU
9	Quez Watkins	WR	6-0	193	28	5	Southern Miss
11	Mecole Hardman Jr.	WR	5-10	187	28	7	Georgia
12	Nick Westbrook-Ikhine	WR	6-2	211	29	7	Indiana
32	Daniel Scott	S	6-1	208	27	4	California
33	Kenneth Harris	CB	6-0	192	24	R	Oklahoma State
35	Johnathan Edwards	CB	6-1	201	24	2	Tulane
36	Davon Booth	RB	5-8	192	24	R	Mississippi State
41	Trey Washington	S	5-10	205	23	2	Mississippi
47	West Weeks	LB	6-2	230	24	R	LSU
54	Mitchell Melton	DE	6-3	253	24	R	Virginia
59	Germaine Pratt	LB	6-3	250	30	8	N.C. State
65	Reid Holskey	G	6-6	306	24	1	Miami (OH)
76	Nolan Rucci	T	6-8	314	24	R	Penn State
78	Roy Mbaeteka	T	6-8	330	26	1	No College
92	Cam Ball	DT	6-4	310	23	R	Arkansas
96	Carl Lawson	DE	6-2	265	31	9	Auburn

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE	1	2	3
WR	Treadwell		
WR	Downs	Gould	
LT	Raimann		
LG	Nelson	Tucker	
C	Bortolini	Van Pran-Granger	
RG	Goncalves	Farmer	
RT	Travis	Tenuta	
TE	Warren	Alie-Cox	Ogletree
WR	Allen	Dulin	Burks
QB	Jones	Richardson Sr.	Leonard
RB	Taylor	McGowan	Giddens

DEFENSE	1	2	3
DE	Tuimoloau	Gumbs Jr.	
DT	Buckner	Adebawore	
NT	Stewart	Tillery	Smith
DE	Latu	Curry	
MLB	Davis-Gaither	Allen	Ajiake
WLB	Carlies	Boettcher	Chambers
NB	Walley	Gushiken	
CB	Ward Sr.	Taylor-Britt	
CB	Gardner		
FS	Bynum	Owens	
SS	Haulcy	Wohler	

*ROSTER AND AGES AS OF PRINT DEADLINE (10.21.26)



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01	09.13 vs BAL	L	41-23
02	09.20 @ KC	L	33-30 (OT)
03	09.27 vs HOU	W	19-17
04	10.04 @ WAS	W	30-13
05	10.11 @ PIT	L	34-22
06	10.18 vs TEN	L	26-20
07	10.25 @ MIN		
08	11.01 @ JAX		
09	11.08 vs DAL		
10	11.15 vs MIA		
11	11.19 @ HOU		
12	11.29 vs NYG		
13	BYE WEEK		
14	12.13 @ PHI		
15	12.20 @ TEN		
16	12.27 vs CIN		
17	01.03 @ CLE		
18	TBD vs JAX		

FLEX SCHEDULING BEGAN WEEK 5



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THE VIKINGS WILL SEE A FAMILIAR FACE IN BYNUM, WHO WAS DRAFTED 125TH OVERALL BY MINNESOTA IN 2021.

The former Cal Bear played his first four NFL seasons in Purple before joining the Colts as a free agent in the spring of 2025. Nearly midway through his second season with Indianapolis, Bynum has started all 23 games he's played and last year snagged a career-high four interceptions. He secured his first pick of the season last week and is certainly capable of sniffing out and making a play – and if he does, Vikings fans are also well-acquainted with the safety's choreographed celebrations. Bynum has continued the tradition in the AFC South, including joining Colts mascot Blue in his signature dance.

PROUD OF HIS HERITAGE

Bynum is deeply proud of his roots, including the Filipino heritage on his mother Jen's side of the family. He consistently connected with the Filipino community throughout Minnesota during his time with the Vikings, and he spends substantial time in the Philippines – where he met and married his wife Lalaine – during the offseason. This past summer, Bynum traveled back to the Philippines with his family's nonprofit, the Bynum Faith Foundation, to provide aid following a massive earthquake that hit the islands in June.

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6 GAMES BY INDIANAPOLIS
(Dec. 24, 2000 – Sept. 20, 2020)

FLASHBACK

DEC. 21, 1997 | IN MIN
VIKINGS 39, COLTS 28

Cris Carter caught three touchdowns from Randall Cunningham as Minnesota closed the regular season at 9-7 and followed with a win at the Giants in the Wild Card round. The late-season finish precipitated the historic 1998 campaign. Carter led the Vikings with five catches for 89 yards, Andrew Glover caught a score and Robert Smith rushed 17 times for 160 yards. The Vikings limited Jim Harbaugh to 15-of-27 passing for 167 yards and then intercepted backup Kelly Holcomb three times, including two by Robert Griffith and one by Corey Fuller.



