



## COMMUNICATIONS

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1/15/19

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# **FOUR TEAMS REMAIN AS NFL ENTERS CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND**

The final four teams are set and this Sunday will determine the two teams heading to Atlanta for Super Bowl LIII.

	Visitor	Home	Time	Network
NFC Championship Game	Los Angeles Rams	New Orleans Saints	3:05 PM ET	FOX
AFC Championship Game	New England Patriots	Kansas City Chiefs	6:40 PM ET	CBS

Championship Sunday begins with the NFC title game, presented by Intuit Turbo Tax Live, between the Los Angeles Rams and the New Orleans Saints followed by the AFC Championship Game, presented by Intuit Turbo Tax Live, featuring the New England Patriots and the Kansas City Chiefs. The top two seeds in each conference advanced to the Conference Championship games for the first time since 2015 and for just the eighth time in the 29 seasons since the 12-team playoff format was instituted in 1990.

During the 2018 regular season, the Chiefs led the league with a scoring average of 35.3 points per game, followed by the Rams (32.9), Saints (31.5) and Patriots (27.3). This Sunday will mark the first time in the Super Bowl era in which the four highest scoring teams in the regular season all advanced to the Conference Championships.

However, in the Divisional round, defense loomed large as each of the four remaining teams came up with big defensive plays on their way to victory. In the NFC, New Orleans cornerback **MARSHON LATTIMORE** had two interceptions, including the game-sealing pick in the fourth quarter, while the Rams defense came up with a fourth-down stop in their own territory to begin the fourth quarter against Dallas that led to the eventual game-winning touchdown. In the AFC, Kansas City linebacker **JUSTIN HOUSTON** recorded two sacks and a forced fumble in the Chiefs win over Indianapolis last weekend while New England held the Chargers to 19 rushing yards in their Divisional round victory.

The Conference Championship games features a rematch of memorable 2018 regular season games and are highlighted by their quarterbacks, as each matchup includes an all-time great against an outstanding young star.

At the Mercedes-Benz Superdome in New Orleans, Saints quarterback **DREW BREES**, the league's all-time leading passer, faces off against Rams third-year quarterback **JARED GOFF**. In their Week 9 meeting, a 45-35 win by New Orleans, Brees passed for 346 yards and four touchdowns while Goff totaled 391 passing yards and three touchdowns.

In the AFC, Patriots quarterback **TOM BRADY**, the NFL's all-time postseason leader in wins (28), passing yards (10,569) and touchdown passes (72), heads to Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City to take on Chiefs second-year quarterback **PATRICK MAHOMES**, who became the third quarterback to record at least 50 touchdown passes in a single season. In their Week 6 meeting, a 43-40 win by New England, Brady passed for 340 yards and had two touchdowns (one passing, one rushing) while Mahomes recorded 352 passing yards and four touchdown passes.

### **LOS ANGELES RAMS (14-3) at NEW ORLEANS SAINTS (14-3) (Sunday, FOX, 3:05 PM ET)**

- The Rams and Saints meet in the postseason for the second time. In the two teams' only postseason meeting, the Saints defeated the Rams 31-28 in the 2000 NFC Wild Card Playoffs (December 30, 2000).
- The Rams hold a 41-34 advantage in 75 all-time meetings between the clubs (including the postseason). The teams last played in Week 9 (November 4), with the Saints winning 45-35.
- The Rams have advanced to the NFC Championship Game for the tenth time in franchise history. The Rams' most recent NFC Championship Game appearance was in 2001 against Philadelphia (January 27, 2002).
- Rams running backs **C.J. ANDERSON** (123 rushing yards, two touchdowns) and **TODD GURLEY** (115 rushing yards, one touchdown) each eclipsed 100 rushing yards in the Divisional Playoffs, becoming the first duo of running back teammates to each rush for at least 100 yards in a playoff game since the 1997 Wild Card Round (Denver running backs **TERRELL DAVIS** and **DEREK LOVILLE** vs. Jacksonville, December 27, 1997).
- Gurley leads the NFL with 22 scrimmage touchdowns and 18 rushing scores this season (including the playoffs).

