

## The Boston Bruins Set NHL Record With 65 Win Season

ANNABEL CURRY

On April 9th, the Boston Bruins beat the Philadelphia Flyers 5-3, clinching their 63rd win of the season. This win celebrated multiple occasions and landmarks. 63 wins are the most ever from a team in a single season. In second place are the 1995-96 Detroit Red Wings and the 2018-19 Tampa Bay Lightning. In addition to this honor, Bruins star David Pastrnak scored a hat trick, giving him 60 goals in the season and 300 for his career. For goaltender Jeremy Swayman, this win meant a lot, as it took place exactly three years after his closest mentor and UMaine coach died. In addition to the date, Swayman was also in Philly at the time. To celebrate this win, Jeremy pointed to the sky before being mobbed by teammates in a big group hug.

This season has been incredible and blown past expectations. Even with Captain Patrice Bergeron signing a one-year contract and the return of Veteran David Krejci, the summer was full of uncertainties. This included the firing of longtime coach Bruce Cassidy and injuries to Brad Marchand and Charlie McAvoy. Despite these injuries, by the time both were back in November, the Bruins had a record of 11-2. The Bruins have not stopped

these winning tendencies as they finish the regular season 65-12-5. Before the 63rd win, the Bruins set records such as fastest to 100 points and fastest to 50 wins. On April 11, the Bruins broke the points record with 133 points.

One of the backbones of this team has been outstanding goaltending. A goalie tandem is usually defined by mediocrity. It is rare to have two great goalies, which usually results in the consistent play of one. Linus Ullmark and Jeremy Swayman have been just that. Linus Ullmark has been a brick wall this season, with 49 games played and a 0.938 save percentage, leading the NHL. He had 40 wins this season and, most spectacularly, has become the first Bruins goalie (13th in the NHL) to score a goal. The second half of this tandem is young Jeremy Swayman. Swayman has played 36 games with a 0.922 save percentage. Not only are the two goalies spectacular on the ice, but they are close off the ice. This season they started a tradition of a goalie hug after every game. When asked about it, Swayman responded, "Yeah, I mean, I'm glad you noticed it, because it's so genuine man." The friendship continues outside of the rink with families. Swayman also added that "There's no one I'll ever meet like him again."

The love for the team is not just between the goalies. The Bruins have contin-

uously stressed how much fun they have together. "It's been a lot of fun, I'm not going to lie. It's been enjoyable, especially with the group we have here," Pastrnak said. The team is led by Captain Patrice Bergeron, who is widely known as the nicest guy in the league. Coach Jim Montgomery once mentioned that on multiple occasions, he has gone to players to discuss something that had been bothering them, and they replied that "Bergy" had already discussed it with them.

This season has also been a great season for forward Jake Debrusk. While this is

Debrusk's 6th season with the Bruins, he struggled, especially last year. He disagreed with former Coach Bruce Cassidy, and at one point, requested a trade out of Boston. With the addition of Head Coach Jim Montgomery, Debrusk has performed incredibly, scoring both goals in the 2023 winter classic before missing time with a fractured fibula.

The Bruins have made history this year with their regular season, but there is still more to accomplish. Even with their incredible season in 2019, the Tampa Bay Lightning, who won 62 that year, got swept in the first round

of The Stanley Cup Playoffs by the Columbus Blue Jackets (later eliminated by the Bruins). The 1995-96 Red Wings, who also had 62 wins, lost in the Western Conference Finals. In fact, since 2013, no Presidents Trophy winner (won the most games that season) has won the Stanley Cup. While much is to be celebrated, the Bruins can't be too confident. Every team must be taken seriously, especially in the Eastern Conference, which has been incredibly strong all year.



Jeremy Swayman and Linus Ullmark hug after a win.

## Julian Nagelsmann Sacked By Bayern Munich, Replaced By Thomas Tuchel

DAVIN JEONG

Following a disappointing 2-1 loss against Bayer Leverkusen this past March, Bayern Munich swiftly replaced young manager Julian Nagelsmann with former Chelsea coach Thomas Tuchel.

CEO Oliver Kahn identified dips in Nagelsmann's performance as the primary motivation

for the replacement, as the club dropped from first to second place in the Bundesliga table under his management. For Bayern, having won its 10th consecutive league title last season, this performance was unacceptable. It was time for a change.

"Julian shares our aspiration to play successful and attractive football. But now we have come to the conclusion that the quality in our squad

- despite the Bundesliga title last year - has come to the fore less and less often," Kahn said in the club's official statement.

This dismissal shocked many, especially as Bayern chairman, Herbert Hainer, had talked just four days prior about the club's "long term" plan for Nagelsmann and as Bayern remained top contenders to win the German Cup and the Champions League.

Nonetheless, motivat-

ed by problems in performance and tensions in the dressing room, Bayern Munich replaced Nagelsmann with German manager Tuchel. Known for his meticulous management style and close relationship with his players, Tuchel most recently managed Chelsea, where he won the Champions League, the European Super Cup, the Club World Cup, and the World Coach of the Year in 2021.

With this being said, Tuchel has struggled to adjust to his new club. Eliminated from the DFB Pokal by SC Freiburg and a 1-4 loss in the Champions League against Manchester City, Tuchel will be looking to pull together his new squad with the form and consistency he found previously.

Meanwhile, Nagelsmann has yet to find his next job, with rumors pointing ironically toward Tuchel's former club Chelsea. The London club recently spent close to €600m in transfers following last year's takeover by Todd Boehly, but they remain 11th in the Premier League and out of the Champions League. Currently,

under the supervision of interim manager and club-legend Frank Lampard, Chelsea is looking for a long-term manager who can capitalize on the recent investments. At the moment, Nagelsmann is seen as the most likely appointment. The young coach is known for his flexible, high-pressing style, giving his players patterns of play to use against their opponents during the game. Chelsea's co-sporting directors Paul Winstanley and Laurence Stewart reportedly met with Nagelsmann last Thursday and are said to be impressed with his ideas, though no official statements have been made.

For Borussia Dortmund, only a handful of points from winning the Bundesliga, Bayern's last-minute management changes may be a blessing. Chelsea, Real Madrid, and Tottenham are all looking for long-term managers, and Nagelsmann may be the young innovator they have been looking for. Through only one sacking among many this season, this move may prove impactful for teams across Europe.



An introspective Julian Nagelsmann at his last game with Bayern Munich.