PREVIOUS MEETING

NOV. 3, 2024 | IN MIN | VIKINGS 21, COLTS 13

The Vikings trailed 7-0 at halftime (much less than the 33-point deficit the Vikings overcame against the Colts in 2022) and rallied with touchdowns from Sam Darnold to Jordan Addison, Jalen Nailor and Josh Oliver. Addison secured his score with an incredible catch. Despite two interceptions and a fumble lost (returned for Indianapolis' lone TD) during one of four sacks, Darnold threw for 290 yards. Justin Jefferson also completed a pass for a gain of 22 by Aaron Jones, Sr. Jefferson led all receivers with seven catches and 137 yards. The Vikings defense forced two takeaways and limited the Colts to 227 net yards of offense.

TOP TWO

AGAINST COLTS

RUSHING YARDS

160 **Robert Smith** on 17 attempts in MIN (Dec. 21, 1997)
160 **Adrian Peterson** on 29 attempts in MIN (Sept. 14, 2008)

PASSING YARDS

460 **Kirk Cousins** on 34-of-54 passing in MIN (Dec. 17, 2022)
449 **Joe Kapp** on 28-of-43 passing in MIN (Sept. 28, 1969)

RECEIVING YARDS

172 **Gene Washington** on six catches in MIN (Sept. 28, 1969)
157 **K.J. Osborn** on 10 catches in MIN (Dec. 17, 2022)

AGAINST VIKINGS

RUSHING YARDS

128 **Edgerrin James** on 26 attempts in IND (Dec. 24, 2000)
123 **Edgerrin James** on 26 attempts in IND (Nov. 8, 2004)

PASSING YARDS

385 **Johnny Unitas** on 19-of-34 passing in BAL (Dec. 16, 1962)
344 **Johnny Unitas** on 17-of-22 passing in BAL (Dec. 8, 1963)

RECEIVING YARDS

150 **Willie Richardson** on six catches in BAL (Nov. 24, 1968)
148 **Willie Richardson** on six catches in BAL (Dec. 22, 1968)*
* 1968 NFL Western Conference Championship Game

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Q&A ISAIAH RODGERS

BY ROB KLEIFIELD



THERE ARE 30-PLUS MINUTES UNTIL KICKOFF, AND ISAIAH RODGERS HAS ALREADY MADE AN IMPACT.

The second-year Vikings cornerback and 2020 Colts sixth-round draft choice has festive footwear – he hinted at Halloween-inspired cleats for today's game against his original team – and is tossing the football back-and-forth with a beaming fan he just met.

That routine has become pregame protocol for Rodgers. He credited his former Colts teammate, receiver Zach Pascal, for showing him the difference it can make – that is, the joyous feeling that a little special attention can bring to a person before the actual performance on the field.

Rodgers said "making people's days" is his main goal.

The 28-year-old's impact has thoroughly extended to Minnesota's No. 1 scoring defense.

Rodgers ranks third in passer rating against (43.8) among cornerbacks this season with a minimum of 100 coverage snaps, according to Pro Football Focus. The two perimeter players who have been stingier entering Week 7 are Trent McDuffie (21.1) and Josh Wallace (39.2) of the Los Angeles Rams.

Additionally, Rodgers has recorded a pass breakup in four consecutive games and is the third Vikings player under Defensive Coordinator Brian Flores with a streak at least that long, joining Colts safety Cam Bynum, who did it for the Purple from Oct. 23 to Nov. 12 in 2023 and Harrison Smith, who achieved a streak of five games over two different seasons from Jan. 7 to Sept. 29 in 2024.

The biggest leap for Rodgers from 2025 to now, he said, is fully understanding Flo's scheme.

"Last year I was jumping onto a ship that had a lot of guys who were here for 2-3 years, and just trying to hop on and trying to figure out, you know, 'Where am I going to fit in? Is it going to be here? Is it going to be there? Am I going to make enough plays to even fit in this system?' " Rodgers remarked.

"I've realized that Flo' is not all about coming out and getting 20 interceptions," Rodgers continued. "He wants you to be where you need to be and control the game the way it's supposed to be controlled."

Rodgers is making a positive impression before and after the opening kickoff. In this Q&A, he shared insights on his growth as a player and person. Let's start with a throwback to his time with the Colts.



Q: HOW DID PLAYING ALONGSIDE XAVIER RHODES AND STEPHON GILMORE HELP YOU AS A YOUNG PLAYER?

A: I knew couldn't get too much 'game' from Xavier because he's a huge corner (Rhodes is 6-foot-1, 220-ish pounds, whereas Rodgers is 5-10 and 180). I wasn't going to use certain techniques he had, because I'm smaller, so I was just trying to pick his brain on how to maximize the longevity of my career. And then with Stephon, by that time, he was near the backend of his career. He was out there on cruise control and still finding ways to make plays. I'm like, 'Yo, how you do this, how you do that?' He helped me a lot with treating my body right, and he also helped me a lot off the field, seeing him interact with his kids ... so being a dad was something he taught me about, as well.

Q: ON THE TOPIC OF FAMILY, YOU'VE BECOME FAMOUS – YOUR SON, TOO – FOR THE "HOT DOG DANCE" FROM *MICKEY MOUSE CLUBHOUSE* THAT YOU PERFORMED IN WEEK 2 AT SOLDIER FIELD AFTER RECOVERING A FUMBLE. I IMAGINE THAT WAS A SPECIAL MOMENT FOR THE RODGERS FAM AND WAS NEAT TO SEE GO VIRAL?

