

THE SPORTIER

AFC Championship

The AFC in this year's playoffs has already been thrilling. The Tennessee Titans, a 6 seeded wild card team that had to matchup against the New England Patriots in a seemingly quick loss in Foxborough, upset the Patriots in the Wild Card. They didn't stop there, as they went on to shock everybody by taking down the 1 seeded Baltimore Ravens in Baltimore, while they defense practically eliminated MVP frontrunner and Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson. The significant factor for this Titans team has been Derrick Henry. The 6'3", 247-pound machine has put up huge numbers against fierce competitors in the postseason, with 182 yards against the Patriots and 195 against the Ravens. The only thing stopping these underdogs are the mighty Kansas City Chiefs. Last year's MVP winner, Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, proved again why he deserved that honor last year, with his fantastic performance against the Texans last week. Down 24-0 in the first quarter to the Houston Texans, with energy being drained from all of the Chiefs players, Mahomes led the team to 6 straight drives resulting in touchdowns, scoring 41 unanswered points, and led to the Chiefs winning, 31-51. This matchup should be a thrilling one, with two high powered offenses. Who is going to stop Derrick Henry, and who is going to stop Patrick Mahomes? With such high-powered offenses, it will be important that the defenses for both teams come up big in this game.

NFC Championship

Two tough teams will face off in today's NFC Championship. Both the 1 seeded San Francisco 49ers and the 2 seeded Green Bay Packers will face off tonight, but there were exciting parts that contributed to this year's NFC playoffs. Firstly, another 6 seed defeated a 3 seed, as in the Wild Card round, the Minnesota Vikings upset the New Orleans Saints in New Orleans. The Saints were thought to have been a legitimate Super Bowl contender, but the Vikings defense constantly put Brees under pressure, forcing multiple turnovers. Though the scores were close until the end, the Vikings won on an overtime touchdown. This Vikings win allowed for the 49ers to play a weaker opponent, as the Minnesota offense struggled against San Francisco. The 49ers took advantage and won their game for a spot in today's game. The Packers faced off against the Seattle Seahawks, who had defeated the Philadelphia Eagles in the Wild Card Round. Though the Eagles were the higher-seeded team as they won their division (division winners take priority over other teams), the Seahawks had a better record. This game was surprisingly low scoring, though, as neither team could put points up. Seattle won 17-9, but it was clear that they would struggle against Green Bay after a weak performance against the Eagles. The Packers burst out to an early 21-3 lead to end the half, but the Seahawks began to mount a comeback, as Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch, who was a massive factor in the Seahawk's playoffs runs in prior years, ran for two touchdowns. This was not enough to pull out a win, though, as the Packers held on to their lead to advance to today's game. The Packers may have a tough time against the 49ers excellent defense, but the Packers offense has shown that they can come and compete with Aaron Rodgers leading their team at quarterback.

In The Rulebook

Did you know: There is a Coach-to-Player speaker system embedded within helmets? Communications between the coach and player begin when the previous down is signaled dead and cuts out when the play clock reaches 15 seconds, or when the ball is snapped (whichever comes first). Only one player at a time is allowed to have the speaker within their helmet on the field, offense or defense.



**Prediction: Titans win,
31-28**



**Prediction: 49ers win,
24-12**

Sources

[ESPN](#)

[NFL Rules](#)