## 2023 NBA Playoff Predictions



The Larry O'Brien Championship trophy for the NBA Champions at Scotiabank Arena during the Raptors Championship Showcase.

BRANDON HORNE

Now that the final regular season game of the year is done, it is time to look towards the playoffs and, ultimately, the championship. The Golden State Warriors, the defending champions, are coming off of a rough season in which they barely clinched the final playoff spot to avoid participating in the play-in tournament. Meanwhile, teams from the Eastern Conference are looking dominant, with the likes of the Milwaukee Bucks and Boston Celtics coming from years in which they won 58 and 57 games, respectively. LeBron and the Lakers will attempt to rekindle the magic of their 2020 NBA Finals win but will have to fight their way into the playoffs, starting in the play-in tournament. While many analysts and fans predicted an extreme season filled with high win and loss totals, due to teams tanking for Victor Wembanyama, this season turned out to be balanced. No team won over 60 games, and no team lost more than 60 games. With this in mind, let's jump into my predictions for the 2023

NBA Playoffs.

Starting with the Western Conference, the number one seed is the Denver Nuggets. Despite having two-time reigning MVP Nikola Jokic, the Nuggets still need to advance past the Western Conference Finals, only getting there once, where they were defeated in five games by the eventual champions, the Los Angeles Lakers. As for their current season, I do not see the Nuggets ready to contend for a championship. So far, we haven't seen enough from Jokic or Jamal Murray to consider them title contenders. The Nuggets will defeat a play-in team in the first round but will lose in Round 2 to the Phoenix Suns.

Next is the number two seed, the Memphis Grizzlies, where a budding rivalry between the Grizzlies' Dillion Brooks and Warriors' Klay Thompson and Draymond Green makes for spectacular battles, and I expect this to be the case in the coming playoffs. What remains to be seen is if they will make an actual rivalry out of it, and defeat the Warriors this year. They are loaded with talent, especially star point guard

Ja Morant, however, recent news reveal that their starting center Stephen Adams will miss the playoffs. The Grizzlies will defeat a play-in team, then lose to the Warriors in the second round.

Following the Grizzlies are the number three seed, the Sacramento Kings. The Kings own the best offense in the league, backed by their fast point guard DeAaron Fox and All-Star power forward Domantas Sabonis. They averaged an impressive 120.7 points per game as a team in the regular season, but similar to the Warriors, they had a somewhat lackluster defense that gave up the third most points in the Western Conference. Despite this, the Kings have a strong, young roster built to contend now, and in the near future. However, I just can't see them getting past the Warriors, who have playoff experience (four titles in eight years) and are coming off a strong past 10 games, of which they have won eight. If we also consider the fact that the Warriors are getting Andrew Wiggins back, it is a no brainer. The Kings will lose to the Warriors in six games

during the first round.

The number four seed is the Phoenix Suns. The Suns have the most fearsome trio in the league currently, including Kevin Durant, Devin Booker, and Chris Paul. What they lack in depth, they make up for with star power. In addition to their top three, they have a solid center, DeAndre Ayton, and overall they are a team built to contend this year, as they have the top defense in the West and the sixth best defense overall. The Suns will defeat the Clippers and the Nuggets, but lose to the Warriors in the Western Conference Finals.

The Los Angeles Clippers are seeded fifth. The Clippers are a great team, led by stars Kawhi Leonard and Paul George, with an improving Russell Westbrook and Ivica Zubac backing them up. So long as they can avoid any injuries, the Clippers are a formidable team in the playoffs. However, Paul George has been injured for a while and is expected to miss at least the beginning of the series against the Suns. The firepower of the Suns is too much for the Clippers to handle, and they will lose to them in the

first round.

The defending champion Golden State Warriors are seeded sixth. The Warriors have been the NBA's most successful team for the past eight years, winning four titles, and cementing themselves as one of the best dynasties ever. However, the Warriors struggled in the regular season, with stars Stephen Curry and Andrew Wiggins missing extended periods of time due to injuries and familial issues, respectively. The Splash Brothers can still make a massive impact on the game, nonetheless, indicated by Curry's multiple games with over 50 points and Klay Thompson leading the league in threes this past year. Despite their lackluster defense and regular season, you can never count the Warriors out. They have returned from back-to-back poor seasons to win championships even when every analyst thought their championship window closed. The Warriors will shock the world and make a run to the Finals, but lose to the Celtics in 7, a rematch of

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## Odell Beckham Jr. Signs Guaranteed \$15 Million One Year Contract with Ravens

BEN SHIN

This offseason, 30 year old Odell Beckham Jr., a three-time Pro Bowl wide receiver, signed a deal with the Ravens worth up to \$18 million and \$15 million guaranteed. The Ravens were able to sign Beckham the day before he was scheduled to meet the New York Jets. Multiple teams, like the New England Patriots, Buffalo Bills, and Dallas Cowboys, were also in contact with him but couldn't reach a deal.

Odell Beckham Jr's career path has not been the most consistent lately, due to injuries and trades. He was first drafted by the Giants in 2014 and was named Offensive Rookie of the Year. After that, he was quick to become a star player. In his first three seasons alone, he had more than 1,300 receiving yards. He was then traded to the Cleveland Browns, where he

had a 1,035 receiving yard season. A knee injury, however, ended his season. He then got picked up by the Los Angeles Rams and was a crucial component in the Ram's postseason success.

It was essential for the Ravens to add Beckham to their roster because they were lacking in wide receiver talent. The Raven's wide receiving core consists of Rashod Bateman, Nelson Ashlor, and Devin Duvernay. Even though these players are talented, the Ravens needed a star to help them truly become a Superbowl contender. They needed a Beckham. Beckham has shown his ability to be helpful for a Superbowl-worthy team, the Los Angeles Rams. He signed with them for the 2021-2022 season. That season, he caught five touchdowns over the eight regular season games he played. He also had two touchdowns in the playoffs. In the



Wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. during the third quarter of the NFL game against the Arizona Cardinals in 2021.

12 games he played that season, he had 48 catches and 593 yards, ultimately playing a large role in winning the fifty-sixth Superbowl.