A: I told him I was going to do it Week 1. I told him I was going to make an interception, and I ended up dropping one of the easiest ones in my career. And I told him after that, 'I didn't get a chance to do it, so I'll do it next week.' Murph' (Byron Murphy, Jr.) ended up getting an interception in Week 2, and I did it then, but the cameras weren't rolling at the time. My moment ended up coming, though. And I told everybody whenever the moment came, I was going to do it. I thought it was just for me and him (my son), and it took off for the whole world. It's cool to see youth league guys doing it now."

Q: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO INVOLVE YOUR FAMILY ON GAME DAYS?

A: It means a lot. After I was suspended (for 2023), I had an opportunity to hang my head, but instead, I wanted to keep going. I wanted to find different ways to keep my name positive on social media platforms. So, if my son Googles his name, which is my name, he won't see the guy that was suspended. He'll see the positivity that I have helped spread since then.

Q: BASICALLY ... YOU'RE LEANING INTO HOW SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BE USED FOR GOOD?

A: I'm just trying to change the narrative, for one. For two, there's a lot of kids back home who look up to me and whose parents reach out. I talk to a lot of the kids, as well, on social media. They send me their highlights. I just try to do as much as I can to show them I'm a small kid from the town who made it out. It's not about how big you are, how fast you are or whatever, but you have got to find a way to get there. And being interactive with them and showing them that I can display what I'm talking about, as well – it feels good to know that they've got somebody to look up to.

Q: THE CLEATS YOU WEAR IN WARM-UPS HAVE GAINED TRACTION, TOO. HOW ARE THOSE IDEAS FORMED?

A: It starts in the offseason. We start in April or March and dive deep on just writing a whole list of different characters, different activities that people like or any way we could turn it into a cleat – just try to be creative – so when the season comes we're not rushing trying to figure it out; or there's moments, for example, my daughter, she wanted mermaids for her birthday. 'Cool, let's do that.' Whatever is popular. You just try to keep it relevant.

Q: IS THERE A FAVORITE PAIR THAT YOU'VE WORN?

A: My favorite is the next one. Whichever one I've got coming, it's going to be better than the last.



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ROCK SOLID

T.J. HOCKENSON RELIABLE IN MULTIPLE ROLES

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

T.J. Hockenson isn't flashy.

The Vikings tight end is a man of few words and seeks even fewer moments in the spotlight, instead keeping his head down and focus outward.

There isn't a stat category for dirty work, but if there was, Hock would almost certainly stack up the numbers. He's always happy to haul in a catch but just as willing to drop his shoulders into a block and clear space for a teammate to make a play.

"He's putting his body out there first," Aaron Jones, Sr., said. "Very selfless when it comes to blocking."

Even on Hockenson's high-production days in the passing game, he's also giving his all on every other offensive snap.

Vikings Offensive Coordinator Wes Phillips pointed to Minnesota's Week 4 win over Miami, when Hockenson tied his previous single-game high of 13 catches. The tight end racked up 119 receiving yards, the fourth most in his career thus far – but his impact on the game was even more widespread.

"T.J. wants to win, and all these skill guys, they'd love to get balls come their way. And I'm really glad for him that the ball found him a little more," Phillips said. "But all he's done run-game wise, he's shown up. Within that same game when he has over a hundred yards, he's cross-sifting and chopping down Chop Robinson.

"He's willing to do what it takes," Phillips added. "He's a tight end."

It's fair to say not all tight ends are created equally, though, and not all demonstrate the team-first mentality Hockenson does.

Asked about his philosophy by Vikings Entertainment Network's Tatum Everett, Hockenson referenced his Midwest upbringing and closeness to family, as well as his college career at the University of Iowa.

"It's a big thing for me, and that's what I ask [from] people who are close to me – being loyal," Hockenson said. "That's what I give in return. It's how I am. It's how I play," he emphasized. "Ultimately, I want to win and build an organization and be part of that."

EXAMPLE OF HARD WORK

Hockenson's devotion to his team is the same now as it was 10 years ago at Iowa.

Hawkeyes Head Coach Kirk Ferentz referenced Hockenson's passion for the organization and willingness to do whatever was asked of him. A standout high school basketball player and receiving tight end, Hockenson went from proverbial king of the hill to starting from the bottom.

"We really liked him as a prospect, but we didn't know about his physical toughness and how physical he played," Ferentz recalled. "So, he came to camp and gave it everything he had. He wasn't used to – we asked him to block, and it was kind of funny. But he had a lot of pride and he tried; he wasn't hesitant at all."

Hockenson went on to redshirt his freshman season and work on the scout team. It's certainly not a glamorous job practicing against the starting defense ("Those guys can be a little rude to the



young guys," Ferentz quipped), but a motivated Hockenson never complained.

"And as it turns out, he tortured them. He really wore them out," Ferentz said. "He went hard every day, and it was great for our defense because he really stressed them."

