



PLAYBOOK

U.S. BANK STADIUM

VIKINGS VS. RAMS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2016

FORCES COLLIDE

BOONE AND JOSEPH



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INAUGURAL SEASON



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OF THE



MINNESOTA
VIKINGS



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OFFICIAL
ORTHOPEDIC
PROVIDER



TONIGHT'S GAME

- 4 Tonight's Game
- 7 Tonight's Promotions
- 11 Vikings Snapshot
- 13 Rams Snapshot
- 14 Vikings Depth Chart
- 15 Rams Depth Chart

FEATURE STORIES

- 16 First Game at U.S. Bank Stadium
- 21 Photos vs. Chargers
- 25 Spotlight: Rhett Ellison
- 28 Linval Joseph: Hungry for More
- 33 Boom, Boom, Boone

ENTERTAINMENT

- 37 Cheerleader Spotlight
- 38 Viktor the Viking
- 40 Vikings Entertainment Network

EXTRAS

- 2 Fan Code of Conduct
- 8 Upcoming Events
- 42 Vikings in the Community
- 45 U.S. Bank Stadium Maps
- 48 Vikings Voyage at U.S. Bank Stadium

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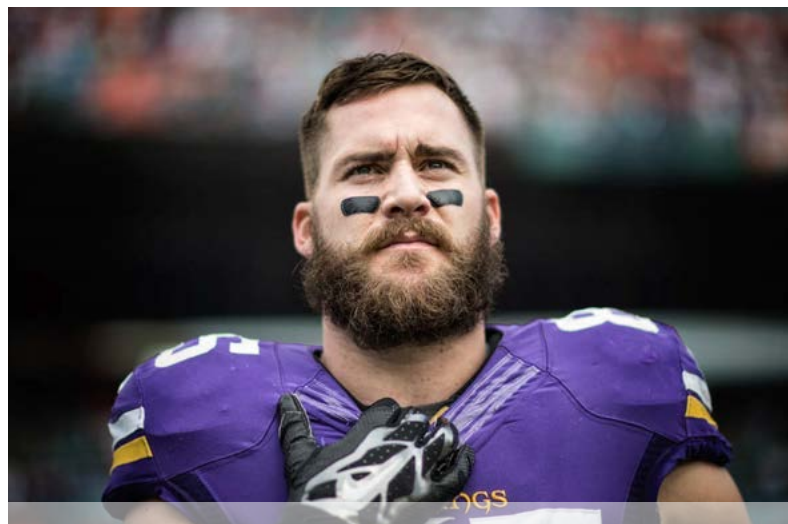
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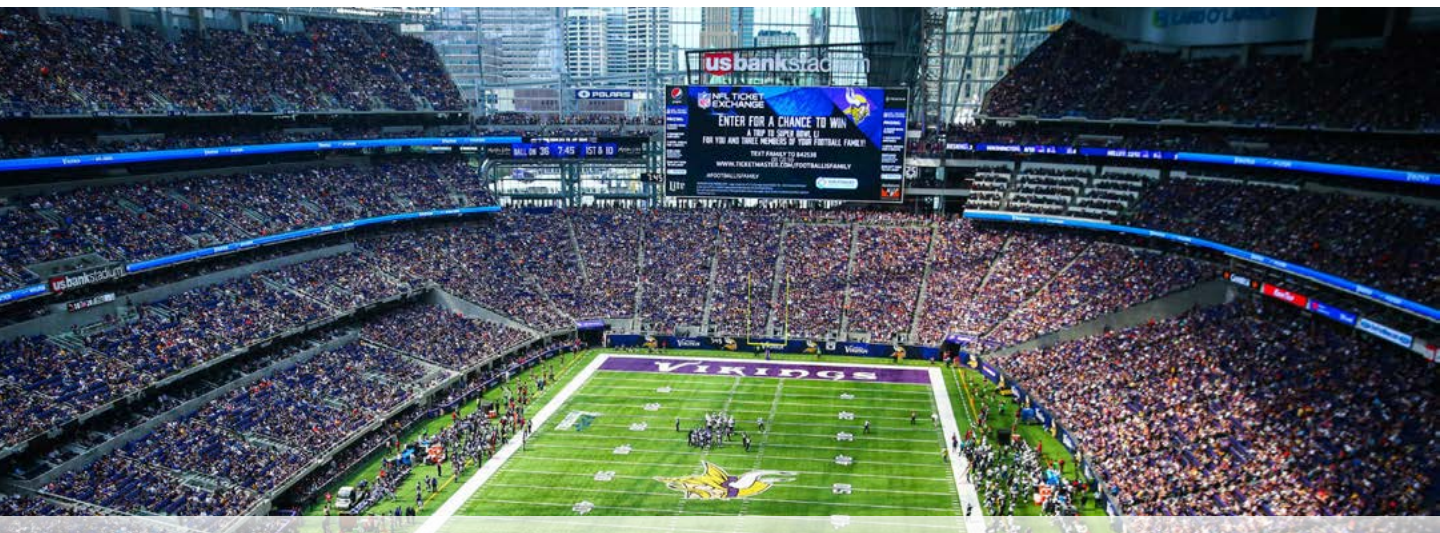
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▼ PG 25 | RHETT ELLISON RETURNS TO THE FIELD





WE ARE VIKINGS, NOT BARBARIANS

We are confident that our fans lead the NFL in enthusiasm, support, hospitality and sportsmanship. Our image is shaped not only by our players, coaches and employees, but by our fans as well. Our goal is to create a high-energy environment to lend support to our team, while maintaining a family-oriented atmosphere.

TO ENSURE that all fans have a pleasant game-day experience, each patron should act responsibly and be considerate of others. Unruly behavior will not be tolerated and, in some cases, might be deemed grounds for dismissal from U.S. Bank Stadium. These cases include, but are not limited to the following:

- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Underage drinking
- Actions that are harmful to or endanger others
- Throwing items of any kind
- Using foul or abusive language and/or gestures
- Displaying inconsiderate behavior toward others
- Disorderly conduct
- Wearing obscene or indecent clothing
- Smoking in non-designated areas

- Sitting or standing in the aisles
- Entering or attempting to enter the field of play
- Failure to follow instructions of stadium security personnel
- Entering the stadium with any prohibited items
- Harassment of visiting-team fans

Season Ticket Owners are responsible for the actions of any individual using their tickets. Any of the above behavior by anyone using an account owner's ticket(s) may be cause for non-renewal of ticket privileges. Vikings management and security reserve the right to deem an act or exhibited behavior as inappropriate and take action, based on available information and circumstances. Thank you for making U.S. Bank Stadium an enjoyable and friendly atmosphere to watch Vikings football!

REPORT GAME DAY ISSUES

Text VIKES (space), the issue and location to:

78247

You may also contact an usher or security officer, or stop by the nearest Fan Services location, to report the problem.

Standard text message rates and other charges may apply.

NFL BAG POLICY

The Vikings strongly encourage fans to not bring any type of bags, but should the need arise, fans will be able to carry the following style and size bag, package or container at stadium plaza areas, stadium gates, or when approaching queue lines of fans awaiting entry into the stadium:



CLEAR PLASTIC BAG
No larger than 12" x 6" x 12"



SMALL CLUTCH BAGS
No larger than 4.5" x 6.5"



ONE GALLON BAG
Clear plastic freezer bag

IT MAKES EVERYONE'S HIGHLIGHT REEL.



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THROWBACK THURSDAY

THE VIKINGS AND RAMS WILL CLOSE OUT THE 2016 PRESEASON IN A REMATCH OF THE VIKINGS FIRST FOOTBALL GAME IN MINNESOTA, A 21-17 LOSS TO LOS ANGELES ON SEPT. 10, 1961.

The rivalry between the teams escalated nicely in the 1970s when the franchises

met four times in five postseasons. The Vikings defeated the Rams twice in NFC Championships to earn trips to Super Bowls IX and XI.

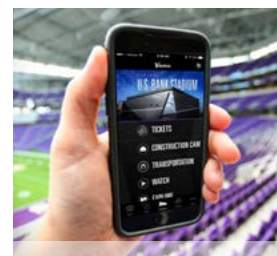
This is the first time the Rams have visited Minnesota from Los Angeles since 1992, but the teams have been in three of the past four regular seasons. Mike Zimmer recorded his first win as a head coach against the Rams in St. Louis in 2014.



GJALLARHORN: DAVE MANSSELL

U.S. Bank Stadium reached substantial completion six weeks ahead of schedule thanks in large part to the efforts and execution of construction workers under the guidance of General Superintendent Dave Mansell with Mortenson Construction.

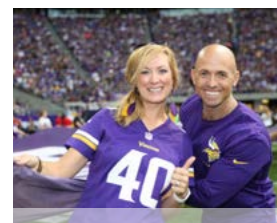
Mansell began mentally scheduling the building in December 2012 and led the process with use of a 4D computerized scheduling model.



CONQUER THE FIELD WITH THE VIKINGS MOBILE APP

Download the Vikings App to get the latest news and game features to enhance your experience at U.S. Bank Stadium. With the App, you can:

- Manage your Vikings tickets
- Watch instant replays
- Explore the stadium and its many points of interest
- Order concessions for express pick-up
- Purchase Vikings merchandise



SEASON TICKET MEMBER FAN FLAG

Season Ticket Members will be carrying the Fan Flag on the field during pregame ceremonies tonight. This unique experience is available exclusively for Season Ticket Members through Vikings Rewards. All fans have the opportunity to earn points and redeem them for merchandise, memorabilia and unique experiences. To sign up, visit vikings.com/rewards.



