



### **Divisional Round Predictions**

All four of these games offer so much, there are so many great match-ups as well. Let's take a look at the key players and the predictions for these match-ups.

#### **Texans @ Chiefs**

The Texans travel to Arrowhead off the back of their impressive win at the Chargers to face off against the fresh Chiefs after their bye week and a week of resting starters. This game on paper and recent form looks like a comfortable win for the Chiefs, but the Texans offense showed good signs at the end of the last game and could potentially cause some issues for the Chiefs defense.

##### **Key Players Texans:**

Eric Murray - Murray has had a sneaky good season and been an unsung hero for the Texans after both Ward and Pitre went down with injury in the slot. He faces off against Travis Kelce who causes everyone issues especially in the playoffs. Murray will have to play really well to keep Kelce quiet.

Dalton Schultz - the Chiefs will likely try to take Nico Collins away from Stroud which leaves a huge hole for the Texans, Schultz could be the man to take over the targets and will need to get some big yards in this one.

Calen Bullock - For the Texans to cause an upset they are likely going to need some takeaways. Bullock gives them a deep zone presence with his speed and hands that could get that for the Texans. He also has to deal with deep threats the Chiefs have and limit their big plays.

##### **Key Players Chiefs:**

Trent McDuffie - McDuffie will be tasked with stopping Nico Collins who has had another good season and the Texans biggest weapon. If McDuffie can stop Collins it could be a long night for the Texans.

Isiah Pacheco - the Chiefs running back can set the tone for his side. He still looks like he is recovering from his injury but the break and potential focus on fitness could have been massive for Pacheco.

Hollywood Brown - Brown could be key because he is a new weapon on the season for the Chiefs. There will still be questions in relation to his role so the Texans defence may not be able to prepare fully for his input on the game.

Prediction:

Texans 17-27 Chiefs

### **Commanders @ Lions**

The other team off the top seed bye week is the Detroit Lions. One of if not the most exciting teams in football comes fresh off a much needed bye with all of the injury concerns. The Commanders have a really tough task stopping this top side, but with the rookie sensation Jayden Daniels anything is possible.

Key Players Washington:

Daron Payne - Payne will need to disrupt The offensive line of the Lions and look to pressure Jared Goff as often as possible to try and disrupt his passes to his receivers.

Terry McLaurin - the Commanders biggest wide receiver threat will need to be at his very best in this one to take pressure off the young rookie quarterback. The two have a fantastic relationship that will need to stay strong in this one.

Mike Sainristil - Another hugely impressive rookie for the Commanders, he has a tough job going against Amon-Ra St Brown and Sam LaPorta out of the slot and potential wide spots. He has been a huge piece to the Commanders defence and could be a key piece for the Commanders.

Key Players Lions:

Jack Campbell - The impressive linebacker has a tough ask. He could quickly be in pass coverage but have to monitor Jayden Daniels movements in case he scrambles.

Jahmyr Gibbs - This Lions offense is always hugely impressive, I have said this a few times but it always ticks Better when the run game is working well. Gibbs is the heartbeat of this.

Jameson Williams - The deep threat of the Lions had a good season. He could be huge not only in gaining some big plays, but could also drag players deep allowing yards underneath to the likes of Amon-Ra St Brown and Sam LaPorta.

Prediction:

Commanders 27-33 Lions

### **Rams @ Eagles**

Both teams are hot and arguably both had the best display in the wildcard round. I think the game will be one of the very best of the whole season.

#### **Key Players Rams:**

Omar Speights- the rookie has become a starter for the Rams. He has the huge task of stopping or even slowing down Saquon Barkley. If Speights and others can get to Saquon early the Rams could have another big display.

Cooper Kupp - The Rams receivers didn't get going last week despite the impressive display. I think the veteran who has won the superbowl will be key to guiding the younger guys will be key to winning this game.

Beaux Limmer - The rookie centre has a huge matchup and needs a huge game. Going against Jelani Carter and Jordan Davies. It will be a huge test to keep his quarterback protected.

#### **Key Players Eagles:**

Quinton Mitchell - It is a recurring trend this name pops up in these match-ups. He plays like a 10 year vet. He goes against 2 of the best receivers in the game and will need to stop them as much as possible.

DeVonta Smith - This feels like a game where Smith could play a huge role for the Eagles, with the attention likely on Barkley and Brown. Smith could find himself having a big day.

Zach Baun - Another who has had a great season but has the tough task of stopping Kyren Williams. Williams could be key to opening the field for the dynamic receiver duo of Kupp and Nacua.

#### **Prediction:**

Rams 30-33 Eagles

### **Ravens @ Bills**

The best game to watch of this round of fixtures lands last on the schedule. This game is a battle between the two top teams, both defences are strong, both offences are strong and one has the MVP quarterback on them the other is the runner up quarterback, which way round we don't officially know yet.

The key players may have a common theme with this one however.

#### **Key Players Ravens:**

Roquan Smith - I have tried to swap some players around this week where I can, but this one is not changing. Roquan has to stop the run of both Cook and Allen.

Isaiah Likely - Likely has become a huge part of this offense as a pass catching playmaker. Last week he made some big plays. He could have the opportunity to do that again this week.

Nnamdi Madubuike - Madubuike could be key to disrupting the tough Bills offensive line. If Madubuike can force Allen out of the pocket it could create chances for edge and potentially secondary.

Key Players Bills:

Terrel Bernard - Bernard was a huge tackling machine in the regular season finishing second behind Williams for the Bills, he goes against Henry and Jackson in a tough battle.

Dalton Kincaid - Kincaid he had moments where you can see the potential. With the defensive matchup here he could become key with some small underneath routes. I expect to see a lot from Kincaid.

Greg Rousseau- Rousseau has a huge role to play in this game, he has to make life easier for the linebacker behind him by not allowing Henry or Jackson to get out of the pocket with their run lanes, if he can keep it inside there will be less ground on the inside to cover.

Predictions:

Ravens 24-27 Bills