The Hawkeyes coach continues to use Hockenson as an example to incoming athletes who may cringe at playing on the scout team.

"I tell them, 'Here's a guy who did it, and two years later he's the eighth pick in the NFL Draft.' It's all about your attitude and your work ethic," Ferentz said. "T.J. majored in both of those things."

Hockenson continues to display those traits.

It's why he didn't balk at the play call against the Dolphins including "Rolex" – a code word to run clock, which meant sliding in bounds and shy of the goal line. A touchdown would have looked great on his stat sheet – and on the scoreboard for Minnesota – but also would have required the Vikings to send their defense back on the field. By giving up a personal accomplishment, Hockenson enabled the team to finish the game in victory formation.

A touchdown is nice, he acknowledged, but winning is better.

"The odds are 100% if you slide and 99.9% if you don't slide," Hockenson said with a smile. "Those are things that we call in the huddle. ... It's a 'situational master' [instance] we talk about as a football team."

Throughout Hockenson's days of college ball and now at the pro level, he's been considered more of a pass-catching tight end – but he's shown especially the past


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two seasons he's a well-rounded player.

The Vikings last season experienced multiple injuries to their offensive line and called on Hockenson to help pass protect, which he obliged without complaint. This year's team lost tight end Josh Oliver, who is known more for blocking but also is a capable receiver, in Week 3, so Hockenson will help offset missing Oliver.

Vikings Head Coach Kevin O'Connell said Hockenson "has done so many selfless things" in Purple.

"Last year, with some of the adversity we had on the offensive line, [he was asked] to do some jobs before he got out on routes," O'Connell said. "His improvement and his commitment in the run game has been felt.

"Sometimes he was the primary, and we needed him to win [immediately]. Sometimes he was a backside guy that would need to catch and then gain the required yards for a first down," O'Connell said of Hockenson's outing against the Dolphins. "There were a bunch of different kinds of plays where I thought T.J.'s skill set showed up, and I was really encouraged by some of the run after catch."

Hockenson, who totaled 46 yards after his catches against Miami, has executed numerous splashy plays on the gridiron. He's shown off impressive verticals, curled his fingers around seemingly uncatchable balls and tapped his toes in-bounds.

But sometimes it's the plays *not* making the highlight-reel cut that make the biggest impact.

"When you cut on the film, you'll see T.J. do a lot of the blocking – and not just a lot of blocking, but great blocking, at that," Jones said. "It's one thing he doesn't get enough credit for, but those sift blocks coming back and digging out of the defense – those tough, dirty plays where I'm able to now fit inside and find an alley from his blocking.

"We work hand-in-hand a lot. I call T.J. my wingman," Jones smiled. "He's literally set up in a wing sometimes. If I don't have the fullback there, I know I have T.J."

When reflecting on Hockenson's highly successful time at Iowa, it isn't a touchdown or spectacular catch that tops the list for Ferentz. It's a play in which his blue-collar work ethic showed up in a big way.

In the January 2019 Outback Bowl, the Hawkeyes faced Mississippi State and its top-ranked defense featuring Jeffrey Simmons and Montez Sweat. Iowa led 17-6 at halftime, but the Bulldogs fought their way back with 13 consecutive points.

"They kind of had us on the ropes," Ferentz recalled.

Iowa bounced back with a touchdown to lead 24-19 at the start of the fourth quarter. Mississippi State netted a field goal and forced a quick punt, but a Bulldogs interception was followed by a quick pass from QB Nate Stanley to Hockenson in the flat. The tight end pivoted to run up the field. He shook off one defender, broke another tackle, walked the tightrope of the sideline and somehow stayed in-bounds. He sprinted with three Bulldogs hanging on him, finally being brought down after a 20-yard gain to the 48-yard line. The play kickstarted a drive that ended with a Hawkeyes field goal and a 27-22 lead that proved to be enough.

"Despite all the touchdowns, all the other stuff he did [that season], that was a huge play," Ferentz said. "I'm a believer that great players have a way of knowing when something's got to get done and then they find a way to do it. That was



MINNESOTA VIKINGS

2022-PRESENT

one of those moments. And to me, that play won the game for us."

CONSISTENTLY HOCK'

A lot has changed since New Year's Day 2019 when Hockenson helped the Hawkeyes to the win.

He's played 102 NFL games with Detroit (47) and Minnesota (55), totaling 456 receptions. He's grown out his hair, chopped it and is now growing it out again. He's married to Mikala and is dad to 7-month-old son, Judah, who learned to clap for the first time during Minnesota's win over Miami.

Even Hockenson's perspective has shifted, seeing life through the lens of little Judah.

"It takes pressure off what you do in here. I mean, there's a lot more to life than just this job," he said. "It's fun to be able to come home and see him and really hang out and enjoy his company. It's cool to have your own little family and watch him learn, teach him some new things. … He's been waking up in the middle of the night, just clapping."

But what hasn't changed?

Hockenson's consistency of character. His lunchpail mindset that speaks volumes, even if he doesn't.

