

NFL GAMEDAY

WEEK 20

GREEN BAY PACKERS @ CHICAGO BEARS – PART 1

THE PACKERS OPENING WAS NEAR PERFECTION. AARON RODGERS LED GREEN BAY ON AN 84 YARD SCORING DRIVE COMPLETING ALL FOUR OF HIS PASSES.

IT WAS VINCE LOMBARDI FOOTBALL. // JAMES STARKS RAN TO DAYLIGHT TO GIVE THE PACKERS A FOURTEEN POINT LEAD.

GREEN BAY TURNED THE NFC CHAMPIONSHIP INTO A PRESSURE COOKE FOR JAY CUTLER AND THE BEARS. IN THE FIRST HALF, CHICAGO WAS SCORELESS.

NOTHING IN THIS RIVALRY COMES EASY. EVEN WHEN THEY GOT A BOUNCE, THE BEARS STILL COULDN'T BOUNCE BACK.

GREEN BAY PACKERS @ CHICAGO BEARS – PART 2

WHEN BEARS QUARTERBACK JAY CUTLER LEFT THE FIELD JUST BEFORE HALFTIME, HIS RETURN WAS QUESTIONABLE BECAUSE OF A KNEE INJURY. IN THE SECOND HALF, HE CAME BACK FOR ONE SERIES, AND THEN WATCHED THE BEARS DEFENSE PROVIDE THE SPARK CHICAGO NEEDED.

(TILLMAN - "C'MON TODD, HELP US OUT BABY")

BACKUP TODD COLLINS DIDN'T HELP. HE WENT 0-FOR-4 PASSING, AND FAILED TO GENERATE A FIRST DOWN IN TWO SERIES.

("IF CUTLER DOESN'T COME BACK IN, BEARS ARE GONNA LOSE GAME")

CUTLER DIDN'T COME BACK IN ON THE BEARS NEXT SERIES, AND NEITHER DID TODD COLLINS. / INSTEAD IT WAS THIRD STRINGER CALEB HANIE, WHO BEFORE SUNDAY HAD COMPLETED JUST EIGHT CAREER PASSES IN THREE NFL SEASONS.

ON HIS FIRST SERIES, THE FORMER UNDRAFTED FREE AGENT OUT OF COLORADO STATE GUIDED CHICAGO 67 YARDS IN EIGHT PLAYS.

(BENCH SOUND – “ONE SCORE GAME, EVERYTHING YOU GOT”)
DOWN 14-7 IN THE FOURTH QUARTER, HANIE’S INEXPERIENCE FINALLY SEEMED TO SEAL HIS TEAM’S FATE.

(RADIO – RAJI TD; “LET’S FINISH EM OFF”)

LEADING 21 TO 7 WITH UNDER FIVE MINUTES REMAINING, THE PACKERS COULDN’T FINISH OFF HANIE OR THE BEARS.

(RADIO – BENNETT TD; “IT HAS TO BE DRAMATIC”)

AND ALL THE DRAMA WAS BEING PROVIDED BY A SEEMINGLY UNFAZED THIRD STRINGER. // IN THE FINAL MINUTES, CHICAGO WAS DOWN 21 TO 14. // AND CALEB HANIE AND THE BEARS WERE MAKING ONE FINAL PUSH TOWARD THE UNLIKELIEST OF COMEBACKS.

(RADIO – FINAL INT.)

IN THE 182ND, AND MOST IMPORTANT, MEETING BETWEEN THE NFL’S OLDEST RIVALS, THE PACKERS WERE THE ONES LEFT STANDING. / NOW THE TEAM FROM TITLE TOWN IS ONE WIN AWAY FROM A FOURTH LOMBARDI TROPHY.

(LOCKER)

NEW YORK JETS @ PITTSBURGH STEELERS – PART 1

NEW YORK'S CONFIDENCE WAS SHAKEN AFTER THE STEELERS OPENED THE GAME WITH A 15-PLAY SCORING DRIVE THAT CONSUMED MORE THAN NINE MINUTES.

PITTSBURGH CONTINUED TO POUND THE JETS, FINDING HOLES IN AN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY SUSPECT DEFENSE.

THE STEELERS RUSHED FOR 135 YARDS IN THE FIRST HALF, INCLUDING 95 FROM RASHARD MENDENHALL.

NEW YORK ALSO STRUGGLED TO CONTAIN BEN ROETHLISBER. BIG BEN TORMENTED THE JETS WITH HIS ELUSIVENESS AND HIS ABILITY TO CONVERT THIRD DOWNS.

ROETHLISBERGER'S LEGS GAVE THE STEELERS A 17-0 LEAD.

IN THEIR WEEK 15 VICTORY IN PITTSBURGH, THE JETS HAD SUCCESS WITH A BALANCED ATTACK. ON SUNDAY, THEY WERE HELD TO 50 TOTAL YARDS IN THE FIRST HALF.

NEW YORK JETS @ PITTSBURGH STEELERS – PART 2

TRAILING 24-3, THE JETS BIG-PLAY OFFENSE FINALLY SHOWED UP.

THE JETS GAINED NEARLY AS MANY YARDS ON SANTONIO HOLMES'S TOUCHDOWN AS THEY HAD THE ENTIRE FIRST HALF.

THE JETS BEGAN THE FOURTH QUARTER WITH THEIR BEST DRIVE OF THE GAME. // STILL LEADING BY TWO TOUCHDOWNS, PITTSBURGH'S DEFENSE TRIED TO KEEP EVERYTHING IN FRONT OF THEM. THE JETS DIDN'T CARE WHAT WAS IN FRONT OF THEM. // THE DRIVE CONSUMED NEARLY 8 MINUTES, AND LED TO A 4TH AND GOAL AT THE ONE YARD LINE.

THE JETS GOT ONE ON THEIR NEXT POSSESSION.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM SAYS YOU RUN OUT THE CLOCK BY RUNNING THE BALL. BUT WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN, THE STEELERS USUALLY BET ON THEIR LUCKY NUMBER SEVEN.

A 3RD AND 6 AT THE TWO MINUTE WARNING DIDN'T SEEM LIKE THE TIME TO GAMBLE AND ROLL SNAKE EYES.

ALT: IT DIDN'T SEEM LIKE THE TIME TO ROLL THE DICE, ON 3RD AND 6 AT THE TWO MINUTE WARNING.

THERE IS NO BIGGER DIVIDE IN FOOTBALL THAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOING TO THE SUPER BOWL AND GOING HOME A LOSER ON CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY. ONCE AGAIN, THE STEELERS AND JETS FOUND THEMSELVES ON FAMILIAR SIDES OF THE NOT-SO-FINE LINE.

MIKE TOMLIN WILL ENTER DALLAS THE YOUNGEST HEAD COACH EVER TO REACH THE SUPER BOWL TWICE. // HE'LL BE JOINED BY SIXTEEN PLAYERS WITH A CHANCE TO WIN A THIRD RING, // AMONG THEM A QUARTERBACK WITH A KNACK FOR WINNING IT ALL // AND A TROUBLED PAST THAT NEARLY COST HIM EVERYTHING.

THE PACKERS AWAIT. BUT ON SUNDAY NIGHT STEELERS YOUNG AND OLD ENJOYED THE KIND OF VICTORY THAT NEVER GETS OLD.