THE COMPLETE PRODUCT LINE UP



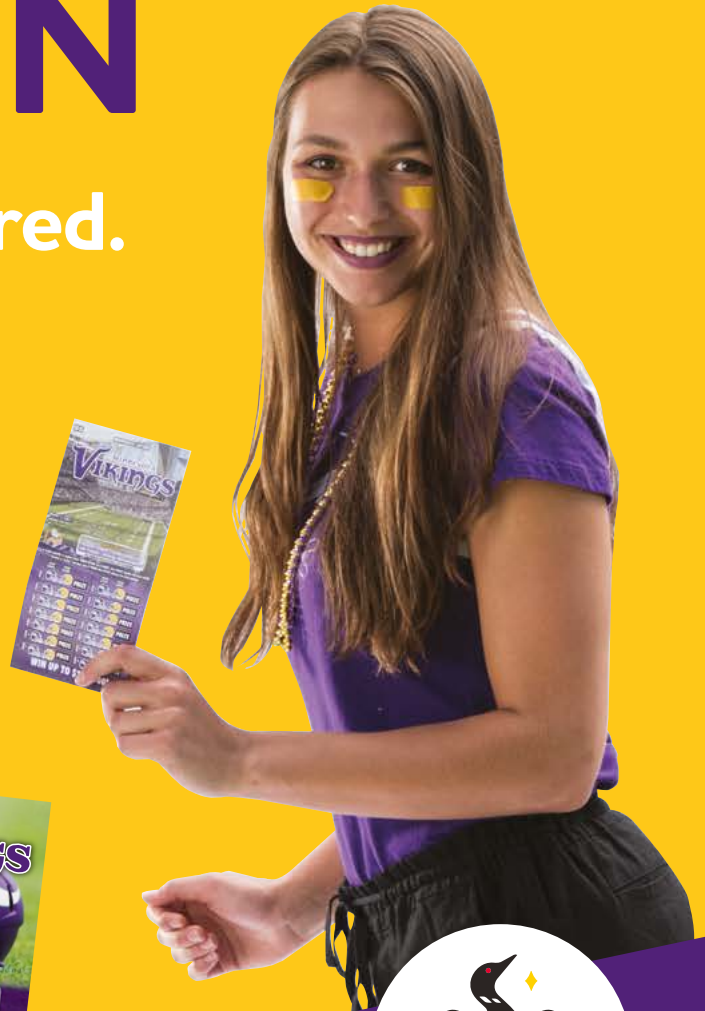
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SEASON TICKETS & MORE!**

Details at CallingAllVikings.com



TONIGHT'S GAME

PROMOTIONS



GET IN ON THE ACTION WITH THESE
PROMOTIONS DURING TONIGHT'S GAME

U.S. BANK COIN TOSS

Are you the Vikings biggest fan? Enter to win two tickets and an unforgettable Vikings coin toss experience! Share a picture using #VikingsBiggestFan and #USBankSweepstakes for a chance to be on the field for the official coin toss! Visit Vikings.com/biggestfan for more information.



BUFFALO WILD WINGS OPENING DRIVE

During tonight's game, how many plays will the Vikings run in their opening drive? Tweet your guess to @VikingsPromos for your chance to win Buffalo Wild Wings gift cards, and watch the video board for more ways to score with B-dubs!



KWIK TRIP FAMILY OF THE GAME

Kwik Trip is going to pick one lucky family every home game this season to be the Kwik Trip Family of the Game. Your family could be chosen to win four lower-level tickets to the next Vikings home game, along with on-field passes and more! Text "FIELD" to 77887 to register. Congratulations to tonight's Kwik Trip Family of the Game, the Wetter family from Mankato!



U.S. BANK HOMETOWN HERO

During each Vikings home game, U.S. Bank and the Minnesota Vikings will recognize one individual who has helped make our community a better place to live. We will honor a Minnesotan who has gone to extraordinary measures to benefit his or her community. Nominate a Hometown Hero by visiting Vikings.com/HometownHero.



HY-VEE #OPENTHEGATES

Share a photo at tonight's game using #OPENTHEGATES to see yourself on the video board and for the chance to win a Hy-Vee gift card!



SPALON MONTAGE GIVEAWAY

Spalon Montage will be giving away a \$100 gift card at tonight's game! Show us your game-day hairstyle by tweeting a photo @VikingsPromos using #VikingsHairstyle to enter.



VIKINGS WIN, YOU WIN FROM PAPA JOHN'S

Join Papa John's this season in cheering on the Vikings. Every time the Vikings win during the 2016 season, fans receive 50 percent off their entire order the next day at participating Papa John's locations. Just order online at papajohns.com and type in promo code "VIKE550." Visit the Promotions page on vikings.com for more details.



SNAP, TWEET, WIN

Vikings fans, we want you to show us your Miller Time! It's easy - just follow @MillerLite on Twitter, snap a Miller Time photo and tweet it to @MillerLite using #ItsMillerTime #Vikings. Look for your photo on the video board at tonight's game!



TWEET YOUR SEAT LOCATION TO @VIKINGSPROMOS FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN PRIZES FROM THE VIKINGS STREET TEAM AT TONIGHT'S GAME.



DELTA VIKINGS VILLAGE AND THE COMMONS PARK

Opening two-and-a-half hours prior to kickoff, this Vikings fan engagement area is located across Chicago Ave. from Medtronic Plaza. Fans can find their favorite tailgate fare, ice-cold Miller Lite and plenty of interaction with Vikings partners, receive autographs from Vikings Legends and hear live music each game from the Pepsi “Sound The North” stage. The centerpiece of the Vikings Village will be the Longhouse, a 6,000-plus-square-foot, climate-controlled gathering space. The Longhouse and Vikings Village will be free to attend for Vikings fans with or without game tickets and will be the ultimate destination for fans looking to congregate and celebrate together before, during and after Vikings homes games. The pregame festivities will include the KFAN pregame radio broadcast as well as nine 55-inch televisions to keep fans up to date on the NFL. In addition, live music will be rocking the Delta Vikings Village each game from within the Miller Lite Beer Garden.

Fans will also be able to enjoy downtown’s newest treasure, The Commons Park. The Vikings will take over the easterly block of The Commons prior to each game this season with great family-friendly activities and entertainment. Complete with Vikings inflatable games, face painting, a DJ or live music and visits from Viktor, the SKOL Line and Vikings Cheerleaders, The Commons will have something for the entire family.



LIFE TIME KIDS FOOTBALL CLINIC

Life Time invites kids ages 5-12 to participate in a FREE Vikings football clinic on Thursday, Sept. 15 at the Woodbury Life Time. The clinic will be run by Vikings Youth Football Manager E.J. Henderson. Kids will also have the opportunity to meet two current Vikings players. Register by visiting Vikings.com/promotions.

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

It’s time for “#TheGreatMNSkolTogether” as the Vikings are back at the Minnesota State Fair. Stop by the Vikings new home on the West side of Underwood St. between Dan Patch & Carnes Avenues. Enjoy activities, load up on the latest Vikings gear and have a chance to win two tickets to the inaugural regular-season game at U.S. Bank Stadium when the Vikings take on the Packers on Sept. 18.

SOUND THE NORTH — GJALLARHORN TOUR

The original Gjallarhorn is making its rounds through the North. The “Sound the North” tour kicked off on Aug. 6 at training camp and will make its final stop in Bemidji, Minnesota, on Sept. 15. The tour will make 23 total stops, where Vikings fans will have the opportunity to view the iconic instrument that’s been a significant part of team history while helping to usher in the next Vikings era.

TCO VIKINGS 5K

Finish on the 50-yard line at the new home of the Minnesota Vikings, U.S. Bank Stadium! Race registrants will receive a custom T-shirt, participation medal, commemorative photo, post-race snacks, tour of the Vikings Locker Room and access to the post-race Healthy Living Expo!

VIKINGS COUNTRY PRESENTED BY MILLER LITE

The popular *Vikings Country* radio show returns on Thursday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. Host Mike Mussman is joined each week by a Vikings player. Tune in on KFAN and the Vikings Radio Network or attend the live broadcast each Thursday night at various locations around the Twin Cities.

FRIDAY FOOTBALL FEAST AT BUFFALO WILD WINGS

Join KFAN each Friday morning from 9 a.m. to noon for a Friday Football Feast. Paul Allen and Paul Charchian will get you set for the weekend’s action, including an in-depth preview of the upcoming Vikings game. Use #MVPTablePromo in your tweets and photos for your chance to win an MVP experience! Check out vikings.com for a complete schedule



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2016

FINISH ON THE 50 AT U.S. BANK STADIUM



REGISTER NOW AT VIKINGS.COM/RUN



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CHRIS CARR & COMPANY | WEEKDAYS 6A-10A



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PLAYER TO WATCH: WR LAQUON TREADWELL

TREADWELL HAS PUT IN EXTRA WORK since he arrived in Minnesota as the 23rd overall pick of the 2016 NFL Draft. The native of Illinois helped his high school win its first Class 6A state title as a dynamic receiver (81 catches, 1,424 yards and 16 touchdowns) and defender (56 tackles and six interceptions). Treadwell then turned in a strong freshman campaign at Mississippi, garnering SEC Freshman of the Year from the league's coaches for his 72-catch, 608-yard season that included five touchdowns. Treadwell brings a physicality with him that capitalizes on his 6-foot-2, 215-pound frame.

COMEBACK ROUTE: TREADWELL SUFFERED A SEVERE LEG INJURY AS A SOPHOMORE BUT RETURNED TO SET SCHOOL SINGLE-SEASON RECORDS IN RECEPTIONS (82), YARDS (1,153) AND RECEIVING TOUCHDOWNS (11) AS A JUNIOR IN 2015.

202 IN 35

Treadwell set a Mississippi record with 202 receptions in just 35 games played (5.8 catches per game) over the course of three seasons before becoming the first receiver from the school ever drafted in the first round. He never had fewer than two receptions in any college game.