Even though Beckham has had great success in the past, he is coming off a season of rest and injury. During the fifty-seventh Super

Bowl, Beckham tore his ACL in his left knee. He has been recovering and is now physically ready to play in the NFL. There are doubts, however, that he won't be the same as he was previously. He might not have the same explosiveness or acceleration that he had before. He had previously

shown that he was capable of coming back from a knee injury, but some critics question if he will be in peak physical performance at all this season. Hopefully, Odell Beckham Jr can make an impact on this Ravens team, giving them a shot at the Lombardi trophy.

## The Woes of an Ex-Angels Fan

QUINN NOVICK

The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. The Los Angeles Angels. The Anaheim Angels; whatever you want to call them, this club has gotten its fanbase into quite a predicament. Arte Moreno, the owner of the Anaheim Angels, has effectively destroyed this franchise, prioritizing immediate

success and recognition over long-term success. He wasted the talent of the Greatest Player in the Modern Era: Mike Trout. His plan with Shohei Ohtani only cements this theory; with the two best baseball players on the planet, Trout and Ohtani, and no help around them, it is clear that this organization has no interest in actually winning ball games. Sure,

Trout having the greatest Wins Above Replacement (WAR) of the Modern Era (by far) might be nice on paper, but there is a reason that this team does not invest in long-term pitching, and instead signs the likes of Albert Pujols, Shohei Ohtani, and Anthony Rendon while ignoring clear gaping holes in their lineup. I might get some flack for saying this, but I truly do not

believe this team is designed to win. I genuinely feel that the Angels organization as a whole does not even have a devoted interest in winning the World Series. Sure, they would want to, who wouldn't? This squad is intentionally designed to be a mediocre playoff exit team. Why won't they develop pitching in their farm system? Why would they sign Pujols just to have a regular-season playoff exit?

So, yes, I tried. I tried to root for the Angels, but after punching the wall day in and day out for the last seven to eight years, I simply cannot root for this team. When Moreno decided that he was not going to sell the team, that was the moment that I called it quits and threw in the towel. For my own sanity, it just will not happen. Moreno has, in a way, backstabbed the city of Anaheim and all Baseball Fans throughout the country. So, I will be honest, I don't have much hope for this team. I truly do not believe that this team is

designed to win a World Series, and perhaps even worse, I feel that the high levels of the Angels' management know this. But frankly, why would they care? The revenue that they can pull in from their two superstars, in their eyes, is a greater win than a Championship Ring ever would be; it's a cruel trade-off, sacrificing the success of your franchise for an immediate buck.

However, not all hope is lost, and through the darkness, there is light. It starts with pitching, though. Regardless of how great Ohtani is, the fact is that baseball is not a one-man sport. It is fundamentally a team sport, which explains why having such a top-heavy lineup as the Angels do is not a sustainable model in the major leagues. If the Angels want to keep Ohtani from heading to Los Angeles or New York, they must fill the glaring holes in their lineup, which, simply put, won't be easy. Screw you, Arte Moreno.



Shohei Ohtani, one of the best players in the Modern Era, serves as the Angels' designated hitter and pitcher.





## Should Coaching From the Stands be Allowed, Or Does it Feel Like Cheating?

KENDRA TOMALA

Traditionally, coaching from the sidelines in Grand Slams has not been allowed, at least not without penalty. However, just this year, following the trial that the US Open held in 2022, the rest of the Grand Slams — Wimbledon, the French Open, and the Australian Open — have also permitted coaching, but only from the player and coach box in the form of hand signals and short spoken phrases. Previously, women were able to receive coaching in most non-Grand Slam tournaments, including the Fed Cup, while men were only allowed coaching in the Davis Cup.

Players have shown support for both sides, in favor of and against coaching during tournament matches. Some, who have been notorious for receiving illegal coaching, can finally play with a clear conscience, as nothing much will change for them. Others, on the other hand, view

this change in rules as cheating and believe that players should not have any outside help during matches. Tennis is known for being a very mentally challenging sport, and with the help of coaches during matches, will the sport continue to be respected at the same level?

Ultimately, coaching should not be allowed during any individual matches. During team tournaments, coaching can be more or less justified, as the players rely on one another, and coaches should be able to provide their support when there could be some added pressure from fellow teammates. Other than the Davis Cup and the Fed Cup, individual tournaments should be a test for players to measure how well they do in a match by themselves.

Moreover, some, especially more novice players, may not even be able to afford their coaches to travel with them to tournaments, giving the more affluent an even greater advantage. This would



Novak Djokovic at the 2023 Australian Open as Goran Ivanisevic, his coach, watches from the stands (second from the right).

create barriers among different groups of players, potentially creating more conflict. Players could feel pressure to bring their coaches in an effort to hide their financial status or to gain an extra edge.

Therefore, I believe that coaching from the sidelines should not be allowed for a multitude of reasons. Part of the respect for the sport of tennis

is the mental toughness that players have because they are not coached on the court. They would not have to endure as much of a mental challenge with help from their coaches. With tennis already being seen as a sport for the rich, further highlighting a financial divide would make tennis seem even less accessible. Lastly, tournaments should be seen as an evaluation of

what players have accomplished up to their matches, and coaching from the stands essentially would eliminate that aspect. As all of the Grand Slams have now approved coaching from the stands, I wonder if all tennis tournaments, including juniors, will also allow coaching during matches, fundamentally changing the sport of tennis altogether.

## 2023 NBA Playoff Predictions

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last year.

For the play-in bracket for the Western Conference, I have the LA Lakers defeating the Minnesota Timberwolves to face the Grizzlies, and the Pelicans defeating both the Thunder and the Lakers to face the Nuggets. I have both teams losing in the first round of the actual playoffs.

On to the Eastern Conference, where the Milwaukee Bucks are seeded first, owning the NBA's top 2022-2023 season record with a record of 58-24. The Bucks are coming from a dominant year in which their star PF and perennial MVP candidate Giannis Antetokounmpo averaged over 30 points and over 10 rebounds. It was also supposedly a down year for him, despite leading his team to the number one record. They also have Khris Middleton, who is coming off of an

injury but still looking strong. Backed by agile point guard Jrue Holiday, the Bucks are serious contenders this year and in the future. The Bucks will win until they run into the Celtics in the Eastern Conference Finals, who they will lose to in five games in the past.

The Boston Celtics are seeded second and were the runner-ups last year. Boston is led by Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown, who are both hungry to avenge their loss in last year's finals. Tatum is having a season for the ages and was, at one point, an MVP front-runner behind Nikola Jokic. The Celtics have both an incredible offense and an incredible defense, with many great options on their roster, such as Blake Griffin and Al Horford, as well as former Defensive Player of the Year Marcus Smart. Boston is an incredible team, and they will be strong contenders for this champi-

onship. The Celtics will avenge their loss from last year and defeat the Warriors in the 2023 finals.

