

- NINA MOINI:** For the Minnesota Vikings, the very beginning of the new NFL season was rough. Starting quarterback Kyler Murray left the field with a concussion early in yesterday's home opener against the Green Bay Packers, but Carson Wentz came in as backup and helped the Vikings win 39 to 22. Wentz spoke about the comeback after the game.
- CARSON WENTZ:** And obviously didn't think I'd be out there and to the momentum swing fast at the end of the game from us scoring-- I think we scored four straight maybe to finish and the defense had, I think, a couple turnovers on down, a couple turnovers. Yeah, football's a funny game, but it's fun to be on this side of it.
- NINA MOINI:** Joining me now to talk about this and other Minnesota sports news are our funny and fun sports contributors. Wally Langfellow, founder of *Minnesota Score Sports Magazine*, co-host of the sports talk show *10000 Takes*. Not in the studio. We hoped to see you today, Wally, but glad to have you joining us.
- WALLY LANGFELLOW:** Yeah, ended up making it back to my office. Our meeting ended early in St. Paul, so I--
- NINA MOINI:** That's OK. I know you guys are busy. We got Eric Nelson, the other co-host of that show, and the Minnesota Vikings reporter for Odyssey's Gridiron, GameDay, and SiriusXM. Hey, Eric.
- ERIC NELSON:** Yeah, happy rainy Monday, Nina.
- NINA MOINI:** Happy rainy Monday. Well, Wally, I thought you would be in great spirits maybe today. What are your takeaways from that Vikings home opener? There was some good and some bad, huh?
- WALLY LANGFELLOW:** Yeah, no question. Obviously, the bad news you already pointed out, Kyler Murray going down early. And he was just 3 of 5 in his passes, 3 for 5. His very first pass was intercepted. And then the injury on the third possession of the game for the Vikings and he's out with a concussion. And it's hard to tell how long somebody's going to be out. I would suspect that they do not expect him to play this coming Sunday against Chicago. I would guess probably two to three weeks, but it's hard to say.
- That all remains to be seen. Depends on the severity, how quickly he recovers. And he'll go through a concussion protocol. But they were saved by Carson Wentz. Played really well, 12 of 19, very efficient. 133 yards. Threw three touchdown passes. On the flip side, Jordan Love threw 380-- threw for 387 yards and two touchdowns, but they lost the football game. And that's the most important thing, that you lose a football game. Justin Jefferson was a big factor. He had eight catches and a couple of touchdowns.
- The Vikings, as you mentioned, did trail. They trailed 22 to 10 late in the third quarter. They reeled off 29 straight points, in part, to multiple penalties on the Packers, an interception, and a fumble recovery by the Vikings defense. And the Vikings offense, as I mentioned, 133 yards for Carson Wentz. So they all totaled-- their passing yardage was not that great. The Packers stacked up 419 total yards to 239 for Minnesota. But it just shows you, you can win in other ways.

And the Vikings did that. They took advantage of some penalties. On one drive, the Packers were penalized three times that turned into first downs, and then that turned into a touchdown for the Vikings. So some key moments in the game that-- and I think that the biggest moment in the game, and we talked-- Eric and I were in the locker room afterwards. We were both at the Twins game earlier in the day and then we went over to the Vikings game. But in the locker room afterwards, the key moment in the game, and Eric and I agreed on this, was on a fourth down, the Packers had a chance to kick a field goal.

They kicked it and made it, but there was a penalty on the Vikings. So they took the penalty. They took the 3 points off the board, did not get the first down, and they never scored again. So very, very key moment turned the tide at that point.

NINA MOINI: Yeah, lots of different things going on leading to that conclusion. But Eric, what do you think is next for the Vikings with their starting quarterback position? It's been a lot already.

ERIC NELSON: Yeah, I would suspect, again, it's Monday, so we shall see what happens on Sunday. But I'm looking for Carson Wentz to probably start Sunday in Chicago. That's a 12:00 PM kickoff on Fox. The Bears are favored by 5 and 1/2 points as these longtime rivals play for the 131st time. Now the game will be at Soldier Field on the Windy City lakefront. This is a historic venue. It's 101 years old. It has a natural grass surface.