2015 SEASON LEADERS

Passing (Yards)	Teddy Bridgewater	3,231
Rushing (Yards)	Adrian Peterson	1,485
Receiving (Yards)	Stefon Diggs	720
Tackles	Eric Kendricks	105
Sacks	Everson Griffen	10.5
Interceptions	Terence Newman	3
KOR (Yards)	Cordarrelle Patterson	1,019
PR (Avg.)	Marcus Sherels	9.1

2016 SCHEDULE

PRESEASON (3-0)

P1	8/12	at Cincinnati Bengals	W 17-16
P2	8/18	at Seattle Seahawks	W 18-11
P3	8/28	San Diego Chargers	W 23-10
P4	9/1	Los Angeles Rams	

REGULAR SEASON (0-0)

1	9/11	at Tennessee Titans	
2	9/18	Green Bay Packers	
3	9/25	at Carolina Panthers	
4	10/3	New York Giants	
5	10/9	Houston Texans	
6	10/16	BYE	
7	10/23	at Philadelphia Eagles	
8	10/31	at Chicago Bears	
9	11/6	Detroit Lions	
10	11/13	at Washington Redskins	
11	11/20	Arizona Cardinals	
12	11/24	at Detroit Lions	
13	12/1	Dallas Cowboys	
14	12/11	at Jacksonville Jaguars	
15	12/18	Indianapolis Colts	
16	12/24	at Green Bay Packers	
17	1/1	Chicago Bears	

TOP 2s AGAINST LOS ANGELES

RUSHING YARDS

212	Adrian Peterson on 24 attempts at St. Louis (Dec. 12, 2012)
179	Robert Smith on 23 attempts at St. Louis (Sept. 13, 1998)

PASSING YARDS

330	Daunte Culpepper on 33-of-47 passing at St. Louis (Nov. 30, 2003)
327	Fran Tarkenton on 21-of-31 passing in Minnesota (Oct. 16, 1966)

RECEIVING YARDS

160	Randy Moss on 10 catches at St. Louis (Nov. 30, 2003)
142	Jim "Red" Phillips on six catches in Minnesota (Oct. 16, 1966)



MINNESOTA VIKINGS
LOCKER ROOM
OFFICIAL TEAM STORE

TODAY'S ITEM OF THE GAME



Cutter & Buck Fairwood Polo

ONLY \$34.95

Original Price: \$59.00

While supplies last.



PLAYER TO WATCH: DT AARON DONALD

IT'S SAFE TO SAY THE VIKINGS are aware of what Donald can do. So far, they've minimized the damage wrought to Minnesota by the Pittsburgh native. Donald was selected to the Pro Bowl in each of his first two seasons, and he recorded six tackles (five solo) in his first regular-season game ever when Minnesota opened 2014 at St. Louis. Donald went on to win 2014 Defensive Rookie of the Year and played at a high level in 2015 but was limited to one tackle when the Vikings hosted the Rams a year ago. With 20 sacks in his first two NFL seasons, Donald is a handful on the interior of the line of scrimmage.

TROPHY CASE: FORMERLY RATED BY A RECRUITING SERVICE AS THREE OUT OF FIVE STARS, DONALD BECAME QUITE DECORATED DURING HIS COLLEGIATE CAREER AT PITT. HE CLAIMED THE OUTLAND TROPHY, LOMBARDI AWARD, CHUCK BEDNARIK AWARD, BRONKO NAGURSKI TROPHY AND ACC DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR HONORS IN 2013. HE WAS SELECTED 13TH OVERALL IN 2014 AFTER SETTING THE NFL COMBINE RECORD BY A DEFENSIVE TACKLE WITH A TIME OF 4.68 SECONDS IN THE 40-YARD DASH.

11 IN '15

Donald tied for eighth in the NFL with 11 sacks in 2015, joining Cincinnati's Geno Atkins and Carolina's Kawann Short for the most in the league by a defensive tackle.

2015 SEASON LEADERS

Passing (Yards)	Nick Foles	2,052
Rushing (Yards)	Todd Gurley	1,106
Receiving (Yards)	Kenny Britt	681
Tackles	Mark Barron	113
Sacks	Aaron Donald	11
Interceptions	Trumaine Johnson	7
KOR (Yards)	Benny Cunningham	714
PR (Avg.)	Tavon Austin	7.9

2016 SCHEDULE

PRESEASON (2-1)

P1	8/13	Dallas Cowboys	W 28-24
P2	8/20	Kansas City Chiefs	W 21-20
P3	8/27	at Denver Broncos	L 9-17
P4	9/1	at Minnesota Vikings	

REGULAR SEASON (0-0)

1	9/12	at San Francisco 49ers	
2	9/18	Seattle Seahawks	
3	9/25	at Tampa Bay Buccaneers	
4	10/2	at Arizona Cardinals	
5	10/9	Buffalo Bills	
6	10/16	at Detroit Lions	
7	10/23	New York Giants	
8	10/30	BYE	
9	11/6	Carolina Panthers	
10	11/13	at New York Jets	
11	11/20	Miami Dolphins	
12	11/27	at New Orleans Saints	
13	12/4	at New England Patriots	
14	12/11	Atlanta Falcons	
15	12/15	at Seattle Seahawks	
16	12/24	San Francisco 49ers	
17	1/1	Arizona Cardinals	

TOP 2s AGAINST MINNESOTA

RUSHING YARDS

142	Steven Jackson on 25 attempts in Minnesota (Dec. 31, 2006)
135	Marshall Faulk on 28 attempts at St. Louis (Dec. 10, 2000)

PASSING YARDS

391	Kurt Warner on 27-of-33 passing at St. Louis (Jan. 16, 2000)
377	Sam Bradford on 33-of-55 passing at St. Louis (Dec. 16, 2012)

RECEIVING YARDS

192	Isaac Bruce on 11 catches at St. Louis (Sept. 13, 1998)
172	Torry Holt on nine catches at St. Louis (Dec. 10, 2000)



OFFENSE

WR		TE	
12 Charles Johnson		82 Kyle Rudolph	
11 Laquon Treadwell		85 Rhett Ellison	
15 Isaac Fruechte		83 MyCole Pruitt	
		89 David Morgan	
LT		WR	
75 Matt Kalil		14 Stefon Diggs	
78 Jeremiah Sirles		84/19 C. Patterson/	
60 Carter Bykowski		Adam Thielen	
LG		17 Jarius Wright	
76 Alex Boone		QB	
67 Zac Kerin		5 Teddy Bridgewater	
64 Willie Beavers		13 Shaun Hill	
C		2 Joel Stave	
61 Joe Berger		FB	
62 Nick Easton		48 Zach Line	
RG		49 Blake Renaud	
63 Brandon Fusco		HB	
69 Isame Faciane		28 Adrian Peterson	
RT		21 Jerick McKinnon	
71 Andre Smith		44 Matt Asiata	
68 T.J. Clemmings			

DEFENSE

LDE		SLB	
96 Brian Robison		55 Anthony Barr	
99 Danielle Hunter		51 Edmond Robinson	
91 Zach Moore		56 Jake Ganus	
DT		LCB	
73 Shariff Floyd		23 Terence Newman	
92 Tom Johnson		26 Trae Waynes	
NT		25 Jabari Price	
98 Linval Joseph		RCB	
93 Shamar Stephen		29 Xavier Rhodes	
72 Kenrick Ellis		24 C. Munnerlyn	
RDE		20 M. Alexander	
97 Everson Griffen		SS	
94 Justin Trattou		34 Andrew Sendejo	
64 S. Weatherly		33 Michael Griffin	
WLB		27 Jayron Kearse	
52 Chad Greenway		FS	
59 Emmanuel Lamur		22 Harrison Smith	
58 Brandon Watts		41 Anthony Harris	
MLB			
54 Eric Kendricks			
57 Audie Cole			
40 Kentrell Brothers			

SPECIALISTS

P / H		KR	
18 Jeff Locke		84 C. Patterson	
K		35 Marcus Sherels	
3 Blair Walsh		PR	
LS		35 Marcus Sherels	
47 Kevin McDermott		19 Adam Thielen	