Next is the third seed, the Philadelphia 76ers. The 76ers are the third best team in the league and have my MVP favorite, Joel Embiid, as the heart and soul of their roster. Embiid averaged an otherworldly 33 points and 10 rebounds per game this past year. I see the 76ers as great contenders in the playoffs this year, but they are hindered by the lack of a secondary star to pair with Joel Embiid. The 76ers will lose to the Celtics in the second round.

The fourth seed is the Cleveland Cavaliers. Cleveland is a young team with budding stars Darius Garland, Jarrett Allen, and Donovan Mitchell, who are all 26 and under. However, I think that the Cavaliers are built more for the future than for now, so I cannot foresee a signif-

icant title run this year. Their lack of playoff experience will almost certainly be a major factor in each series they play in. The Cavaliers will lose to the Knicks in the first round.

Occupying the fifth spot are the New York Knicks. The Knicks have their star, Julius Randle, and young talent, RJ Barrett and Jalen Brunson, to complement him. In addition, they have a great shot-blocker in Mitchell Robinson and have the fifth best offense in their conference. Overall, the Knicks are a decent team that could certainly make some noise, given the correct circumstances. The Knicks will defeat the Cavaliers in the first round but get defeated by the Bucks in the second round.

Last, but not least, is the sixth seed, the Brooklyn Nets. Having traded away all their big names at the deadline, including Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving,

the Nets had to rely on their already good record to grant them a playoff berth. The Nets do not have any bona fide stars. Instead, they have great roleplayers, such as bucket-getters Cam Thomas and Mikal Bridges, in addition to center Nix Claxton, who was second in field goal percentage in the regular season. As a result, I can't see the Nets impacting the playoffs this season. The Bucks will sweep away the Nets in the first round.

For the Eastern Conference play-in bracket, I have the Hawks and the Raptors earning themselves a spot in the actual playoffs.

Overall, I anticipate the 2023 playoffs will be extremely exciting and lead to a new champion, the Boston Celtics. They will become the league leaders in championships, edging out the Lakers by one ring, 18 titles to 17.





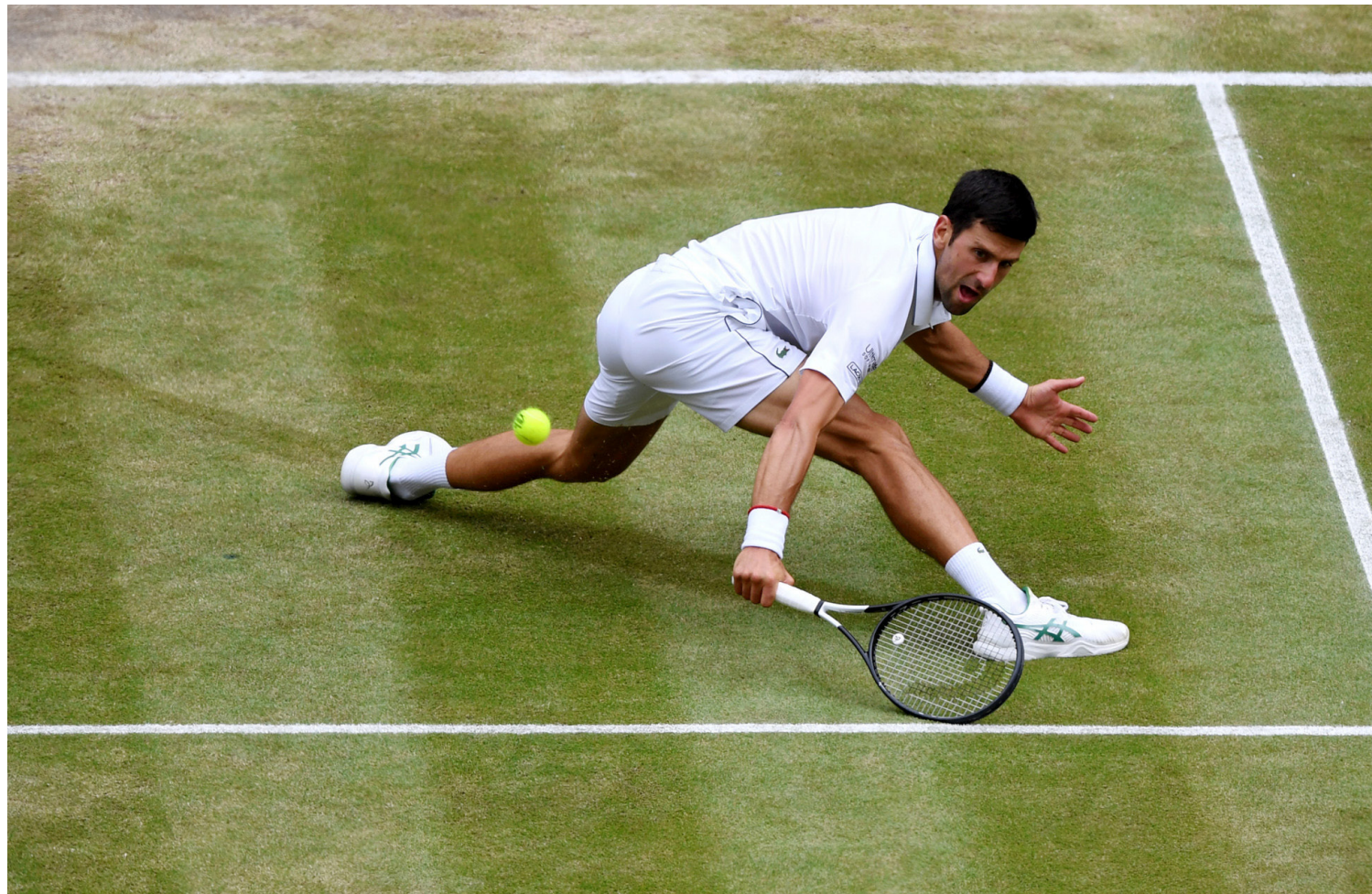
## Is Djokovic Breaking Away with the GOAT Debate?