"He's the same guy he was when he showed up as a high school student at camp," Ferentz said. "Great attitude, work ethic. Anything you want, he was going to try to do it well. … His attitude was always, 'Hey, what can I be doing to get better?' "

NATIONAL TIGHT ENDS DAY

Today marks the holiday officially recognized by the NFL since 2019. The previous season, San Francisco TE Garrett Celek caught a touchdown pass following a bevy of tight end scores across the league earlier that day, and QB Jimmy Garoppolo quipped, "What is it, like, National Tight Ends Day?"

George Kittle took it and ran – and the rest is history. The recognition later spurred Tight End University, a three-day program established by Kittle (Hockenson's former Iowa teammate) in 2021 in effort to bring the community of tight ends together from around the league.

"We all have similar personalities, so it's easy to click," laughed Hockenson. "We all like to share things, and [there's no gate keeping]; we genuinely want to help each other out. I think that's a unique thing to have in this league, to genuinely want the best for another person. So it's a lot of fun to get to know those guys, talk to them and know them personally, rather than just a name and a number."



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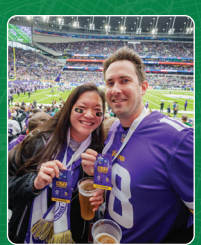
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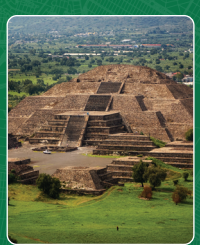
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IVAN PACE, JR.

MEETING KEY MOMENTS

BY ROB KLEIFIELD

Right after midnight, Iverson Skye Pace entered the world.

Fifteen hours later, armed with newfound dad strength, Vikings linebacker Ivan Pace, Jr., buckled his chinstrap and blasted into the Buccaneers backfield for a stunning half-sack.

"I'm a smaller guy, but I got more power than a lot of these tight ends and running backs," said Pace, who charged into and through Tampa Bay's 6-foot-5 tight end Cade Otton on the play to get to his target. "I just ran through his face, and then I saw Baker [Mayfield] step up.

"He was just right in my lap, man," Pace added. "I was like, 'Oh, my goodness, I got a sack.' "

And his celebration came to him at that exact moment – he rocked the baby.

"I just knew I was going to have a good game," Pace smiled. "Just knowing that God blessed me with a child, and I was able to make it … [I knew] it was going to be a good game for me."

Pace almost didn't suit up for Minnesota in Week 3 because his wife, McKenzie, wasn't feeling well Saturday morning and went to the doctor. She texted Ivan shortly before the team's charter flight was scheduled to take off from MSP and said, "They are keeping me."

So, the fourth-year pro called Head Coach Kevin O'Connell and told him he needed to go to the hospital. Ivan remained by McKenzie's side until she delivered their healthy baby boy – and then realized that playing the game was his way to support his growing family.

Pace stayed awake until 4 a.m., then finally caught a brief wink before going to the airport and hopping on a plane to Tampa. In the air, he felt "high emotions" and got a little rest.

His commitment to his teammates and coaches impressed them.

"They didn't expect me to come out there – I didn't expect myself to make it out there," Pace said. "But I got there, and they were all congratulating me, telling me they're happy for me, but [also], 'You're out here now, so you've got to turn it up a notch and go play. You've got to stay focused on where your feet are.' And that's what I did, focused on where my feet were."

Pace played a season-high 16 defensive snaps and recorded three quarterback pressures, in addition to handling various duties on special teams as he's done well all season.

The 25-year-old's physicality and efficiency on blitzes was par for the course for him, but his off-the-cuff celly was something new. And the joy he felt returning to Minnesota was, too.

"It was an amazing feeling to come back home to McKenzie and our newborn baby," Pace shared.

That whirlwind weekend in late September is one great example of Pace's maturation as a person and a player. The 2023 undrafted free agent out of Cincinnati, who started 11 of 17 games and tallied 102 tackles as a rookie, has reduced his defensive snaps year over year and is primarily being featured in the third phase in 2026 because he's in a deep linebackers room led by veterans Blake Cashman and Eric Wilson. But he's playing his best football yet.

"I think Ivan's just – I want to say a can of kick---, but I'll say a can of kick-butt," Defensive Coordinator Brian Flores quipped before the Vikings defeated New Orleans to start 5-0. "He's just physical. He's tough. ... His last couple weeks have been awesome to watch.

"His wife goes into labor. We don't think he's going to make it. He shows up at 10 a.m. on game day. He's all smiles. He goes in there and he's running through people. He's sacking the quarterback. He's making plays in the kicking game," Flores added. "I just go back to when we got him as an undrafted player, and he's just grown so much. He really has, as a ball player, but also as a man, I would say. I think we look at these guys as just ball players, but to see him, he's married now, he's got Iverson, his son, he's doing great on the field, he's doing great off the field. And so, I'm very proud of him – just like I'm proud of all our guys."

Although his playing time on defense has declined, Pace's impact feels greater than ever.

In Week 1 he knifed through Green Bay's offensive line and tackled running back MarShawn Lloyd for a loss of 2 yards. The play was highlighted in meetings the next day. It was a spark.