- The Rams, who led the NFC in total offense in the regular season, recorded 459 net yards of offense in the Divisional Round, a franchise postseason record. Los Angeles' 273 rushing yards in the Divisional Round also marked a postseason franchise record.
- Los Angeles won the NFC West for the second consecutive season and the team's 13 wins are the most for the franchise since 2001, when the team won the NFC and advanced to Super Bowl XXXVI.
- The Rams had four players selected to the 2019 Pro Bowl: defensive tackle **AARON DONALD**, quarterback **JARED GOFF**, running back **TODD GURLEY** and special teamer **CORY LITTLETON**.
- The Saints have advanced to the NFC Championship Game for the third time in franchise history. New Orleans previously played in the NFC Championship Game in 2009 (January 24, 2010) and 2006 (January 21, 2007).
- New Orleans wide receiver **MICHAEL THOMAS** caught 12 passes for 171 yards in the Divisional Round. His 171 receiving yards were a single-game franchise postseason record.
- Saints quarterback **DREW BREES** threw for 301 yards last week and holds the NFL record for the most 300-yard passing games, including the postseason (123 games).
- New Orleans captured the NFC South for the second consecutive season, the first time in franchise history they have won back-to-back division titles, and earned a first-round bye for the first time since 2009. The team's 13 regular-season wins match a franchise record and are the most since 2011.
- The Saints had five players selected to the 2019 Pro Bowl: tackle **TERRON ARMSTEAD**, quarterback **DREW BREES**, defensive end **CAMERON JORDAN**, wide receiver **MICHAEL THOMAS** and center **MAX UNGER**.

#### NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (12-5) at KANSAS CITY CHIEFS (13-4) (Sunday, CBS, 6:40 PM ET)

- The Patriots and Chiefs meet in the postseason for the second time. New England won the previous meeting, 27-20, in the 2015 Divisional Round (January 16, 2016).
- The Chiefs lead the all-time series (including postseason), 18-15-3. The teams last played in Week 6 (October 14), a 43-40 Patriots victory.
- New England has advanced to its eighth consecutive AFC Championship Game and are the first team since the 1970 merger to play in eight consecutive Conference Championship Games.
- New England won its 10th consecutive division title, the longest streak in NFL history. The Patriots are the only team to win 15 division titles in a 16-year span.
- The Patriots defeated the Los Angeles Chargers 41-28 last week in the Divisional Playoffs. Patriots head coach **BILL BELICHICK** and quarterback **TOM BRADY** have won 28 postseason games together, the most in NFL history by a head coach and starting quarterback combination.
- Belichick has advanced to 13 Conference Championship Games, the most by a head coach since the 1970 merger.
- Brady has 28 career playoff wins, the most by any starting quarterback in NFL history. Brady is also the NFL's all-time postseason leader in career completions (954), attempts (1,508), passing yards (10,569) and touchdown passes (72). Last week against the Chargers, Brady passed for 343 yards and one touchdown for a 106.5 passer rating. He has 15 playoff games with at least 300 passing yards, the most in NFL history.
- Patriots rookie running back **SONY MICHEL** rushed for 129 yards and three touchdowns in his postseason debut, while running back **JAMES WHITE** caught 15 passes in the Divisional Round, tying an NFL postseason record (running back **DARREN SPROLES**, New Orleans at San Francisco, 1/14/12).
- The Patriots had two players selected to the 2019 Pro Bowl: quarterback **TOM BRADY** and cornerback **STEPHON GILMORE**.
- Kansas City will play in the team's fifth AFL/AFC Championship Game and Sunday's contest will mark the franchise's first AFC Championship Game appearance since 1993 (January 23, 1994 at Buffalo). The Chiefs are 3-1 in the club's previous four appearances.
- Chiefs quarterback **PATRICK MAHOMES** led the NFL with 50 touchdown passes this season, joining **TOM BRADY** (50 in 2007) and **PEYTON MANNING** (55 in 2013) as the only quarterbacks with at least 50 touchdown passes in a single season in NFL history.
- Kansas City tight end **TRAVIS KELCE** caught seven passes for 108 yards in the Divisional Round. In the regular season, Kelce had 1,336 receiving yards, the second-most in a single season all-time by a tight end.
- Defensive lineman **CHRIS JONES** ranked third in the NFL this season with 15.5 sacks and had at least one sack in 11 consecutive games (Weeks 5-16), the longest streak in a single season since the individual sack became an official statistic in 1982.
- The Chiefs had six players selected to the 2019 Pro Bowl: tackle **ERIC FISHER**, outside linebacker **DEE FORD**, wide receiver **TYREEK HILL**, tight end **TRAVIS KELCE**, quarterback **PATRICK MAHOMES** and fullback **ANTHONY SHERMAN**.