BRANDON HORNE

After his record-tying 22nd grand slam victory and record-extending tenth Australian Open title, the GOAT debate is now settled. Novak Djokovic is the GOAT of tennis.

Novak Djokovic's rise to the top of the tennis world has been a remarkable journey. From humble beginnings in Serbia, Djokovic has worked tirelessly to achieve greatness and cement his place in tennis history. His dedication to the sport is evident in his unwavering commitment to training and preparation, and his ability to adapt and evolve his game has helped him stay ahead of his competition. Despite all of his achievements, Djokovic remains humble and grounded, often crediting his success to his team and his firm support system. His positive attitude and sportsmanship have earned him the respect and admiration of fans around the world, and his determination to continue pushing the boundaries of what is possible on the court has made him a true legend of the sport.

In all measures, Djokovic leads both Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. For head-to-head record, Novak leads Rafa 30-29, and Federer 27-23. In stark contrast to



Novak Djokovic in a match against Roger Federer at Wimbledon 2019.

Nadal, Djokovic continues to perform at peak levels, constantly pushing past injuries and age. For example, at the past Australian Open, Djokovic played through a 3 centimeter (1.2 inch) tear of his hamstring to win his tenth title in Melbourne. Even as the youngest of the big three, Novak is still 35 years old, and continues to dominate the tour unlike any other. Since turning pro in 2005, Djokovic has won two or more titles every single year, includ-

ing 11 titles in 2015 and 10 titles in 2011, both of which are considered as contenders for the best years by an individual player in tennis history.

Djokovic has complete mastery of every surface, having won multiple grand slams on every surface. He is also the only player to best Nadal in all four slams. His hard court prowess is unbeatable, and this claim is supported by a shocking 68 career titles on the surface. He has an astounding

381 weeks and counting as world number one, 71 weeks ahead of the second best player, Roger Federer, and 172 weeks ahead of Nadal. When looking at the best aspect of the tennis GOATS (who I consider to be Djokovic, Nadal, and Federer, in that order), Novak is the only one to appear on multiple top lists. When looking at top backhands of all time, it is undoubtedly Djokovic. His ability to come up with shots from the stretch, defend anywhere on the

court at any time, hit with pace and spin, and generate winners, is unrivaled by any other player in the history of the game. In addition, Novak is the top defensive tennis player as well as the best returner of all time in tennis. He can come up with any angle and rarely gets aced, leading to shockingly high break percentages.

Djokovic plays with a mental tenacity that is certainly among the best on the tour, only second behind Nadal. Djokovic has the ability to stay focused and composed even in the most high-pressure situations, often coming back from seemingly impossible positions to win matches. His mental strength allows him to remain calm and confident in the face of adversity, making him a formidable opponent on any court. Overall, Djokovic's dominance in every aspect of the game, coupled with his mental strength, makes him the clear choice as the greatest tennis player of all time. He has shattered records and achieved feats that were once thought impossible, all while maintaining his position at the top of the rankings for an unprecedented length of time. Djokovic has proven himself to be a force to be reckoned with and his legacy in the sport of tennis is truly unparalleled.



Novak Djokovic claims his 22nd Gram Slam title in 2023 Australian Open men's singles.





## MLB Power Rankings After Season Opener

QUINN NOVICK

As week two of the MLB Opening comes to a close, Baseball fans can understand where their team stands. While many fans may be ecstatic to see their team's position, some are disappointed. Whatever the case, the new landscape of baseball — particularly from the recently implemented rule changes — will unquestionably add excitement to the game regardless of where your team stands.

Without a doubt, the team that has had the hottest start to the year thus far is the Tampa Bay Rays. Starting out at 10-0, the first undefeated team since the 1987 Milwaukee Brewers, the Rays have most certainly captured the eyes of many. From the tremendous pitching of Jason Adam to the hitting and fielding of Taylor Wals and Brandon Lowe, the squad will surely be a competitive group to watch come October. However, a new team has taken up first in the newly released MLB Power Rankings: the Atlanta Braves. For any baseball enthusiast, this should come as no surprise. With Ronald Acua and Ozzie Albies, the

Braves have a deep lineup. Acua has already been touted as one of the best ballplayers in all of the MLB, with a tremendous fielding ability, and a perhaps even more impressive baserunning ability — particularly due to the new rule changes — the 25 year old Venezuela-native is a force to be reckoned with. Additionally, the relatively young squad has a recent post-season victory in 2021 which undoubtedly hangs in recent memory.

Additionally, the usual suspects of New York — the New York Yankees and New York Mets — look poised for a deep postseason run. The Brewers and the Toronto Blue Jays have both gotten hot starts as well, and it will be interesting to see how both squads respectively shape themselves throughout the season. After all, if you have either Christian Yelich or Vladly Guerro Jr. on your team, how bad can you be?

Of course, we can't count out the former reigning champs. With a star-studded lineup of Yordan Alvarez, Jose Altuve, Jeremy Pea, and Alex Bregman, the Houston Astros have the ability and experience to go all the way. While they have gotten off to

a rocky start by losing their series against the Texas Rangers (another team to look out for in the American West), the Astros have traditionally been a slow team to start off, so expect them to get up and running when we are deep in July.

However, as a team that spent over a billion dollars in the offseason, I expect the San Diego Padres to be a serious contender. With, in my opinion, the most loaded lineup in all of baseball, they have the potential to win it all this year. Although, I fear that their standings throughout the season,

and their star power, may be hampered by the fact that they lack chemistry. Sure, they might be loaded, have a gold glover at third with Manny Machado, one of the best players in the game with Juan Soto, and newly acquired star Xander Bogaarts — not even mentioning anything about Fernando Tats Jr., who hit a whopping eight for eight in his minor league stint coming off a PED suspension — but their lineup is a patchwork of stars from across the leagues, whose attitudes and play styles may not materialize well with each

other. As the season unfolds, I will be curious if this enigma of a club can bring it together and see if they have what it takes to make a run for a ring.

Of course, positions, standings, and the abilities of teams will change dramatically throughout the year, as they should. Regardless, a preview of what we have seen from the first two weeks of the season may offer valuable insight into a window to this upcoming October.



Tampa Bay Rays celebrate after a successful beginning to the new season, entering the 2023 MLB Opener.

## MVP Joel Embiid: Trust the Process

PAPA PAINTSIL

Joel Embiid has been nothing short of an All-Star this season. He is exceptional on both sides of the ball, and he has led his team to the three seed in the Eastern Conference. Embiid has been dominant for many years, but his MVP campaign is particularly strong this year for various reasons.