The following Sunday on a rain-soaked field, Pace subbed in for Cashman (the 'backer left for a couple plays to get checked out) and made one of the plays of the season so far at the Vikings 1-yard line. With no hesitation, Pace shot a gap and tackled D'Andre Swift; defensive lineman Jalen Redmond executed a crisp punch-out as Pace was dragging the Bears RB to the grass. The play amounted to a Vikings takeaway and a huge momentum shift that keyed a 9-3 win. About his execution in a pinch, Pace said, "That's what I do best, is shoot gaps."

Pace was impactful in Week 4, as well, decking Miami's long snapper along the sideline during a punt return Myles Price took 36 yards.

"I was just coming back down to block for 'Jug', seeing if anybody was going to come up and get close to him," Pace said. "He just gassed it around the corner, so I had to turn up and find somebody. The long snapper was right in my face, so I had to knock him over. I thought Jug could've kept it down the sideline a little bit [farther], but, you know, it was a good play."

Later, Pace used his "unbelievable ball get-off" and grazed a Fins punt. Special Teams Coordinator Matt Daniels said, "If he just had an inch-longer arm, maybe his middle finger was two inches longer, we'd be having a different conversation. Maybe we'd block it, scoop it and score it." Nevertheless, it was another awesome example of Pace's all-out effort.

As life speeds up on Pace, the game is slowing down. He said he's most proud of the way he's "stepping up as an actual football player, because in college I really didn't know stuff."

"I was just out there playing 'see ball, get ball,' " he pointed out.

Now, he's seeing the bigger picture.





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PAUL ALLEN'S 500TH VIKINGS GAME



BY CRAIG PETERS

In his 25th season as the "Voice of the Vikings," Paul Allen has learned the power of preparation and the value in anticipation when trying to expect the unexpected.

He puts in the hours to be ready for nearly anything but was totally surprised when Vikings Head Coach Kevin O'Connell took an aside while recording *Xs and Os* to ask Allen to sound the Gjallarhorn before today's game, which will be Allen's 500th Vikings contest in the play-by-play role for KFAN and the Vikings Audio Network.

Shock shifted into a broad smile on Allen's face. He leaned back in an office chair, "Oh, wow, c'mon, man! Really?"

Moments after the on-air surprise, Allen explained, "I was blown away because it's clear others had talked about it and cared about it."

He described the invitation as "an ultimate professional honor" and thought of previous sounders, including Vikings Ring of Honor members and *Good Morning Football's* Jamie Erdahl, who coincidentally and memorably sounded the horn before Minnesota defeated Indianapolis in 2024.

"I'm kind of feeling a little pressure to not get chided by Jamie, so the team must win. That's the bottom line," Allen said. "Those are big shoes to fill.

"After they surprised me and I started reflecting a little bit on 25 years of having the honor of calling Minnesota Vikings football on the radio, it is everybody who has taken time to listen to the games," Allen said. "I've always looked at it like I serve the listener because people make a conscious choice to turn on 'The Fan.'

"I pray before every game. And part of the prayer is recognizing that I serve those who are listening to give them accuracy, give them energy, give them humor and give them vivid descriptions of what their favorite team is doing," Allen continued.

Vikings Audio Network analyst, former linebacker and coach Pete Bercich is in his 20th season of teaming with Allen, extending a relationship that began during Bercich's time on Minnesota's sideline.

"I know he loved working with Joe Senser, and he and Joe were fantastic," Bercich said. "Joe retired after the 2006 season, and I was really in the right place at the right time, having been with the Vikings for the previous 11 seasons and [a guest] on KFAN all of 2006."

Relationship-building is an incredibly important aspect of the business, but it doesn't guarantee smooth mechanics while providing live broadcasts of games. Bercich remembered going into the first preseason game without any form of practice as a team.

"Paul was there every step – he was unbelievably important in the beginning, as far as feedback and guiding me on that path because Paul wants to be the best. He wants the radio team, which consists of Ben [Leber] and Paul and me, to be the best in the business.

"And sometimes they're difficult conversations. Sometimes it can be critical, it can be fun, it can be all kinds of different things, but his desire to have the best group, that's really the foundation for it. For Paul, that's something that's never left."

Chris Hawkey, an audio producer and co-host of KFAN's popular *Power Trip Morning Show*, looks forward to every game day because he knows Allen will meet the moments – history-making or humbling, expected or not – with apt description and emotion listeners can *feel*.

"The moment is never too big for him – the Minneapolis Miracle, no matter what happens," Hawkey said. "He's the guy you want on the microphone.

"A lot of times things happen where you'd expect he wouldn't have the stat or the number because nobody would ever expect that might have happened, and it's always right there for him," Hawkey said. "A lot of it is written down, but a lot of it comes right out of his head, so he puts in the time, loves football and what he does, really respects the game, and I love to see when we go to other cities, how the other play-by-play guys in television and radio react to him because he is a treasure – somebody that everybody knows wherever we go."

