

Minnesota Timberwolves

BY ANTHONY (CURRY) O'NEEL

IF YOU KEEP up with basketball, or more specifically, the NBA, then you should be familiar with the Minnesota Timberwolves. The T-Wolves currently sit at 9-8, and they are ranked 10th in the Western Conference. They had a game against the Knicks on the 7th of November at home and they couldn't quite pull away with the win, ending with a final score of 107-120. Karl Anthony-Towns (KAT) led all scorers with 25 points. He also added seven assists, and 13 rebounds. Rudy Gobert wasn't able to play due to Covid-19 protocols. Anthony Edwards has been inconsistent. He finished the night with 16 points, 1 assist, and 9 rebounds. When asked about the loss to the Knicks, Edwards said, "We just play soft, man. Like, every bump, we are flying all over the place, including myself. Teams just coming in like, 'We're going to take their heart,' and that's what's going on. We're down 20 every game! We've got to figure it out."

They had a game against the Suns on the 9th and the game ended with another loss. The final score was 117-129. Rudy Gobert, the 7 foot big man, led all Wolves with 25 points, 0 assists, and 11 rebounds. The team ended the game with 41 of 78 shots made, shooting 52.6% overall from the field. Jaden McDaniels was their second best player during the loss finishing with a career high of 24 points, 3 assists, and 8 rebounds. Their star players, Karl-Anthony Towns and Anthony Edwards, finished the game with combined points of 22 points.

During the November 11th game, we saw a rematch of the first round of the 2022 playoffs between Ja Morant and the Grizzlies and KAT and the T-wolves, two star-studded teams. The Wolves finished with a loss of 103-114 to push them to 5-8. Anthony Edwards led the team with 28 points, 6 assists, and 6 rebounds. He shot 10 of 16, including shooting 75% from behind

the 3-point arc. Jaden McDaniels and Rudy Gobert both finished the game with 15 points shooting 100% from the field. Karl Anthony-Towns finished the game with a double-double, 13 points and 10 rebounds. The Wolves added the addition of an elite shot-blocker in Rudy Gobert who ended the game with 4 blocks. Anthony Edwards led the team with the highest +/- of 2. Kyle Anderson, a former Grizzly, made a strong contribution to the Timberwolves coming off the bench. He finished the game with a game high of 11 points, while shooting 41.7% from the field. He shot 1 for 5 behind the arc. The team finished 86.4% from the charity stripe.

These Aren't the Same Vikings: How Have the Vikings Done So Far and What is Left?

BY THOMAS PRESNALL

THESE ARE NOT the same Vikings. Coming into the season with a brand new head coach and general manager, Vikings faithful would understand if the team started the season with a few hiccups. However, Kirk Cousins and Co. have defied expectations and have started the season off with a respectable 8-2 record, losing only to the still-undefeated Philadelphia Eagles in Week 2 and the Dallas Cowboys in Week 11.

Perhaps what is most astounding about the record is that the Vikings have won several close games since playing the Eagles. They beat Detroit, New Orleans, Washington, Arizona, and Chicago all by 7 points or less. A complete turn-around from the team which lost several close games just last season.

Through 9 weeks, Cousins has put up nearly 2,000 passing yards and 13 touchdowns but worryingly has thrown 6 picks as well. Dalvin Cook has kept up his usually-elite numbers, rushing for just over 600 yards and 5 scores. Justin Jefferson dominated in the first game of the season against the Green Bay Packers and has kept that standard throughout the season.

He's hauled in 59 passes for 867 yards, but for only 3 touchdowns.

With the addition of pro-bowl-caliber tight end T.J. Hockenson and a solid offensive line, this offense has elite potential if Cousins can manage to reduce the number of interceptions.

On the defensive side of the ball, several stars have re-emerged to show that they deserve to be recognized and respected. Za'Darius Smith leads the Vikings with 8.5 sacks, followed closely by fellow edge-rusher Danielle Hunter, who has 5 sacks. Harrison Smith, the veteran safety, has managed to revitalize his career as he leads the defense with 4 interceptions.

It should be noted that, with the exception of the first game against the Packers, the defense has given up 20+ points to every other offense that it has gone against, forcing Kirk Cousins and others to out-score

the opponent to win games. The defense must tighten up if the Vikings hope to make it deep into the playoffs.

The remainder of the season looks promising for the Vikings. Their in-division rivals—the Packers, Lions, and Bears—simply do not have the teams to contend with the Vikings, although it is possible that one of those teams might be able to steal a game. The Cowboys, Bills, and Giants may prove to be tough opponents, but those seem to be the only true obstacles. The Indianapolis Colts are moving forward with a head coach who has never coached at the professional level, the New York Jets are a wildcard as they have proven capable of winning and losing in spectacular fashion, and New England still has questions at quarterback.

The Vikings currently sit just behind the Eagles at the top of the conference, with the Seahawks, Cowboys, and Giants right on their heels. They have the stars on both sides of the ball to make it far into the playoffs, but a lot can happen over 9 weeks and the Vikings need to prove that they are serious contenders, not one-year wonders.



Photo Credit: Dave Adamson