33.1 points, 10.2 rebounds, and 4.2 assists per game. Those are Embiid's numbers for this season. He has shown that he can be present in all aspects of basketball; offense, defense, and leadership. Joel Embiid is a center who has now been named the leading scorer for 2 seasons in a row. He has also proven himself to be a great shooter from the field. Embiid is averaging 49% from mid-range this season, which is perfect for a center who constantly has to run off the pick-and-roll. This level of efficiency has put

Embiid above other NBA greats for MVP, such as Giannis Antetokounmpo, who is well known for his lackluster shooting.

Defense is also a strong aspect of Joel Embiid's MVP campaign this year. His team, the Sixers, isn't necessarily amazing defensively, but his impact on that end of the court is noticeable. When Joel Embiid is on the court, his team improves from the 47th percentile to the 54th in pick-and-roll defense. Embiid is also recognized as a good rim protector too, only allowing 64% of shots at the rim, as opposed to Nikola Jokic's 68%. Embiid is also a much better shot blocker than Jokic, so he has put himself higher in that regard as well.

Although the stats show that Joel Embiid is a very good choice for MVP, there is one defining factor that puts him above the rest of his competition: the fact that fans want him to win. Since Joel Embiid has been 2nd

in MVP voting for the past 3 seasons, voter fatigue will be biased in his favor. In addition, Jokic has already won 2 MVPs in a row. While there is no doubt that he is one of the most valuable players in the league, he definitely isn't the most popular. Winning MVP 3 times in a

row shows an unmatched level of dominance in the league, and many voters wouldn't feel comfortable with giving that honor to a non-American player. Giving the award to Embiid would also help create an exciting narrative going into the playoffs. A Sixers team being

completely led by MVP Joel Embiid is much more compelling than a Jokic-led Nuggets team. This year's voting will be very close, but Joel Embiid will prove to fans nationwide that the process is valid.







## Warriors Set NBA Record with 55 Points in 1st Quarter

JADEN CHYU

The Golden State Warriors made history in their onslaught against the Portland Trail Blazers, scoring 55 points in the first quarter to beat the previous record of 51 points held by both the Charlotte Hornets and Warriors as the most points scored in the first quarter of a game in NBA history. Klay Thompson also became one of three NBA players to hit more than 300 3-pointers in a single season after successfully making five threes in the first quarter.

The game played in the first quarter epitomized what the Defending Champions of the NBA were capable of: They dominated the range with 12 3s made under their typical pick-and-roll play alongside catch-and-shoot, allowing range shooting for Thompson and Jordan Poole while still making opportunities for cut-ins to the paint

with the assists made by Stephen Curry. The open 3s made by Poole seemed especially reassuring before the playoffs, as Poole struggled to score any goals in the previous game against Sacramento Kings.

Ultimately, the even distribution of 3s made by the different players—Klay Thompson, Jordan Poole, and Stephen Curry—opened up the court for cut-in players such as Moses Moody and Jonathan Kuminga to exploit the paint area. Naturally, the ball movement of the team allowed more creative plays as Gary Payton II scored in the paint using a flare screen, and Curry showcased his smooth layup using the wrist.

Gary Payton II, who rejoined the Warriors after being traded from the Trail Blazers, had notable plays on the defense as he made two steals in the first quarter, fueling the transition offense with his ball-picking. Thus, the face-paced offense

played into the Dubs' historical first quarter was the absence of key players from the Trail Blazers. The Portland Trail Blazers summed up their season early on in the week as they were eliminated from the playoffs and took out their role player Damian Lillard for the remainder of the season.

In their regular sea-

son finale, the Dubs Dynasty secured the 6th seed for the playoffs after a dominant performance over the Trail Blazers as they finished the game 157 - 101. The Golden State Warriors will face the Sacramento Kings in the first round of the NBA Playoffs.



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry reacts after a basket by Jonathan Kuminga.

## Fernando Alonso Reflects on His 20 Years of F1 Racing

JOHN MORAN

Fernando Alonso is widely regarded as one of the greatest Formula One (F1) drivers of all time. With two World Championships, 32 Grand Prix wins, and 101 podium finishes, the Spanish driver has left an indelible mark on the sport. As he experiences his recent resurgence in this second stint of his career, it is a perfect time to reflect on the illustrious career Alonso has experienced.

Alonso first appeared on the Formula One scene in 2001, driving with backmarker team Minardi. He only scored one point in his rookie

season, finishing 23rd that year. However, that was considered impressive, given the terrible car he had been put in. His finish caught the eye of the new French team Renault, who themselves made their debut as a car manufacturer (they had been engine manufacturers for some time) in 2002, with Alonso onboard as a test driver. In his season of testing, Alonso further improved his stock with the team and earned the 2003 race seat. Alonso came out swinging in his second full season in a race seat, winning the Hungarian Grand Prix. The 2004 season came with two more wins. Alonso was rising.

In 2005, Alonso

had his greatest season yet, and it brought him his first World Championship. At the time, his seven win season made him the youngest driver ever to win a Driver's Championship; he was only 24. Throughout the season, he had battled McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen, whose car had been far faster but lacked the reliability to sustain its top speed. Alonso's victory ended five straight years of dominance from Ferrari's Michael Schumacher, widely regarded as the greatest driver of all time. This World Championship propelled him from the title of simply a strong, young driver to one of the top performers on the grid.

In 2006, Alonso did it once again. He defended the title from a retiring Michael Schumacher in a furious rivalry that ended with Alonso winning by a mere 13 points. Every race that season, bar the Hungarian Grand Prix, was won by either a Renault or a Ferrari, leading to an extremely tight title fight. Despite this, Alonso came out on top, joining the ranks of the champions.

Even though he was extremely successful with Renault, Alonso decided to move to McLaren for the 2007 sea-

son, partnering with rookie Lewis Hamilton. However, the relationship between the two drivers quickly soured, becoming a rather explosive rivalry, and Alonso left the team after just one season. He returned to Renault for two uneventful years before joining Ferrari in 2010.

His move to the Scuderia was thought to be the herald of another age of Ferrari dominance, as the historically greatest team would be paired with one of the greatest drivers of the period. However, the only thing in store for Alonso and Ferrari was heartbreak. He finished as the runner-up in the Championship three times, just missing the mark each time due to Ferrari's strategy failures or mechanical issues. Although he had 11 wins over the years with the Scuderia, his trust with the team was lost, and in 2014, Alonso returned to McLaren.