But the Bears are pushing hard for a new domed stadium, something identical to what the Vikings have. The facility, if it is built, and it probably will be, likely is going to be in suburban Arlington Heights, Illinois, or Hammond, Indiana. Dare I say it, Indiana, which is right on the Illinois-Indiana border. Now, Chicago and Carolina put up cartoon-like numbers yesterday as the Bears won a wild game against the Panthers in Charlotte, 59 to 37. This is the highest scoring week one game in NFL history.

NINA MOINI: Wow.

ERIC NELSON: The Bears, remember Nina, won the NFC North last season behind head Coach Ben Johnson and quarterback Caleb Williams. He's a Houdini-like quarterback. He has a knack for producing magical plays and orchestrating comeback wins. Williams threw for 269 yards and two touchdowns, and he ran for 65 yards and two more scores against Carolina. And I did want to mention, as Wally said, we double-dipped yesterday. I spent five innings at the Guardians Twins game, then saw the Packers play the Vikings.

And for the record, it is a 21-minute walk from Target Field to US Bank Stadium, straight down Sixth Street through the core of downtown Minneapolis. And the final nugget I want to drop in, before the game, the Minnesota Vikings paid tribute to the late Larry Fitzgerald, a popular Twin Cities broadcaster and columnist who covered the Vikings for decades. His son, Marcus, and grandson, Jaylen, sat in Larry's normal pressbox spot, which had flowers and a photo of Larry when he was reporting on the Vikings back in the day. So it was a touching day and a winning day at US Bank Stadium for the Vikings.

NINA MOINI: Wonderful. Thank you for that, Wally, Eric mentioned the Twins game in downtown Minneapolis yesterday. What was going on there at Target Field?

WALLY Well, not much good for the Twins, I'll say that. They lost 9 to 2 to Cleveland. And I took the train because I
LANGFELLOW: waited until the ninth inning to leave. Eric left earlier because he was going to walk. I took the train, took about seven minutes, so there you go. I went from Target Field to US Bank Stadium. But that said, yeah, not a great day for the Twins yesterday. Joe Ryan, who's been lit up by Cleveland earlier this season, was not good. Twins lose the game 9 to 2. They lose the series.

They're now 5 and 1/2 games out of the last playoff spot. I will say this, though. I was there on Saturday as well and the Twins beat Cleveland on Saturday. That was the win that they got in the three-game series. It was really a fun moment when Emmanuel Rodriguez, E-Rod we'll call him, in his very first at bat in Major League Baseball, hit a home run.

NINA MOINI: Wow.

WALLY And the exuberance that he showed running around the bases. And then he came out of the dugout afterwards
LANGFELLOW: and took a curtain call. I mean, you could see he was so excited. This 22-year-old kid was so excited. His family was in the stands. That was-- to me, that was the shining moment of the weekend for the Minnesota Twins, was what Emmanuel Rodriguez did. He threw a guy out at third base in that game. He had a really nice debut. So congratulations to him. It was a fun time on Saturday for Emmanuel and his family, no doubt.

NINA MOINI: Yeah, I love to see that. Let's go back to football though for a minute here, Eric. The University of Minnesota Gophers played their second game of the season this weekend. How did it go? How are they looking?

ERIC NELSON: Well, it was a forest fire to put it bluntly, Nina. I was there. I saw the carnage with my own eyes on a sun-drenched day in Dinkytown. They had a gold out. I mean, they had almost a full house. But it wasn't pretty if you were cheering for the Gophers. They lost to Mississippi State 38 to 13. And the Bulldogs dominated the Gophers in every phase of the game. Mississippi State quarterback Kamario Taylor, they call him Super Kamario, well, he lived up to that name.

He threw for 227 yards, three touchdowns. He ran for 86 more yards on the ground. He's just a sophomore, but he played with the poise of a senior. And they have a running back named Fluff Bothwell. But he's more like a battering ram. He gained 113 yards rushing, scored three touchdowns. The Gophers offense was anemic, scoring 0 TDs. And as a team, Minnesota gained a meager 13 yards on the ground. You're not going to win any games if you can only run for 13.

And the bad news, Nina, for the Gophers is this was going to be a measuring stick game. How does a team from the Big Ten, like Minnesota, match up against a team from the powerful SEC, Mississippi State? But Minnesota clearly was not ready to play. And, want to put a little salt in the wound, game was on CBS, so the nation saw this debacle.

NINA MOINI: We got to go, Eric. Thanks so much, Wally and Eric, and thank you all for listening to *Minnesota Now*. Have a great rest of your day.