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	AGE	EXP.	COLLEGE
1	Troy Stoudermire	WR	5-10	195	26	1	Minnesota
2	Joel Stave	QB	6-5	230	24	R	Wisconsin
3	Blair Walsh	K	5-10	170	26	5	Georgia
5	Teddy Bridgewater	QB	6-2	215	23	3	Louisville
11	Laquon Treadwell	WR	6-2	215	21	R	Mississippi
12	Charles Johnson	WR	6-2	217	27	4	Grand Valley State
13	Shaun Hill	QB	6-3	230	36	15	Maryland
14	Stefon Diggs	WR	6-0	191	22	2	Maryland
15	Isaac Fruechte	WR	6-3	210	25	1	Minnesota
17	Jarius Wright	WR	5-10	191	26	5	Arkansas
18	Jeff Locke	P	6-0	195	26	4	UCLA
19	Adam Thielen	WR	6-2	200	26	3	Minnesota State
20	Mackensie Alexander	CB	5-10	192	22	R	Clemson
21	Jerick McKinnon	RB	5-9	205	24	3	Georgia Southern
22	Harrison Smith	S	6-2	214	27	5	Notre Dame
23	Terence Newman	CB	5-10	197	37	14	Kansas State
24	Captain Munnerlyn	CB	5-9	195	28	8	South Carolina
25	Jabari Price	CB	5-11	200	23	3	North Carolina
26	Trae Waynes	CB	6-0	190	24	2	Michigan State
27	Jayron Kearse	S	6-4	215	22	R	Clemson
28	Adrian Peterson	RB	6-1	220	31	10	Oklahoma
29	Xavier Rhodes	CB	6-1	218	26	4	Florida State
30	C.J. Ham	RB	5-11	235	23	R	Augustana
33	Michael Griffin	S	6-0	215	31	10	Texas
34	Andrew Sendejo	S	6-1	210	28	6	Rice
35	Marcus Sherels	CB	5-10	175	28	6	Minnesota
36	Tre Roberson	CB	6-0	200	23	R	Illinois State
40	Kentrell Brothers	LB	6-1	242	23	R	Missouri
41	Anthony Harris	S	6-1	192	24	2	Virginia
42	Jhurrell Pressley	RB	5-10	206	24	R	New Mexico
44	Matt Asiata	RB	6-0	219	29	5	Utah
47	Kevin McDermott	LS	6-5	240	26	4	UCLA
48	Zach Line	FB	6-1	233	26	4	SMU
49	Blake Renaud	FB	6-1	252	23	1	Boise State
51	Edmond Robinson	LB	6-3	245	24	2	Newberry
52	Chad Greenway	LB	6-3	237	33	11	Iowa
54	Eric Kendricks	LB	6-0	232	24	2	UCLA
55	Anthony Barr	LB	6-5	255	24	3	UCLA
56	Jake Ganus	LB	6-2	233	22	R	Georgia
57	Audie Cole	LB	6-5	248	27	5	NC State
58	Brandon Watts	LB	6-2	231	25	3	Georgia Tech
59	Emmanuel Lamur	LB	6-4	245	27	5	Kansas State
60	Carter Bykowski	T	6-7	313	26	3	Iowa State
60	Travis Raciti	DT	6-4	305	24	1	San Jose State
61	Joe Berger	C	6-5	305	34	12	Michigan Tech
62	Nick Easton	C	6-3	303	24	2	Harvard
62	Denzell Perine	DE	6-2	250	23	R	Florida International
63	Brandon Fusco	G	6-4	306	28	6	Slippery Rock
64	Willie Beavers	G	6-5	322	22	R	Western Michigan
64	Stephen Weatherly	DE	6-5	265	22	R	Vanderbilt
67	Zac Kerin	G	6-5	305	25	2	Toledo
68	T.J. Clemmings	T	6-5	309	24	2	Pittsburgh
69	Isame Faciane	G	6-4	302	25	2	Florida International
69	Toby Johnson	DT	6-4	325	24	1	Georgia
71	Andre Smith	T	6-4	325	29	8	Alabama
72	Kenrick Ellis	DT	6-5	335	28	6	Hampton
73	Shariff Floyd	DT	6-3	311	25	4	Florida
75	Matt Kalil	T	6-7	317	27	5	Southern California
76	Alex Boone	G	6-8	310	29	7	Ohio State
78	Jeremiah Sirles	T	6-6	315	25	3	Nebraska
81	Moritz Böhringer	WR	6-4	225	22	R	N/A
82	Kyle Rudolph	TE	6-6	265	26	6	Notre Dame
83	MyCole Pruitt	TE	6-2	258	24	2	Southern Illinois
84	Cordarrelle Patterson	WR	6-2	220	25	4	Tennessee
85	Rhett Ellison	TE	6-5	250	27	5	Southern California
86	Kyle Carter	TE	6-3	245	23	R	Penn State
89	David Morgan	TE	6-4	265	23	R	Texas-San Antonio
91	Zach Moore	DE	6-6	290	25	3	Concordia-St.Paul
92	Tom Johnson	DT	6-3	288	32	6	Southern Mississippi
93	Shamar Stephen	DT	6-5	310	25	3	Connecticut
94	Justin Trattou	DE	6-4	258	28	5	Florida
96	Brian Robison	DE	6-3	259	33	10	Texas
97	Everson Griffen	DE	6-3	273	28	7	Southern California
98	Linval Joseph	DT	6-4	329	27	7	East Carolina
99	Danielle Hunter	DE	6-5	252	21	2	LSU



OFFENSE

WR	RT
18 Kenny Britt	76 Rodger Saffold
15 Bradley Marquez	79 Rob Havenstein
10 Pharoah Cooper	64 Andrew Donnal
TE	TE
46 Cory Harkey	88 Lance Kendricks
48 J. Cunningham	89 Tyler Higbee
84 T. Hemingway	
LT	WR
73 Greg Robinson	11 Tavon Austin
77 Isaiah Battle	83 Brian Quick
63 Darrell Williams	13 Michael Thomas
LG	QB
69 Cody Wichmann	17 Case Keenum
71 Garrett Reynolds	16 Jared Goff
66 David Arkin	14 Sean Mannion
C	HB
61 Tim Barnes	30 Todd Gurley
60 Eric Kush	23 B. Cunningham
	39 Malcolm Brown
RG	
68 Jamon Brown	
65 Demetrius Rhaney	

DEFENSE

LDE	LCB
95 William Hayes	22 Trumaine Johnson
93 Ethan Westbrooks	47 Marcus Roberson
96 Matt Longacre	35 Michael Jordan
LDT	RCB
99 Aaron Donald	20 Lamarcus Joyner
91 Dominique Easley	21 Coty Sensabaugh
70 Morgan Fox	33 E.J. Gaines
RDT	WS
90 Michael Brockers	26 Mark Barron
92 Cam Thomas	41 J. Washington
RDE	FS
94 Robert Quinn	38 Cody Davis
97 Eugene Sims	42 Jordan Kovacs
RLB	SS
56 Akeem Ayers	25 T.J. McDonald
50 Cameron Lynch	31 Maurice Alexander
53 Brandon Chubb	24 Christian Bryant
MLB	
52 Alec Ogletree	
54 Bryce Hager	
59 Josh Forrest	

SPECIALISTS

P / H	LS
6 Johnny Hekker	44 Jake McQuaide
K	KR
4 Greg Zuerlein	23 B. Cunningham
PR	
11 Tavon Austin	

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	WT.	AGE	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Greg Zuerlein	K	6-0	196	26	5	Missouri Western
6	Johnny Hekker	P	6-5	236	25	5	Oregon State
8	Paul McRoberts	WR	6-2	200	23	R	SE Missouri St.
9	Austin Hill	WR	6-2	214	25	1	Arizona
10	Pharoah Cooper	WR	5-11	207	21	R	South Carolina
11	Tavon Austin	WR	5-8	176	24	4	West Virginia
13	Michael Thomas	WR	6-1	200	22	R	Southern Mississippi
14	Sean Mannion	QB	6-6	233	23	1	Oregon State
15	Bradley Marquez	WR	5-10	196	22	2	Texas Tech
16	Jared Goff	QB	6-4	215	21	R	California
17	Case Keenum	QB	6-1	205	27	4	Houston
18	Kenny Britt	WR	6-3	223	27	8	Rutgers
20	Lamarcus Joyner	DB	5-8	184	25	3	Florida State
21	Coty Sensabaugh	DB	5-11	187	28	5	Clemson
22	Trumaine Johnson	CB	6-2	208	26	5	Montana
23	Benny Cunningham	RB	5-10	217	25	4	Middle Tennessee
24	Christian Bryant	S	5-10	198	23	2	Ohio State
25	T.J. McDonald	S	6-2	217	24	4	USC
26	Mark Barron	LB/S	6-2	213	26	5	Alabama
30	Todd Gurley	RB	6-1	227	21	2	Georgia
31	Maurice Alexander	S	6-1	220	24	3	Utah State
32	Troy Hill	CB	5-11	182	24	2	Oregon
33	E.J. Gaines	CB	5-10	190	23	2	Missouri
34	Chase Reynolds	RB	6-0	205	28	4	Montana
35	Michael Jordan	CB	6-1	200	23	R	Missouri Western
36-O	Aaron Green	RB	5-11	205	23	R	TCU
36-D	Rohan Gaines	S	5-11	194	23	R	Arkansas
37	Terrence Magee	RB	5-8	215	23	2	Louisiana State
38	Cody Davis	S	6-1	206	26	4	Texas Tech
39	Malcolm Brown	RB	5-11	224	22	1	Texas
41	Jabriel Washington	DB	5-11	182	23	R	Alabama
42	Jordan Kovacs	DB	5-10	205	26	4	Michigan
44	Jake McQuaide	LS	6-2	244	28	6	Ohio State
46	Cory Harkey	TE	6-4	259	25	5	UCLA
47	Marcus Roberson	CB	6-0	191	22	3	Florida
48	Justice Cunningham	TE	6-3	258	24	1	South Carolina
50	Cameron Lynch	LB	6-0	229	22	2	Syracuse
52	Alec Ogletree	LB	6-2	245	24	4	Georgia
53	Brandon Chubb	LB	6-1	245	22	R	Wake Forest
54	Bryce Hager	LB	6-1	235	23	2	Baylor
55	Nicholas Grigsby	LB	6-2	230	24	R	Pittsburgh
56	Akeem Ayers	LB	6-3	255	26	6	UCLA
58	Cory Littleton	LB	6-3	227	22	R	Washington
59	Josh Forrest	LB	6-3	255	24	R	Kentucky
60	Eric Kush	C	6-4	313	26	4	California (Pa.)
61	Tim Barnes	C	6-4	306	27	5	Missouri
63	Darrell Williams	T	6-5	301	22	2	South Florida
64	Andrew Donnal	T	6-6	316	23	2	Iowa
65	Demetrius Rhaney	C/G	6-2	301	23	2	Tennessee State
66	David Arkin	G	6-5	307	28	2	Missouri State
68	Jamon Brown	G	6-4	323	22	2	Louisville
69	Cody Wichmann	G	6-5	319	23	2	Fresno State
70	Morgan Fox	DT	6-3	263	21	R	Colorado St. Pueblo
71	Garrett Reynolds	G/T	6-7	305	28	7	North Carolina
72-O	Pace Murphy	T	6-6	308	22	R	NW Louisiana
72-D	Ian Seau	DE	6-2	250	23	R	Nevada-Reno
73	Greg Robinson	T	6-5	332	23	3	Auburn
76	Rodger Saffold	G	6-5	332	28	7	Indiana
77	Isaiah Battle	T	6-7	290	22	1	Clemson
79	Rob Havenstein	T	6-8	321	23	2	Wisconsin
81	Duke Williams	WR	6-2	216	23	R	Auburn
83	Brian Quick	WR	6-3	218	26	5	Appalachian State
84	Temarrick Hemingway	TE	6-5	210	23	R	South Carolina State
86	Nelson Spruce	WR	6-1	205	23	R	Colorado
88	Lance Kendricks	TE	6-3	250	28	6	Wisconsin
89	Tyler Higbee	TE	6-6	250	23	R	Western Kentucky
90	Michael Brockers	DT	6-5	326	25	5	LSU
91	Dominique Easley	DT	6-2	285	24	3	Florida
92	Cam Thomas	DT	6-4	330	29	7	North Carolina
93	Ethan Westbrooks	DL	6-4	267	25	3	West Texas A&M
94	Robert Quinn	DE	6-4	264	25	6	North Carolina
95	William Hayes	DE	6-3	278	31	9	Winston-Salem State
96	Matt Longacre	DE	6-3	260	24	2	NW Missouri St.
97	Eugene Sims	DE	6-6	269	30	7	West Texas A&M
99	Aaron Donald	DT	6-1	285	24	3	Pittsburgh

*Unofficial depth chart and roster as of 8/28/16



01



"TALK ABOUT OPENING THE GATES ... THE FANS
DESERVED THIS THE MOST, AND IT WAS GREAT TO GO
OUT AND PLAY IN FRONT OF THEM."