In 2018, Alonso's announced his biggest news yet. He announced that he would be leaving Formula One at the end of the season. His absence wouldn't last long, though. In 2020, he would return once again to Renault, which had since been rebranded as Alpine. Over

three seasons with Alpine, he scored a podium and consistently gained points. Most significantly, he put on the defensive show of a lifetime to hold back Lewis Hamilton's charging Mercedes from catching up to Alpine teammate Esteban Ocon's car, which went on to win the race.

Now, in 2023, he is racing with Aston Martin, and he has been off to a blazing start. This start to the season might be his best since 2014 or even earlier. In each of the first three races of the season, he scored a third place finish. He is third in the Driver's Championship, and Aston Martin appears fast enough this season to place him on the top of the podium once again. Will we see another victory this season for Fernando? Quite possibly.

At 41 years old, Fernando Alonso is not getting any younger. But in his near 20 years in the sport, he has accomplished almost everything a driver can accomplish, and he isn't done yet. Alonso is still absolutely kicking. It will be exciting to see what he can do in the twilight of his career in his new car. If it's anything like what he's done before, it will be pretty incredible.



Left: Young Fernando Alonso with Renault. Right: Older Fernando Alonso with Alpine.





## Rand Pecknold And The Bobcats Win Quinnipiac's First National Championship

ANNABEL CURRY

The pinnacle of college hockey is the Frozen Four, which took place this year at Amalie Arena in Tampa Bay. The four teams each represent one region, Michigan from the Allentown region, Quinnipiac from the Bridgeport region, Minnesota from the Fargo region, and Boston University from the Manchester Region.

The semi-finals occurred on April 6, with 2nd seed

Quinnipiac beating 3rd seed Michigan, which included 1st round NHL draft pick Luke Hughes (New Jersey Devils) and freshman Adam Fantelli, who won the Hobey Baker and is projected to be the second pick in this year's draft (behind Connor Bedard). Furthermore, the team also consists of eight more draft picks or projected to-be-drafted players. Quinnipiac only had two draft picks on their roster, in the 6th and 7th rounds. Despite these odds, Quinnipiac beat Michigan 6-2. The

other game was 4th seed BU vs. 1st seed Minnesota. BU, led by junior goalie Drew Comness (Chicago Blackhawks) and Lane Hutson (Montreal Canadiens), took on the Minnesota Gophers. The Gophers have a first line of top prospects, including Logan Cooley (Arizona Coyotes), Matthew Knies (Toronto Maple Leafs), and Jimmy Snuggerud (St. Louis Blues). Minnesota moved forward with a 6-2 win. Both of these games were very similar. For the first two periods, momentum would

take huge swings, the scores after the second being 2-2. For both semifinals, one team absolutely dominated the third, resulting in a defining win.

The National Championship game took place on April 8. Minnesota took an early lead, with a goal from John Mittelstadt five minutes into the period. Jaxon Nelson added to this lead four minutes into the second to make it 2-0. However, three minutes later, Cristophe Tellier and the Quinnipiac Bobcats would rally, bringing it to 2-1. At this point, the game had been pretty even, with Minnesota holding a slight edge. However, in the 3rd period, Quinnipiac took over. Thanks to a late penalty on Logan Cooley, the Gophers were put in a 4-on-6 position with 5 minutes left in the game. Five seconds after Cooley's penalty ended, Collin Graf of Quinnipiac scored to tie the game. Pre-overtime, the atmosphere had an insane energetic intensity. Ten seconds in, a stretch pass from Zach Metsa to Sam Lipkin set up Jacob Quillan for the overtime winner in favor of the Bobcats.

The number of shots tells the story of the game. In the first period, Minnesota outshot Quinnipiac 7-4. In the second, Quinnipiac came back, outshooting the Gophers 11-6. Finally, in the

third period, the Gophers were outshot 14-2. The final amount of shots was 15-30 in favor of the Bobcats.

While Minnesota is amazing, both on paper and ice, they could not get it done. It looked like they were not playing to win or to score, but to not get scored on. This led to a defensive mindset and an incredible effort by goaltender Juston Close who saved 27 out of 30 shots.

The victory was especially emotional for Quinnipiac head coach Rand Pecknold. "I had a little bit of a meltdown after we won. I was probably worse on the bench. I kept hugging some of my assistant coaches so they couldn't see me crying. I was a mess." When Pecknold started with the Bobcats in 1994, they struggled in division two. They didn't have money for food on the road or to play their full schedule. Soon afterward, Quinnipiac moved to Division One in 1998, joining the ECAC in 2005. Pecknold had grown this program from a bottom D2 school to Division One National Champions.

Quinnipiac's National Championship is truly one for the history books. Despite being thought of as underdogs, especially to the NHL prospect powerhouses of Michigan and Minnesota, they pulled through when it mattered most.



Jacob Quillan buried the winning goal against the number one seed with a setup by Zach Metsa and Sam Lipkin.

## MLB Breakout Hitters Ahead Of 2023 Season

JOHN MORAN

Baseball is back, and with its return comes the constant ebb and flow of slumps and hot streaks. Batters will go from week-long hitting streaks to massive droughts where they can't hit a ball to save their life. This early into the season, nothing can really be considered as a season-long trend, but there are still some hot bats out right now that deserve some love.

Among these names is the Boston Red Sox center fielder Adam Duvall. Although he is currently on the injured roster after just eight games due to a fractured wrist incurred on a layout catch attempt, he started the season as the hottest bat in baseball. With a 33 at bat slash line of .455/.514/1.030, he was an absolute force during the few games that he played. His slash line contains the third best average in baseball, the third best on-base percentage, and the highest slugging percentage. This slugging

percentage is especially impressive, as he beats out the second place man, Matt Chapman (we'll talk about him later), by an extraordinary .179 percent. Duvall has been a mediocre bat over the course of his MLB career, with a career slash line of .233/.292/.472 over 10 seasons (two were shortened), but this season, he has been blasting balls left and right.

