

SPORTS

The Vikings Are So Close!

BY THOMAS PRESNALL

I T HASN'T BEEN THE best start for the Minnesota Vikings. Starting the season 2-3 and third in the NFC North, they've lost two very close games: 27-24 against the Bengals in overtime and 34-33 against the Cardinals. These are undoubtedly heartbreakers for fans of the purple and gold.

Thankfully, they found themselves on the other side of the table against division rivals, the Detroit Lions, when the Vikings stole the game with a last-second field goal, winning 19-17. Fans also have a glimmer of hope after the Vikings thrashed the Seattle Seahawks 30-17 in Week 3.

Kirk Cousins is playing out of his mind with more passing yards and fewer interceptions than his division rival, Aaron Rodgers. Alexander Mattison has proven to be a very adequate backup to Dalvin Cook when needed. Justin Jefferson is averaging more than 90 yards per game. So where's the problem? This team seems too talented to be below .500, yet that's where they find themselves.

The stats will tell you that, against the Vikings, opponents have run the ball better and have held onto the ball longer. The Minnesota defense has also struggled with turnovers, recovering just one fumble and having three interceptions altogether. To put it simply: Teams have been playing keep away from the Minnesota offense. However, moving past the statistics and just using the eye-test, the Vikings have struggled to close out games. That needs to change soon or Cousins and Co. will find themselves on their couches in January instead of preparing for the playoffs.

Four out of the next five opponents are all leaders in their respective divisions, the only outlier being a very talented Carolina Panthers team, whose secondary got better with the acquisition of former Defensive Player of the Year, Stephon Gilmore. The Dallas Cowboys, Baltimore Ravens, Los Angeles Chargers, and Green Bay Packers are all 4-1 and will not be a cakewalk for the struggling Vikings. Each team has a prolific offense led by an elite quarterback and a defense that should not be taken lightly.

If the Vikings want to win any of these games, their defense has to be better. Danielle Hunter, who has five sacks, needs help, and the group as a whole has to generate more turnovers in general. Otherwise, it's going to be a long five weeks, and head coach, Mike Zimmer, will find himself on the hot seat.



Minnesota Vikings and Detroit Lions Game Sunday, October 10th. Photo Credit: Dylan Holtmeier

CSP Swim and Dive Have First Meet

BY MAKI JENNER

A THLETICS CAN BE SOMETHING that puts colleges on the map, and CSP has been able to recruit new students to come and be a part of the Golden Bear family for years. Football, lacrosse, soccer, and volleyball are some of the pride and joy of the CSP athletic program. The school is growing, and the athletic department wants to continue to grow as well. In 2019, CSP decided to add swimming and diving to their list of women's sports.

Due to COVID-19, the swim and dive team was unable to compete in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 season, so it has been a long time coming for the Bears to competitively get in the water. The seven female athletes that have the chance to compete for the Bears know that starting a program is not easy, but it is making history for this school.

"I joined the swim team at CSP because I wanted to keep swimming and I found it interesting that this is going to be a brand new program here. I love our new swimming pool and the coaches because they all want us to get better as an athlete and as a person as well," Laura Vekony, a freshman from Hungary said.

Vekony has been swimming since she was ten years old in Hungary, and she knew that coming to

the USA would be great for her development as an athlete. The team struggled to get started, but Vekony knows great things are coming for this squad.

"We are here to build a new tradition and I think it is going to be something memorable for everyone! We have the opportunity to base this program and make it successful. To be honest, last year was mentally hard because there were only two of us on the team with Sydney Fleming. We tried to do our best last year, but since we are starting to grow bigger as a team, it is more enjoyable and fun now than last year was," Vekony said.

The small number of athletes and the struggles of starting a team have made it difficult for the Bears to make their mark, but these girls know that they are part of something bigger than just being a strong team and it all starts at the top with their coach, Rachel Busch.

"My coach definitely makes our program stand out. She's been amazing. This is her first year, of course, coaching our team but she is always on top of everything with a positive attitude. She makes our practices more fun and enjoyable when we're down. Hopefully [she] will take our swim team far in the future," Imani Simmons, a freshman stated.

Busch is new to the NCAA level of coaching, but she is a seasoned coach as she has been coaching at Buffalo High School for many years. Coach Busch will bring a competitive aspect to this team, which will help them strive for greatness in the future.

On October first, the swim team was able to compete in their first ever regular season meet. Unfortunately, they fell to both Northern State and UMary, but these girls were just excited to have their opportunity to make a splash in the pool.

"Having the first meet not only personally but for CSP was a blessing in my eyes. We all are very grateful for this program and couldn't be happier to be a part of it," freshman athlete Dejah Jackson said.

These girls know that time will help their development as competitive swimmers. They also know that they are all creating history for the Golden Bears and making the school's community proud. The swim and dive team have eight more regular season meets in the 2021-22 season. They know that it is only up from here and that each meet they will continue to grow as athletes and as people.