- VIKINGS QUARTERBACK TEDDY BRIDGEWATER





OPEN THE GATES

A HOME-GAME-RECORD CROWD OF 66,143 VIKINGS FANS JOINED THE MAIDEN VOYAGE AT U.S. BANK STADIUM.

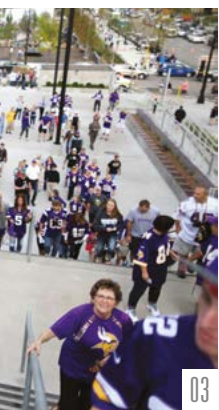
Minnesota defeated San Diego 23-10 to christen the 1.75-million-square-foot venue in style in a game that was nationally televised by FOX.

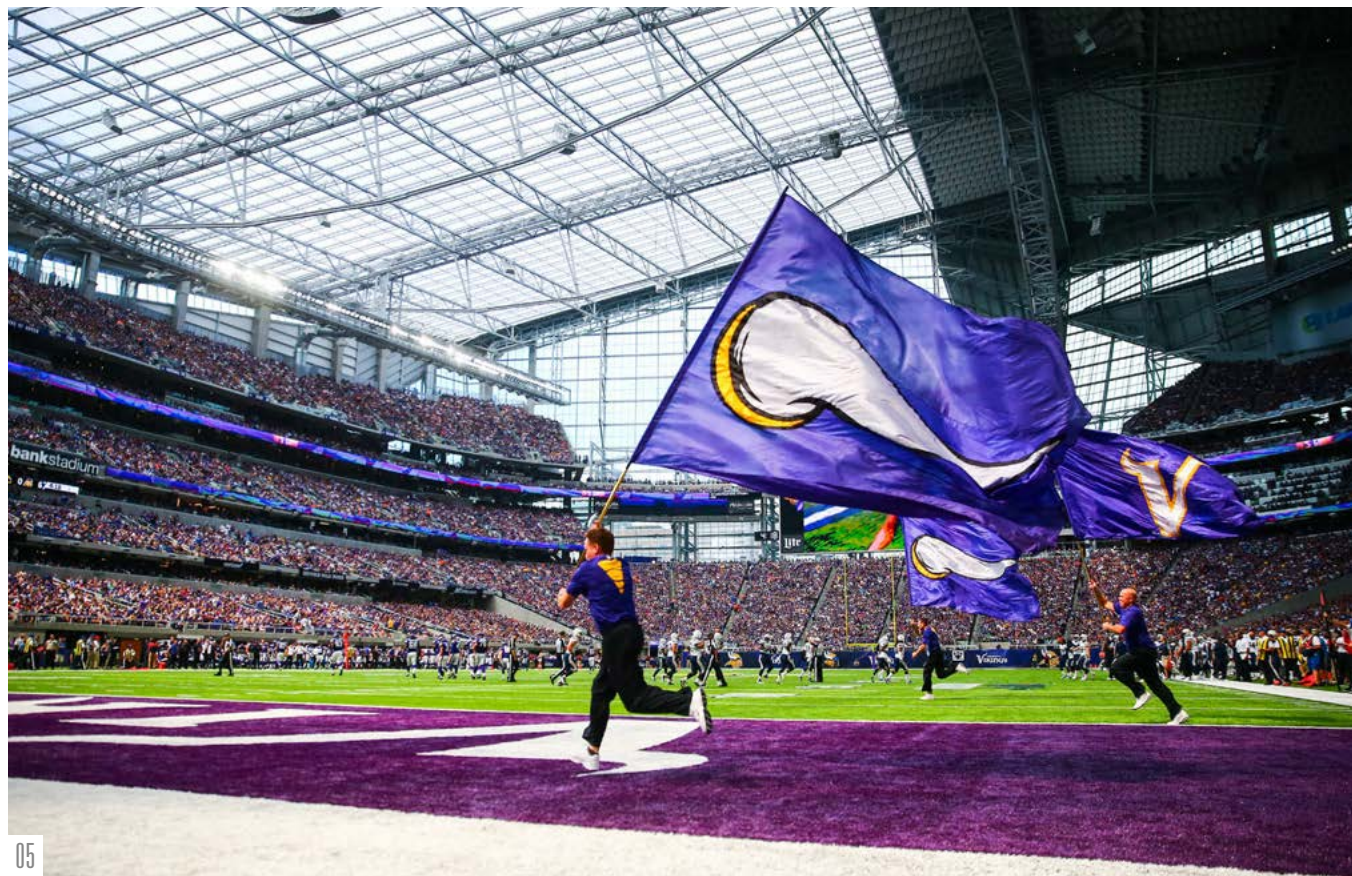
01 | Fans approach the Legacy Gates on the west end of U.S. Bank Stadium.

02 | This view from west to east showcases the amount of natural light allowed into the stadium by the ETFE material on 60 percent of the roof.

03 | The walk through plaza spaces outside the stadium will add to game-day experiences for Vikings fans.

04 | Vikings Cheerleaders visited The Commons Park, a family-friendly pregame space.





05



06



07

05 | There were multiple reasons to celebrate the historic day, including two touchdowns by the Vikings.

06 | U.S. Bank Stadium features broader concourses than its predecessor, the Metrodome.

07 | Viktor visits guests in a turf suite that is one of the closest to the action in the NFL.



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THROUGH-THE-LENS

VIKINGS

VS. SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

THE VIKINGS OPENED U.S. BANK STADIUM WITH A 23-10 VICTORY AGAINST THE CHARGERS.

Minnesota's defense forced four turnovers, and the offense scored touchdowns in the final two minutes of the first half and in the first two minutes of the third quarter.

01 | Brian Robison and Harrison Smith team to bring down Chargers running back Danny Woodhead.

02 | Teddy Bridgewater jukes his way past Chargers safety Adrian Phillips during a scramble that gained 22 yards.

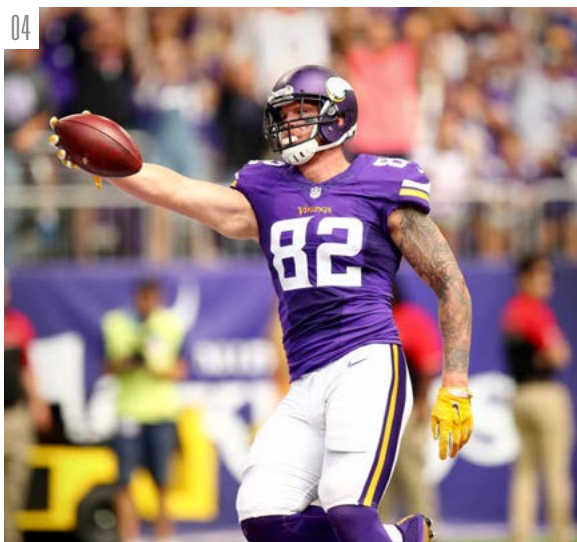
➔ SEE THE FULL THROUGH-THE-LENS GALLERY ON VIKINGS.COM OR IN THE VIKINGS APP

03 | Chad Greenway, preparing for his 11th season in Minnesota, stares down Philip Rivers, who is preparing for his 13th season in San Diego.

04 | Kyle Rudolph reaches the ball across the goal line during a 27-yard touchdown that was the first by the Vikings in U.S. Bank Stadium.



03



04

05 | Cordarrelle Patterson, who is known for taking kickoffs from one end zone to another, recovered a fumble by the Vikings for their second touchdown.



05

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RHETT ELLISON

RETURNS TO THE FIELD

LEAVES 'DARK DAYS'
IN THE SHADOWS

THE VISITORS' LOCKER ROOM AT LAMBEAU FIELD ECHOED THE SOUNDS OF VICTORY. VIKINGS PLAYERS SHOUTED IN EXCITEMENT, CONGRATULATED EACH OTHER AND SNAPPED SELFIES WEARING GRAY, "NFC NORTH CHAMPIONS" BASEBALL HATS. RHETT ELLISON, HOWEVER, WAS LATE TO THE FESTIVITIES.

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

After suffering a torn patellar tendon during the Jan. 3 game that ended with Minnesota dethroning Green Bay as division champion, Ellison entered the locker room with the support – both literally and figuratively – of tight ends coach Kevin Stefanski, now the Vikings running backs coach.

"That was tough ... [It] was a very jubilant atmosphere, but on the other side you had Rhett, who was devastated knowing his season was over," Stefanski said. "Rhett just embodies everything [Vikings Head Coach Mike Zimmer] wants this team to be in terms of physical and mental toughness, so it was so hard to see him suffering there.

"I was so proud of his teammates," Stefanski said. "They did such a great job with celebrating but then all going to put an arm around him and explaining how important he was for us being in that position in the first place."

Rather than readying himself for his second-ever playoff game, Ellison prepared instead for surgery. As he watched the Jan. 10 Wild Card game from a suite, separated from his teammates, the emotional pain proved more difficult than the physical.

