



### **Wildcard Weekend Review**

What a weekend, all the fixtures had something worth discussing and even some of my key players were a success. Let's take a look at what unfolded.

### **Chargers 12-32 Texans**

The Texans defense had an amazing game to help secure the win, the offense struggled to get going in The first half however the defence kept them in it before recording 4 interceptions. Derek Stingley jr (2) and Kamari Lassiter got interceptions, whilst Eric Murray returned his for 6. CJ Stroud got the offence moving after a fumbled snap and from there the team didn't look back. The Chargers however were disappointing other than rookie Ladd McConkey who had 197 yards and a touchdown. Justin Herbert did find McConkey often, however his next player in terms of receptions were the 2 to Derek Stingley jr. The Chargers land the 22nd pick in next year's draft. It was a good season for the Chargers and a big bounce back season, there is a lot to believe in with the organisation and the direction they are going.

### **Steelers 14-28 Ravens**

The Ravens brilliant start was far too good for the Steelers. The Ravens took a 0-21 lead into halftime with fantastic performances from Lamar Jackson and Derrick Henry once again. Henry rushed for 186 yards and 2 touchdowns. Whilst Jackson threw for 175 yards and 2 touchdowns as well as rushing for 81 more. Nnamdi Madubuike caused havoc for the Steelers offensive line getting into the backfield often. He landed 2 sacks and another tackle for loss. It was a truly dominant display by the Ravens. The Steelers took too far too long to get going whilst going up against a tough Ravens defence. The run game was awful, registering 29 rushing yards. The only bright spark came from George Pickins 87 yards and a touchdown. The defense did not step up either and Henry broke tackles far too often. The Steelers early season promised so much but finished in another early postseason exit. They have the 21st pick in the upcoming draft and huge questions at the quarterback position with both Wilson and Fields becoming free agents.

### **Broncos 7-31 Bills**

The Bills were also hugely impressive and set up a huge showdown with the Ravens, whilst setting up the Texans trip to the Chiefs. The Broncos started well with a touchdown on their opening drive, but after this the Bills took over scoring freely and producing big stops when required. Josh Allen was exceptional with 272 yards and 2 touchdowns. He has James Cook in a supporting cast as he rushed for 120 yards and a touchdown. Greg Rousseau constantly upset the Broncos rhythm on offence by landing a sack, 2 tackles for loss and 2 more QB hits on the day. The Broncos couldn't get much going after the first drive. Courtyard Sutton once again impressed but it wasn't enough to get on the scoreboard for the Broncos. The loss landed the Broncos the 20th pick in the 2025 draft, but it was such a positive season for the Broncos after some really tough recent seasons. They have a lot to build on in the future both offensively and defensively.

### **Packers 10-22 Eagles**

The Eagles set the tone with the very first play of the game against The Packers. A huge hit on the opening kick off made Nixon fumble the ball and it was controversially given as a Eagles recovery. This led to the opening touchdown. The defense of the Eagles was hugely impressive picking off Jordan Love 3 times. One coming from the very impressive rookie Quinon Mitchell. Nolan Smith had a good game on the edge landing the two sacks the Eagles registered, he also landed 2 of the 4 tackles for loss. The offence showed signs of brilliance mainly through Saquon Barkley's rushing ability. The Packers defence did play well, and had some big stops. However the offence constantly turned the ball over with fumbles and interceptions. The loss lands them the 23rd pick in next season's draft. There is a lot to be positive about, they have the youngest side in the NFL so the future looks bright.

### **Commanders 23-20 Bucs**

The Commanders win with the last kick of the game as Zane Gonzalez's walk off field goal clips the upright before sneaking through. Jayden Daniels once again was impressive, he had 268 passing yards with 2 touchdowns. His relationship with Terry McLaurin continues to develop and get big yards. There are concerns in the run game but with these two anything is possible. The defense was solid, although they were not at their disruptive best. The Bucs will have a lot to be happy with this season but will also be bitterly disappointed to leave at this stage. Baker, Irving, and Evans have been hugely impressive. There were also big defensive plays throughout this game and season. They take the 19th pick in this year's draft.

### **Vikings 9-27 Rams**

The final wildcard was wrapped up and was another hugely impressive defensive display that helped win it. The Rams defence landed 9 sacks, with Young, Turner and Gallimore all registering more than 1. They also landed 10 other tackles for loss and an interception. The Rams offence was led well by Stafford who threw for 202 yards and 2 touchdowns. Kyren Williams was involved heavily and caught one of the touchdowns, this helped massively with both Kupp and Nacua not having the most impressive of days. The Vikings struggled in this game but can be proud of a terrific season overall. They were not seen as a potential playoff team to start the year but proved everyone wrong. Sam Darnold proved nearly everyone wrong with the season he had. The Vikings end up with the 24th pick in the draft. With the NFC results it leaves the Rams going on the road to the Eagles and the Commanders heading to Detroit to face the Lions.