

Headline: Column | NFL playoffs, first-round wrap-up

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Social: Staff writer Sean McQuillan recaps the NFL's wild-card weekend.

The NFL Playoffs wild-card weekend extravaganza has concluded. Six teams are moving on for a chance to hoist the Lombardi Trophy, while six other teams are traveling to Cancún for a wonderful off-season vacation.

The Commanders conquer Baker's Bay

The Washington Commanders — what a terrific feel-good story this season was. Since 2006, Washington has had 22 different quarterbacks, and yet, only one of those won a playoff game. His name was Todd Collins. Who? Anyway, this year's game was an offensive duel between the favorite to win the Rookie of the Year award and a Pro Bowl quarterback, Jayden Daniels, and a Pro Bowl alternate quarterback in Baker Mayfield. Both shared two touchdowns a piece, but in the end, it was Daniels who led the game-winning drive.

Zane Gonzalez's 37-yard field goal sent the Commanders aboard the ship to the next round, while the Buccaneers walked the plank. Since 1991, the Commanders had not won 11 games in a regular season, and Sunday night was only their fourth postseason victory since winning the Super Bowl following the 1991 season. In the last 26 years, they have only won three postseason games, and will now look to make it four as the up-and-coming squad of the NFC East heads to Motown.

A Love story always Hurts someone in the end

The birds of Philadelphia are legitimate Super Bowl contenders and looked strong against the Green Bay Packers. Even with a rusty Jalen Hurts at quarterback, the Eagles' depth proved deeper than what the Packers had to offer.

Saquon Barkley continued his MVP campaign with 119 rushing yards in the Eagles' wild-card victory. NFL All-Pro linebacker Zack Baun controlled the defensive side of things after he intercepted two passes from Jordan Love in the first half, including a crucial one in the last minute.

Vikings fall to Rams ... in Arizona

The Los Angeles Rams, in dominant fashion, paid tribute to their city's first responders and victims of the wildfires with a playoff victory over the Minnesota Vikings. The game was moved to Glendale, Arizona, the home of the Arizona Cardinals, after tragedy had struck Los Angeles. Sam Darnold, a Pro Bowl quarterback, who rejuvenated his career this season, did not show his regular performance in the wild-card round. The Rams sacked Darnold nine times to set an NFL playoff record and win a huge game. L.A. moves on to Philly.

Everything's bigger in Texas

Isn't football just better when Texas teams not named the Dallas Cowboys thrive? Sorry, Cowboys fans. Highlighting Saturday night's sports displays across all major sports, was the Texans' defense that won the duel against other major sports and Jim Harbaugh's squad. Turnovers felt like a buy-one-get-one-free deal. H-Town forced quarterback Justin Herbert to throw a career-high four interceptions, and the d-line held the Chargers to just 50 rushing yards — their second-lowest total of the season. With the win, C.J. Stroud joined Ben Roethlisberger, Joe Flacco, Mark Sanchez and Brock Purdy as the only quarterbacks in NFL history to win

postseason games in both of his first two seasons. Stroud and Co. move onto Arrowhead to play the Kansas City Chiefs.

Allen nixes the wagons

Josh Allen is really good at football. With a dominant showing against the Denver Broncos, Buffalo will now take on the purple flock. The last time both teams met, the Ravens' came out on top 35-10 in Week Four. As for the Denver Broncos, Bo Nix is special. He led the team to a solid season as a possible runner-up for the Rookie of the Year award. The Bills should feel as confident as ever heading into the next round. With an offense that handled a tough Broncos secondary and a defense that showed out big time, the Bills Mafia will look to avenge that early loss to Baltimore.

Defenses try, Lamar and Henry fly

Lamar Jackson is also really good at football, and like Allen, helped push his MVP campaign forward after stomping on the Steel Curtain. Between Jackson and Derrick Henry's running game, the two combined for 267 rushing yards. The Steelers continue to live in a weird world of success yet failure every season and will now need to address many changes in the offseason. The Ravens, though, will head into Buffalo in a can't-miss showdown between the two MVP finalists.