"Early on, you go through some dark days. Your mind has never had to handle something like that," Ellison said.

The tight end feared he would never again play football.

The dark days blended into sleepless nights, but Ellison eventually overcame both.

Ellison returned to the practice field last week for his first practice of the 2016 season.

He admitted not sleeping much the night before, but this time it was for a good reason.

"It was awesome," Ellison said excitedly, emphasizing emotion with his hands. "I had like the game-day jitters. I didn't sleep the night before."

When Ellison set his first block and caught his first pass of 2016 last week, however, the nerves gradually melted away.

"That was the hard part – just relaxing and playing football again," Ellison said. "It was very exciting."

Ellison has only been playing football since high school, but he's been an athlete his entire life. After all, it's in his blood. His father, Riki Ellison, was a standout linebacker at Southern California who became the first New Zealander to play in the NFL. Riki's 10-year career with the 49ers and the Los Angeles Raiders included three Super Bowl titles with San Francisco.

"I WANT TO CATAPULT THIS TEAM TO THE SUPER BOWL. THAT'S THE GOAL, THAT'S THE DREAM. THAT'S WHY YOU PLAY FOOTBALL; I'M JUST HERE TO DO WHATEVER I CAN DO."

– RHETT ELLISON

When it came time to find a college team, Ellison didn't need to think twice about following in his father's footsteps.

"I was watching USC football since I can remember," Ellison said. "They were the celebrities that I idolized."

He added, laughing: "My dad had me brainwashed to think that USC was the only football team in the world."

Ellison's contributions at USC were recognized, although statistically he wasn't exactly flashy. As a junior in 2010, he started all 13 games at tight end and had 21 catches for 239 yards and three touchdowns. Earning a reputation as an equally proficient blocker and pass catcher, Ellison was moved to fullback for his senior season.

Coming out of college, he didn't expect to be drafted. Rather, he simply hoped a team would give him the opportunity to work out as an undrafted free agent.

Things didn't go exactly as planned.

During the 2012 NFL Draft, Ellison and a handful of close family members were spending time together at his father's home along the Potomac River in Alexandria, Virginia. The morning of the third day, Ellison decided he needed a breath of fresh air and took a solo stroll along the bank of the river.

That's when the Vikings called and told Ellison they were about to select him – in the fourth round.

"There's not too many fullbacks who get drafted, especially

when you have the numbers I did," Ellison said. "So it was a pretty emotional day."

Ellison received a second phone call shortly after, and the familiar voice of USC teammate Matt Kalil greeted him on the other end. The Vikings had selected Kalil fourth overall two nights before, and Ellison couldn't believe he was going to play on an NFL team alongside one of his closest friends.

"Matt's my brother," Ellison said, correcting me. "He's not even a friend. We're family; we're pretty much blood-related."

After sharing a locker room for eight seasons, Kalil and Ellison are together entering their fifth in the NFL. Kalil, who has worked through his own health hurdles during his time with the Vikings, has been a huge support for Ellison on his journey back to the field.

"It's been good to have someone to lean on that understands exactly what you're going through," Ellison said.

Kalil hasn't been the only one to help Ellison back into the swing of things. During the difficult days following his injury, when Ellison believed he would never return to the game he loved, his wife, Raina, never stopped believing he would.

"If I didn't have my wife, I think there's no way I'd be back, ever," Ellison said of Raina, whom he married during the offseason. "She got me closer to my faith, and she's been my rock throughout the entire process."

When Raina helped Ellison get on the right track, he hit the ground running – figuratively speaking – through the recovery process that spanned 233 days from suffering the injury at Lambeau Field to joining teammates on the grass at Winter Park.

"Rhett's worked extremely hard," said Zimmer. "Rhett is a great kid, [a] team guy through and through. It's nice to get him back on the field.

"[He's] probably a little ahead of schedule," Zimmer added.

While Ellison missed out on the physical participation, he said the mental reps were invaluable to his comeback. He was always easy to spot at practice, following along with drills in his mind, working out with Certified Head Athletic Trainer Eric Sugarman on the sidelines or going over plays with the coaching staff.

The Vikings hired Pat Shurmur as the new tight ends coach for the 2016 season. Shurmur talked about Ellison's contributions that helped Shurmur, a former head coach, transition in Minnesota.

"Rhett is a very veteran guy, and he's really good in the meetings," Shurmur said. "He's been helpful for me, in terms of how we function here. Every team functions differently, but he, along with [Kyle Rudolph] have been able to get me up to speed."

Ellison said working with Shurmur and mentoring young tight ends like MyCole Pruitt and rookie David Morgan kept him mentally in the game. Now that he's back in pads, his biggest goal is to continue helping the team to succeed at the highest level – in whatever way he can.

"I want to help the guy next to me," Ellison said. "I want to catapult this team to the Super Bowl.

"That's the goal, that's the dream. That's why you play football," he added. "I'm just here to do whatever I can do."



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BY LINDSEY

YOUNG

THE NOSE TACKLE OFTEN GOES UNNOTICED IN THE GAME OF FOOTBALL, BUT UTTER DOMINANCE BY LINVAL JOSEPH VS. THE RAMS LAST SEASON WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERLOOK.

A framed photo in a Winter Park hallway captured the essence of Joseph's performance.

A stunned Todd Gurley, still holding the football, is being helped from the turf by a nearby teammate after being taken down. Joseph's stance as he turns from his prey is a powerful one – arms outstretched, fingers splayed, lips still fiercely pursed beneath his facemask.

Joseph played his best game of 2015 against the Rams, when he helped Minnesota hold its opponents to just 18 points and come away with an overtime victory. He finished the contest with eight tackles, 3.0 tackles for loss, four quarterback hurries and a shared sack with safety Andrew Sendejo.

"It was unbelievable for a defensive tackle to have [that many] tackles for loss," cornerback Captain Munnerlyn said. "He single-handedly dominated that game and helped us to get a win."

Joseph isn't one who needs the limelight. He doesn't crave glory – he craves team success. During the 2015 season, however, a murmur started to spread through the league, and for all the right reasons. It's become next to impossible to ignore Joseph's production as he wreaks havoc on opposing offenses.

"You can ask any O-lineman he goes against," safety Harrison Smith said. "He's just a nightmare."

In 28 games with the Vikings, Joseph has totaled 144 tackles, 3.5 sacks, 15 tackles for loss and 53 quarterback hurries.

While stat lines don't always reflect a nose tackle's production, rest assured that work never stops on Joseph's watch. And his intense approach is not random.

"I start every play looking at the center, trying to figure out which way he's going to lean," Joseph explained. "I try to disrupt as much as possible. Just do my job, and let the play come to me."

"And then I eat."

Off the field, Joseph loves to cook, and he swears by his baked chicken. But come game time, he's hungry only for one thing: opponents.

Munnerlyn, who weighs 134 pounds less than Joseph and

stands 7 inches shorter, said he continues to be amazed at Joseph's strength.

"Some of those plays he [makes] – those are grown men he's doing that to," Munnerlyn said. "He's putting those players in the gap, and he's making those plays."

In May, NFL Network unveiled its "Top 100 Players of 2016" – Joseph was voted in at No. 76 by his peers on the field, a sign of him gaining respect from those who can see his impact.

"You have to love to play football [to be a defensive tackle]," Vikings defensive line coach Andre Patterson said. "When you're a nose guard, nobody notices the dirty work that you do unless a team rushes for a bunch of yards against you."

"You have to love to play that position," Patterson added. "You have to love taking satisfaction knowing that you're doing a good job and not based on what people are saying about you. That's why it was phenomenal last year when Linval did get the attention that he got by how great he was playing."

Joseph's coaches aren't the only ones proud of the recognition he's receiving. Upon Joseph's inclusion in the Top 100, linebacker Anthony Barr said he believes Joseph is "the best player on our team, to be honest."

Even with the spotlight pointed directly at him, Joseph is a team-first player, deflecting individual attention as easily as centers and guards.

"It's team ball, to be honest with you," Joseph said. "Everybody has one job to do, and if you do your job, things come to you."

Joseph's mentality is one that Patterson preaches to all of his defensive linemen. Patterson is proud of the development he's seen from Joseph in the two-plus seasons he's coached him. According to the long-time coach, Joseph dedicated himself to becoming a student of the game and has become a technician, fine-tuning each and every piece of his game. It's a responsibility he takes seriously.

"Some guys play their position; they put their hands down, and they just play," Patterson said. "But when you really work on



HUNGRY FOR MORE

LINVAL JOSEPH

getting good at your craft, that's what makes you into a really good football player. And Linval's bought into that from day one."

Prior to joining the Vikings in 2014, Joseph spent four seasons with the Giants. Joseph helped the Giants win Super Bowl XLVI in his first season as a starter. Since arriving in Minnesota, the defensive tackle has only continued to improve and found his niche in Vikings Head Coach Mike Zimmer's defense.

Zimmer said there are a number of things he appreciates about Joseph, especially the way that his work ethic and love for the game show up on the field. Zimmer sees more than just size, speed and strength, of which Joseph has plenty.

"He's just trying to get better," Zimmer said. "He's a good worker, and he cares about his teammates.

"He's a good kid to have around," Zimmer added.

The 2016 season will mark Minnesota's third of having Joseph around. Having missed four games in 2015 due to a toe injury, Joseph said he's feeling significantly more comfortable – both physically and mentally – in preparing to help the Vikings defend the NFC North title they reclaimed last year.

In 2015, the Vikings defense ranked fourth in red zone scoring (44.2 percent) and fifth in points allowed per game (18.9). With all defensive starters returning, Joseph is eager to be back on the field with his teammates.

"I feel like all of these guys want to be great," Joseph said. "The whole coaching staff, the recruiting staff, [the front office], they do a wonderful job of bringing guys in who want to learn and who want to win.

"We're a very close unit," Joseph added. "We have a great coach, and he wants to put us in the very best situation on and off the field. I'm just glad to be in that room with everybody."