Truthfully, after the Cardinals knocked the Vikings out of playoff contention in the 2003 finale, Allen wondered if he had called his final Vikings game. It's an epic call between Allen and Senser because it captured a tactical mistake being made by Minnesota in real time. Former Owner Red McCombs was not pleased with the sequence (the Vikings had led 17-6 at the 2-minute warning), but Allen returned the next season and beyond.

Here it is. The season's on the line! Two receivers, left and right. McCown takes the snap, he steps up, he's all by himself. Fires it into the end zone. CAUGHT! TOUCHDOWN! NOOOOO! NOOOOO! THE CARDINALS HAVE KNOCKED THE VIKINGS OUT OF THE PLAYOFFS.

I believe it was caught by Nate Poole. He's being mugged by his Cardinal teammates. There are Minnesota Vikings crying on the field.

He gave words to the ecstasy of "Favre to Lewis" in September 2009 when the Vikings put the NFL on notice as a legitimate contender for Super Bowl XLIV.

Favre back to pass, pumps to the left, eight seconds left. He gets away from the pressure, fires to the back of the end zone. It's caught! It's Greg Lewis!

TOUCH-DOWN! Oh my goodness! Greg Lewis, welcome to Minnesota. OH. MY. HEAVENS! Greg Lewis' first catch has given the Minnesota Vikings an improbable victory. No flags on the field. Brett Favre, Greg Lewis! HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT?

... and the agony in the NFC Championship when the Vikings fell a game shy.

Why do you even ponder passing? I mean, YOU CAN TAKE A KNEE, AND TRY A 56-YARD FIELD GOAL. THIS IS NOT DETROIT, MAN. THIS IS THE SUPER BOWL!

"Brett Favre hugged me in the locker room after the game. It's the only time after a game that I've cried because it was so emotional, and he was so iconic," Allen reminisced. "When it comes to plays or play calls that I've had on the radio that maybe don't get as much run as the Miracle or the '09 game, first and foremost, Week 3 in 2009, the fact that I knew Greg Lewis was in the game, and it was his first play with the team, and then he's the one that caught the pass, back center of the end zone to win the game, and I caught it without using my binoculars, professionally, that was an accomplishment for me."

Another truly historic game – against today's opponent, no less – stands tall among so many memories. Minnesota erased a 33-point halftime deficit to Indianapolis in December 2022 to prevail 39-36 in overtime.

"Dalvin Cook had a swing pass in that comeback against the Indianapolis Colts that I'll never forget. I mean, the sequence was the Colts went for it on fourth-and-short with Matt Ryan. They got stopped.

"The building is on fire because you're coming back from 33 points, NFL record, but the next play was a swing left to Dalvin where he had to drag Colts into the end zone," Allen said. "And I'll just never forget the feeling in the building, the feeling in the booth. It was an amazing play."

ALLEN: Here it is, stretch the chain. HE DIDN'T GET IT. NO HE DIDN'T! THEY STOPPED HIM. YES, THEY DID.

...

ALLEN: Cousins, first-and-10 from his own 36-yard line, back to pass, screen left to Dalvin. Turns it up outside the numbers at the 40, gets to the 50, AND HE'S LOOSE!

BERCICH: NO WAY!

ALLEN: DALVIN, 20, TO THE LEFT, 15, 10, 5, TOUCHDOWN!!!!! DALVIN COOK. YES! YES! A 64-YARD TOUCHDOWN, AND HE HAD TO DRAG A COLT INTO THE END ZONE. 36-34 INDY, 2:15 TO GO.

DOWN BY 2, HERE WE GO. Cousins puts Jefferson in motion. Snap, he fakes a handoff, looks left, looks center.

BERCICH: YES!

ALLEN: It is T.J. Hockenson for the 2, AND WE'RE TIED AT 36. The Minnesota Vikings, down 33, have come all the way back on the Indianapolis Colts, and it's now 36-36.

The score by Cook allowed Allen to demonstrate his understanding of the crescendo, an element he brought to football from his time logged calling horse races.

"Being racetrack raised, calling a horse race involves building a crescendo from leaving the gate down to the finish line," Allen said. "Calling an individual play also is a crescendo-building job. So the fact that I was able to mesh both, I pulled, 'And He's LOOSE!' Or 'Left in the wake of a keen turn of speed.' "

An expanded version of this story will be posted on Vikings.com next week.



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VIKINGS & LUND

PROP FUTURE ANGLERS OF MINNESOTA

BY CRAIG PETERS

Just before training camp opened, Bo Richter boarded a Lund fishing boat with an expert guide and two Future Anglers of Minnesota.

They cast lures into Lake Minnetonka and reeled in fish after fish, celebrating each success and appreciating the relaxation and connection with nature provided by the sport.

Whether seeing muskies glide through the water or hoisting bass for photos before returning them to the state's ninth largest lake (14,004 acres), it took Richter back to his high school days when he first caught the fishing bug.

"My buddies and I would hop around, pond fishing in Illinois," Richter said. "I love fishing, so being out there with the kids was really fun. It was a great day out there. Our boat brought in some nice fish, and it sounds like the other guys had similar success."