Joseph last season finished as a division champ, started in the Wild Card playoff game and received league-wide recognition for his performance.

But he's hungry for more. He's one of two Vikings – along with former Giants teammate Justin Trattou – to have earned a Super Bowl ring in his career, and Joseph wants to change that.

"We work hard, and we're a group of guys who share the same goal," Joseph said. "The biggest goal is to win a Super Bowl."

Joseph has taken a near-thankless position and turned the tables, garnering attention for his contributions. But for him, it's all in a day's work en route – hopefully – to Houston this February for Super Bowl LI.

"Now it's just time to do my job," Joseph said. "Help everybody else make plays."



FORCES COLLIDE, THEN UNITE

LINVAL JOSEPH'S STRENGTH AND POWER FROM HIS NOSE TACKLE SPOT IS WELL-RESPECTED AROUND THE NFL.

BY ERIC SMITH

They are traits that one of Joseph's newest teammates, left guard Alex Boone, first learned about from afar.

"I don't think there's a stronger nose tackle in the NFL," Boone said. "That makes you better ... you kind of hate it at the time, but you have to enjoy it because it's going to make things easier in the games."

Besides going against Joseph in practice, Boone also squared off against "Big Goon" twice when each played for other NFC teams – Boone with San Francisco and Joseph with the Giants.

The pair met up in the 2011 NFC Championship, a win for Joseph and New York on the way to a Super Bowl title.

The Giants then came to San Francisco the following season where Joseph got the best of Boone on a play in the Week 6 matchup.

"Linval actually got a sack on me, it was my first sack (allowed) of the season," Boone said. "He was playing the 3-technique, I tried to stunt him to my tackle and my tackle kind of got stuck.

"I got stuck and I took credit for it," he added.

Now that the two are teammates, Joseph said they constantly motivate each other in practices. Joseph said Boone's large personality has fit in well in the locker room.

"He's a very strong guy, and I really feel like he's going to help this team out a lot," Joseph said. "He's just getting all the guys – on both sides of the ball – rallied up before games, and it's a good move. I'm glad we have him here.

"I feel like, from all the offensive linemen, just going against them and them going against me, we're making each other better," he added. "I'm just glad that we have this specific group of guys and that we're here pushing each other."

Not to be outdone, Boone said Joseph plays with a quiet edge that complements his dominance on the field.

"I think he's smart, he plays well, he's got great leverage," Boone said. "He's reading you while you're reading him.

"He's got an attitude, and I respect that," Boone added.

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ALL OF THE VIKINGS OFFENSIVE LINEMEN WEIGH MORE THAN 300 POUNDS, BUT 6-FOOT-8 ALEX BOONE IS THE TALLEST OF THE GROUP. THE LEFT GUARD ALSO BRINGS A BOISTEROUS PERSONALITY TO THE FIELD AND LOCKER ROOM. HE IS KNOWN AS ONE OF THE VIKINGS LOUDEST AND MOST VOCAL PLAYERS.

BY ERIC SMITH

KNOWN AS A BRASH but loyal teammate, the “Rhino” has injected the Vikings offensive line with a relentless and fierce attitude since he arrived in Minnesota as a free agent this offseason.

“I think everyone has to be tough to some degree,” Boone said. “I don’t think the quarterback has to be as tough as the middle linebacker or that a wide receiver has to be as tough as a left tackle.

“But I think when you’re playing a position that is solely based around violence, then you need to be one tough (player).”

Where did Boone get his feisty demeanor?

“Being from Cleveland,” Boone said. “Not taking

anything from anybody. That’s just kind of how I was raised.”

Boone carried that mindset with him to Ohio State, where he was twice-named an All-Big Ten selection. And he brought it with him to the NFL when he joined San Francisco as an undrafted free agent in 2009.

After spending that season on the 49ers practice squad and appearing in one game in 2010 and playing all 16 as a reserve in 2011, Boone grew into a starter’s role. He started 59 of the 60 games he’s played in the past four seasons.

The San Francisco Zoo even named a baby black rhinoceros after Boone.



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"THEY TOLD ME ... WE
NEED TO GO FARTHER,
AND I AGREED."

— ALEX BOONE

The Vikings prioritized signing Boone when free agency opened because Head Coach Mike Zimmer wanted to add a shot of adrenaline in the form of Boone's attitude to the position group.

"He has kind of changed the mentality of the offensive line room, him and Coach (Tony) Sparano, and that's a good thing," Zimmer said. "That's part of the reason why we did what we did this offseason."

Boone said when he signed in March that he wanted to join the Vikings as soon as they showed interest during free agency. The Midwest native wanted the opportunity to join the physical NFC North.

"I feel the love everywhere, and that's what's so fun about this," Boone said. "As soon as I got in there, I could tell the excitement of the guys. They told me they weren't happy with last year, and we need to go farther, and I agreed."

"This is what we play this game for, to move on and play the next week," he added. "I think we're all on the same page, and we're all going to do what we can to get there."

The Vikings were the only team in the NFL to start the same five players on the offensive line in every game last season.

But Vikings General Manager Rick Spielman and Zimmer felt the need to modify the unit, so they brought in Boone and veteran offensive tackle Andre Smith. Minnesota also hired Sparano as the new offensive line coach.

Boone said the transition to a new team, locker room and city has been seamless. He has primarily lined up next to left tackle Matt Kalil while John Sullivan and Joe Berger have competed for playing time at center.

"If everybody believes in the same thing and buys into the same thing, that we're going to be the toughest, the meanest, the nastiest group, it's not going to take very long for everybody to get on the same page," Boone said.

"I think it's crucial that everybody does buy into that. It's easy to say one thing and believe another," he added. "You've got to believe that we are going to be the most feared group out there, and that's what we're looking for right now."

Zimmer echoed Boone's thoughts, saying the 29-year-old isn't afraid to let his opinion be known.

"I think he has been good for our offensive line room. He has been vocal in a good way," Zimmer said. "I [asked] Chad Greenway about how Boone was in the locker room, and he said, 'He's great. People respect him.'"

Boone was part of San Francisco's run to three consecutive NFC Championship games and appearance in Super Bowl XLVII.

"I just think I'm one of the old guys," said Boone, who played in eight postseason contests with San Francisco. "Been around the block, won some games, played in a championship, lost it."

"I just want to be a part of something special," he added.

Boone said his persona on the field is more than just words. Sure, he'll get into it with an opponent sometimes.

But he also said he actually enjoys the preparation and intensity that comes with going against someone for upwards of 60 to 70 times per game.

"I like to think that after time goes on, I beat them down," Boone said. "But there are a lot of good defensive players in this league, and it's a battle for four quarters, and that's what I love about it."

The Vikings are counting on Boone to infuse their offense, and especially the offensive linemen, with a testy demeanor for the 2016 season.

The group will be called on to block for running back Adrian Peterson, who is in position to add to his career total of 11,675 rushing yards and maneuver his way into the Top 10 on the league's all-time rushing list. Peterson is entering his 10th season at 17th all-time.

They also will be tasked with protecting third-year quarterback Teddy Bridgewater, who has looked strong through training camp and during the preseason against Cincinnati and San Diego.

If Boone can help Minnesota's offensive line elevate the offense as a whole, the Vikings could be in line for a deeper postseason run than a year ago.

It will all start up front.

"We're brothers," Boone said of his position group. "Same mission, same goal ... to be the most feared offensive line in the history of the NFL."



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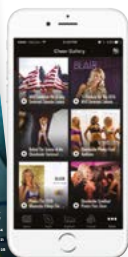


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VIKTOR'S

WORD FIND

Here is a fun word search activity Viktor put together – see if you can find all of the words listed below.

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A	Q	A	N	J	G	M	B	M	V	N	I	G	M	Z	T	V	W	Y	X
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VIKINGS GAMEPLAN

Vikings Gameplan returns for a 10th season, featuring the "Voice of the Vikings" Paul Allen as well as head coach Mike Zimmer, a weekly player guest, game film review and expert analysis. *Vikings GamePlan* is produced by VEN and airs Saturdays on FOX 9 KMSP and Sundays on FOX Sports North.

VIKINGS CONNECTED

Vikings Connected is a Vikings fan-centric show driven by digital content and is co-hosted by Erin Newburg and Chris Hawkey from the Vikings Radio Flagship KFAN. Fans can interact with the show throughout the season by using #VikingsConnected. *Vikings Connected* is produced by VEN and airs Saturday nights on My 29 WFTC and Sundays on Fox Sports North.

VIKINGS: BEYOND THE GRIDIRON PRESENTED BY CENTURY LINK

Vikings: Beyond the Gridiron is an Emmy Award-winning show that offers rare, behind-the-scenes looks at the Vikings on and off the field. *Vikings: Beyond the Gridiron* is produced by Elite Edge Productions in conjunction with VEN and airs Fridays on My 29 WFTC, Sundays on KMSP and re-airs on Fox Sports North.

VIKINGS GAMEDAY LIVE

New this year is *Vikings GameDay LIVE*, the team's live, one-hour pregame TV show. Featuring in-depth analysis and commentary to get you ready for each week's game, *Vikings GameDay LIVE* will bring you live reports from the field each week. *Vikings GameDay LIVE* is produced by VEN in conjunction with FOX 9 KMSP and airs Sunday mornings on FOX 9 KMSP.

VIKINGS HUDDLE

Also new this season is *Vikings Huddle*, a show for our young Vikings fans. Each week will feature a chance for fans to get to know their favorite Vikings players, both on and off the field in a fun, entertaining way. Plus, we'll teach you how lessons learned on the football field can be used in everyday life. *Vikings Huddle* is produced by VEN and airs Saturday mornings on FOX 9 KMSP.

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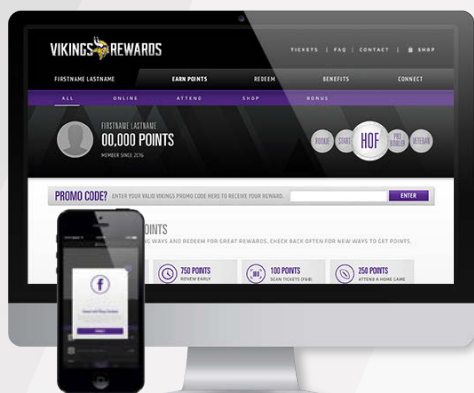
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VIKINGS COLLABORATE ON 11TH PLAYGROUND BUILD

*"I'M IN AWE OF SO MANY PEOPLE SMILING, WORKING HARD TO BUILD
THIS PLAY SPACE FOR OUR COMMUNITY." - BRYAN BASS,
PRINCIPAL, LINWOOD-MONROE ARTS PLUS LOWER SCHOOL*

BY LINDSEY YOUNG

Teddy Bridgewater and Stefon Diggs have a chemistry on the field. The quarterback and receiver were on the same wavelength this summer, too, but this time as artists.

Bridgewater and Diggs participated in the 11th annual Playground Build partnership between the Vikings, The Toro Company and KaBOOM! Bridgewater and the receivers were assigned to the "painting pavers" group, and the project sparked a good-natured competition between the two teammates, whose finished products looked quite similar.

"We were both on the same page - we both saw the same vision," Bridgewater said, smiling. "Mine just turned out better."

Diggs disagreed.

"I have the best painting out here," Diggs

said. "I have a car, I have trees, I have clouds, I have a sun. I have everything you'd need to have a great time."

More than 200 volunteers (not counting players and coaches) gathered to assemble a playground for the Linwood-Monroe Arts Plus Lower School.

"I think the word that comes to mind is 'awe,'" said Principal Bryan Bass. "I'm in awe of so many people smiling, working hard to build this play space for our school community as well as our neighboring community."

Volunteers were assigned to a number of different stations, including the paver painting, building playground components, moving mulch and mixing and pouring concrete - 30,000 pounds of it - without



machines or power tools.

"It's a pleasure to be out here," said Vikings Chief Operating Officer Kevin Warren. "I think whenever you can come together and show young people that they are special, that they are smart, that they do have a bright future and that they are our future, it really is a special day."

A group of 125 players, coaches and trainers joined the volunteers at the school following an organized team activity practice at Winter Park. In addition to the painters, Harrison Smith and Andrew Sendejo were put to work finishing a playground component, Everson Griffen and Brian Robison hauled loads of mulch and Special Teams Coordinator Mike Priefer scaled to the top of the pile to rake mulch onto the tarps. Linebacker Chad Greenway, who participated in the first playground build in 2006, enjoyed his 11th event while adding some artwork to the school's sidewalk for students.

A number of former Vikings joined the build as well, including Scott Studwell, who guided the concrete into holes 4 feet deep to secure the playground structure. Hall of Famers Alan Page and Mick Tingelhoff joined Dave Osborn, Bob Lurtsema and Pete Bercich at the site.

Since the Vikings first partnered with Toro in 2006, almost 30,000 children in the Twin Cities community have benefited from the initiative.

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Nominations are being accepted from now through October 4 on Vikings.com/InTheGame.

In the spring the Minnesota Vikings, Innovative Office Solutions and KFAN will “takeover” the winning community with a once-in-a-lifetime event including Vikings players, Vikings Mascot Viktor and the Vikings Cheerleaders. The winning community will be given a \$10,000 check for their school’s football program.

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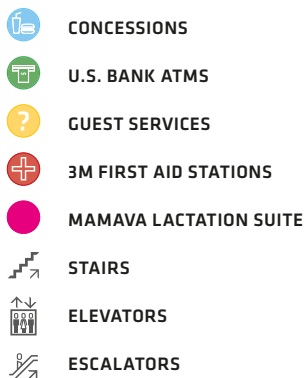
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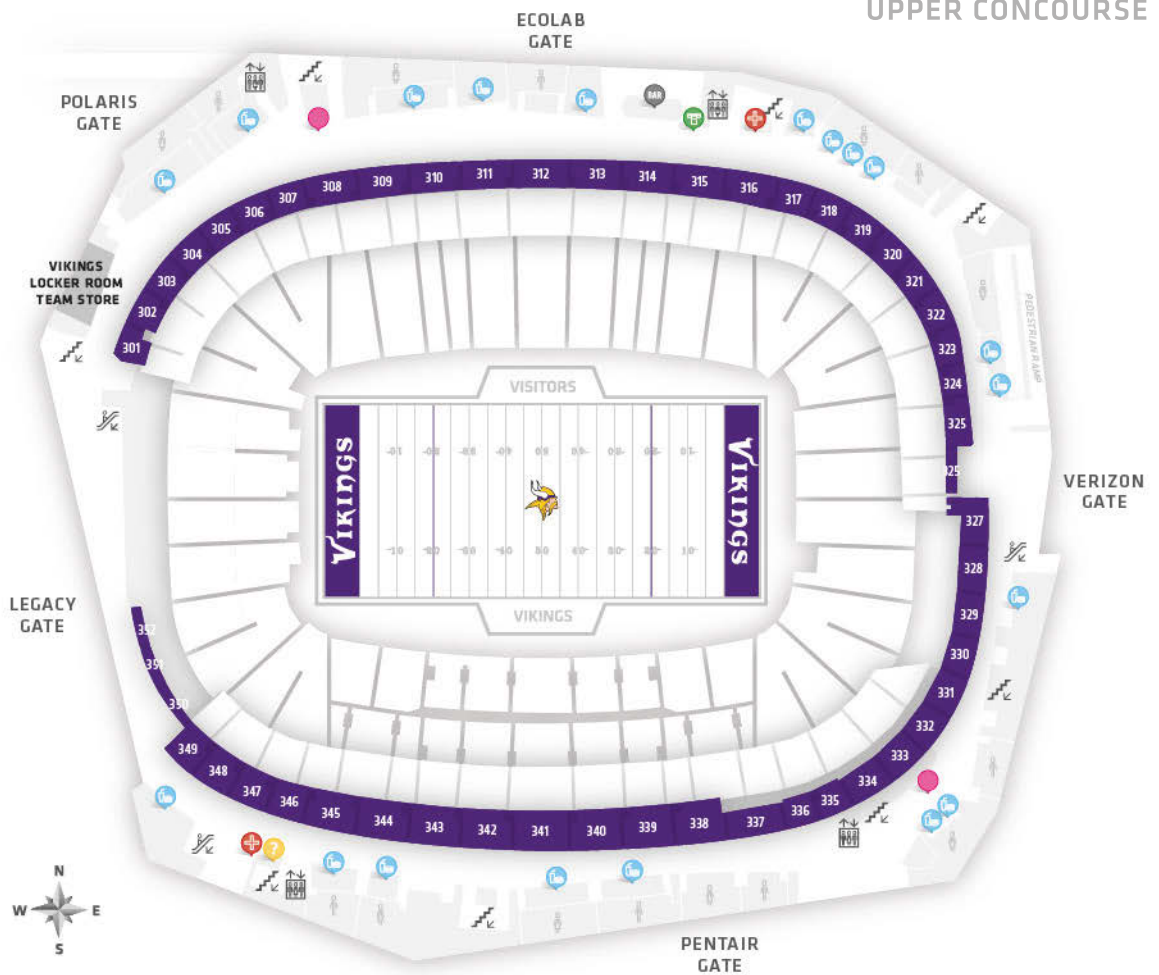










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BEHIND
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BY CRAIG PETERS

Generations of Vikings fans are now able to celebrate the heritage of their team during a highly interactive excursion through the Vikings Voyage.

The 10,000-square-foot space is located near the Skyway entrance to U.S. Bank Stadium and is connected to the Vikings Locker Room store. The Vikings Voyage will be free for all fans with game tickets.

"Our goal was to create a space where fans of all ages could celebrate Vikings and what it means to be a Viking, whether you have been a fan for generations or you're brand new to the organization or a young child," said Vikings Executive Director, Brand & Creative Erin Swartz. "There's this great mix of history and the future all mended together, which is what's really cool about this space."

The centerpiece of the space is an interpretation of a longship that features a 30-foot screen for a dramatic and cinematic film.

"We wanted to start with the ship as the core because we really think it tells that story of what it means to be a Viking," Swartz said. "Starting there, you have a moment, a great opportunity to teach them what being a Viking is all about."

In addition to rare artifacts and artistic acclamations of athletic accomplishments, the Vikings Voyage features interactive spaces that implement state-of-the-art technology, bringing lore to life.

"Prove Your Honor" uses virtual reality to allow guests to catch passes. "Forging Strength" uses a blocking sled to measure

power. "Speed Prevails" allows two guests to race against each other and the time that a Vikings player posted in the 20-yard shuttle drill at the NFL Scouting Combine. "Sky to Valhalla" measures vertical leaps.

An RFID bracelet allows participants to track their results against family, friends and other fans, and the bracelet is free for fans to keep as a souvenir.

Fans also can take a seat amidst history, thanks to a life-sized sculpture of Jim Marshall, Alan Page, Carl Eller and Gary Larsen.

The Vikings began partnering with Dimensional Innovations in early 2015 to execute the project and covered all costs.

"They didn't want to make it too stale and too traditional," Dimensional Innovations Account Manager Brent Haag said. "They wanted to capture some of those great moments in history and pay respect to that, but technology is everywhere, and it's important to every generation."

Swartz and Haag said a display featuring 1,000 reflective chrome footballs suspended from the ceiling provides quite the recap of Cris Carter becoming the second player in NFL history to record 1,000 receptions. He totaled 1,004 catches during his 12 seasons with the Vikings.

"It was about giving a great visual or physicality to how amazing an achievement that is in a way that stats on a wall don't provide," Swartz said.

Haag added, "I think this is a bit of a showstopper."



1,000 footballs suspended from the ceiling representing Cris Carter's accomplishment with the Vikings



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