In addition to Richter, former Vikings RB Zavier Scott, who was signed to Chicago's practice squad after the preseason, and Vikings Legends Stu Voigt, Dave Dixon, Ben Williams and Anthony Harris also participated in the event.

Harris began his NFL career with Minnesota in 2015 and appeared in 81 Vikings games through the 2020 season. After playing for Philadelphia in 2021 and with Denver in 2022, he opted to return to Minnesota and has enjoyed experiencing the area now that he has more free time than he did while playing for the Vikings. He's tried ice fishing and tubing in the wintertime and loved the success rate helped by the pro guides.

"You feel something, boom, and the next thing you know, you see the fish flapping and jumping out of the water," Harris said. "It was very entertaining.

"I had a beautiful day. The pros put us onto some great fishing spots, taking in the weather and all the things into account," Harris added. "We pulled up to a nice spot, and fish started jumping out of the water. I was able to pull in an 18-and-a-half-inch fish."

As each boat returned to the dock at Lord Fletcher's, Amy Aasen, Director of Marketing for Lund Boats, couldn't help but smile and reflect.

"It was really exciting to see them come off the boats telling about their catches," Aasen said. "We saw some great photos, including a 19-inch bass caught by a young lady.

"I'm a lifelong angler, and that's thanks to being introduced to it as a child," Aasen said. "My dad had me out there, and it's something I've been passionate about for years. I was lucky enough five years ago to move my career into the industry and have it be something I do every day. Lund Boats has been passionate about fishing for decades, and we want to inspire the next generation to have that opportunity."








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5 FAVES



Vikings running backs Aaron Jones, Sr., and Jordan Mason may disagree on favorite salty snack (we're not sure cookies count, Jordan) or TV show to binge, but their shared passion for the game of football is unmatched.

Jones and Mason provide Minnesota with a 1-2 punch at running back that's been missing since Mason suffered a thumb injury against Green Bay in Week 1. Jones valiantly carried the load for four weeks, entering today's contest with 97 carries for 410 yards and two touchdowns. Fresh off the bye, he looks forward to welcoming Mason back to the backfield. Here are five of their faves:

	AARON JONES, SR.	JORDAN MASON
MEAL	HIBACHI	GRILLED SHRIMP
SALTY SNACK	SUNFLOWER SEEDS	NESTLE TOLL HOUSE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES
TV SHOW TO BINGE	THE WAYANS BROS.	LOVE ISLAND
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BY LINDSEY YOUNG

TAYLOR

GRATEFUL FOR FULL-CIRCLE MVC EXPERIENCE



Helping coach nearly 500 Junior Cheerleaders during the Vikings Week 4 game against the Dolphins truly felt like a full-circle moment for MVC Taylor F.

Mentoring young girls through the program holds special meaning for Taylor, who participated in Junior Cheer herself. She started dancing at just 3 years old in her birthplace of Ontario, Canada, but received her first experience with the MVC upon moving with her family to Minnesota at age 7.

Taylor performed with Junior Cheer at a Vikings game less than a year later, and the experience left a lasting impact on her. As did Elizabeth Claude, a Minnesota Vikings Cheerleader at the time whom Taylor connected with.

"From the moment we met, Elizabeth made me feel so important and special," said Taylor, who was a Junior Cheerleader for two years. "She supported me through my dance career by spotting me at Vikings games to wave and say 'hi,' remembering the nickname she gave me and even attending my studio's recital.

"The connection Elizabeth made with me grew my confidence as a young dancer, and I truly looked up to MVC," she added.

Taylor danced through high school before taking a break during her college years – but ultimately realized just how much she missed it. Thanks to her experience in Junior Cheer, Taylor decided to "take a leap" and try out for MVC, not only to return to dance but also in hopes of paying forward the inspiration she'd received from Elizabeth.

Taylor still finds it difficult to put into words the emotions of making the team. Sharing the news with her family was special, she recalled, because of how much the Vikings organization has meant to them over the years.

"Moving to a new country as a family meant starting from scratch and acclimating to the Minnesota culture. One of the first ways my family felt connected here was through the Minnesota Vikings … [which] my family quickly took pride in and followed [closely]," she said.

Taylor especially treasures memories of watching games with her family and next-door neighbors.

"Tom Grund was the biggest Vikings fan, and it's something our families always bonded over," Taylor said. "Unfortunately, he passed away in 2023. He was like a second dad to me; when I cheered at my first game last season, he was on my mind a lot.

"We all miss him so much," she added. "Vikings games are a big reminder of him and our Sunday football get-togethers growing up."

Taylor is thankful for the opportunity to influence young dancers and help them create their own Vikings memories.

"It's been so rewarding," she said. "I love that I get to be a role model and watch their reactions when I tell them I used to be a Junior Cheerleader just like them. It's almost like something clicks for them, realizing they can make their dreams come true, too."

TAYLOR'S FAVES

MUSIC ARTIST: *THE WEEKND*
VACATION DESTINATION: *MAUI, HAWAI'I*
CHILDHOOD MOVIE: *ELF*
FEMALE ATHLETE: *ILONA MAHER*
NON-DANCE HOBBY: *TRAVELING*

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