Matt Chapman, the third baseman for the Toronto Blue Jays, is having a dream start to the season. His slash line is absolutely incredible: .460/.518/.800. This line is practically unheard of. He is the leader in slugging percentage, second on average, second on hits with 23 hits, and fourth in home runs with an incredible 15 home runs over the course of only 13 games. That's nearly a homer every game. I'll let that sink in. He is featured in a line up that also contains Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Bo Bichette, who are also incredibly hot bats right now, so look out for the Blue Jays.

The Miami Marlins' second baseman

Luis Arraez has also been having an incredible start to his 2023 campaign. With a current slash line of .500/.558/.696, he has been getting hits constantly. He is the current average and on base percentage leader by a relatively large margin in both stats. Arraez has always been a consistent competitor throughout his career, but this start to the season is still a very

sizable improvement to his career averages.

These three hitters are the ones to watch out for coming into the season. It will be interesting to see which of these players will be able to sustain this early season momentum and carry it with them throughout the season. Duvall is already injured, though, which shows how short lived these successful streaks

can be. It will be something to look forward to down the stretch of the season. After all, we have got 162 games in a season of baseball, and you can be sure that one of these guys will be making something happen in almost every single one of them. I can't wait to watch.



Matt Chapman after sending a ball out to the fences.





## Bears 2023 Mock Draft Rounds 1-7

AJAY MISTRY

The Chicago Bears had the worst record in the league last season, only winning 3 out of 17 games, earning them the #1 overall pick in the 2023 draft, which they then traded for DJ Moore, the 9th and 61st overall pick, and a 2024 first round pick. There is no doubt in this year's draft that the Bears will look to protect their quarterback, who was sacked 58 times last season, the 4th highest in the league. Here are my predictions of what the Bears will do with their 10 picks in the 2023 draft.

### Round 1 Pick 9 (via Carolina Panthers): Peter Skoronski, Offensive Tackle, Northwestern

The Bears had maybe the worst pass-blocking line in the NFL, allowing Justin Fields to be sacked 55 times. Skoronski, who allowed only one sack last season, would bring elite pass blocking to their offensive line. Skoronski is widely considered to be the number one offensive tackle in the draft; however, he lacks length and only has the wingspan of a typical NFL guard. Still, Skoronski would be a franchise offensive lineman for the Bears.

### Round 2 Pick 61 (via Carolina Panthers): Nick Herbig, Edge, Wisconsin

Part of the reason the Bears gave up so many passing yards was their lack of pressure on the quarterback, the Bears sacked the opposing quarterback only 20 times this season. Herbig had 20 sacks over the last two seasons at Wisconsin. Herbig also has a wide range of moves to get around the offensive line, making him unpredictable.

### Round 4 Pick 103: Cameron Latu, Tight End, Alabama

Cameron Latu is a very tall, fast, tight end. Latu is 6'4" and ran a 4.82 second 40-yard dash and a 4.38 second shuttle run. Latu appeared in 10 games this past season, receiving 322 yards and 3 touchdowns. The Bears would take Latu to serve as a TE2 behind Cole Kmet.

### Round 5 Pick 136: SirVocea Dennis, Linebacker, Pitt

After the Roquan Smith trade, the Bears need another linebacker, and SirVocea Dennis is the perfect selection. Dennis has an elite first step and is great at reading the quarterback's eyes. Dennis also has great speed allowing him to blitz the quarterback, drop back and play coverage, and defend the run. SirVocea Dennis checks all the boxes for an NFL level linebacker.

### Round 7 Pick 218: Max Duggan, Quarterback, TCU

Even after leading the Horned Frogs to the National Championship game, I believe Max Duggan will fall to round 7 and be selected by the Bears. Like Justin Fields, Max Duggan is a rushing quarterback making him an ideal backup quarterback.



### Round 2 Pick 53: Tyrique Stevenson, Cornerback, Miami

The Bears had one of the best secondaries in the NFL, allowing 3,716 passing yards this past season. Tyrique Stevenson, although only 6 feet tall, will add speed and physicality to any defense. Stevenson ran a 4.45 second 40-yard dash, only fractions of a second slower than Jalen Ramsey's 4.41 seconds. Tyrique Stevenson could give the Bears the best secondary in the NFL.

### Round 3 Pick 64: Sydney Brown, Safety, Illinois

Brown is one of the most athletic safeties in this year's draft. Brown ran a 4.47 40-yard dash and was in the 96th percentile for vertical jump. Brown's athleticism and ability to defend the run makes him a very versatile player, even at an NFL level.

### Round 4 Pick 133 (Via Philadelphia Eagles): Jon Gaines, Offensive Guard, UCLA

Jon Gaines, the 5th year senior out of UCLA, allowed only 2 sacks in his senior campaign. Gaines is also extremely agile for his size, which should allow him to make an instant impact on the Bear's offensive line.

### Round 5 Pick 148: Kenny McIntosh, Runningback, Georgia

After the departure of David Montgomery, the Bears will need a running back aside from Donta Foreman and Kahlil Herbert. McIntosh adds elite speed to a backfield that already has Justin Fields, making the Bears run game a scary opponent for defenses.

### Round 7 Pick 258: Byron Young, Defensive Tackle, Alabama

The Bears fill another hole in the defensive line by selecting Byron Young. The Bear's defensive line could use more young depth. Young has an NFL-caliber physique which makes him a low-risk but high reward player.

The Bears are still multiple years away from being Super Bowl contenders. However, if their offseason signings and these rookies work out, I believe the Bears could be a playoff team in the weak NFC. Justin Fields also needs to take his game to the next level and prove to everyone that he is a legitimate starting quarterback in the NFL. Peter Skoronski and Jon Gaines will be able to give him the time he needs to throw the ball, and Tyrique Stevenson and Sydney Brown will help keep games in reach on the defensive end.





## Israel Adesanya Comes Back With a Second-Round Knockout Over Alex Pereira Following Three Consecutive Losses

CHARLES VEST

Defeat, to many, is the greatest motivator that one can experience. The drive to better oneself, or to get revenge on those who have wronged you in the past, can only arise once the sting of defeat has been tasted. For many, however, the dream of avenging a loss is just that: a dream. It is for this reason that we humans love a comeback story. We like to see people defeat the odds, take back what is theirs, or claim something they deserve. Such is the case with the recent fight between Israel Adesanya and his unofficial rival, Alex Pereira. Going into the fight, which took place on April 8, Adesanya's fans were nervous that he would be unable to take down Pereira after their last bout in the UFC, in which Pereira won by TKO. This wasn't the only other time the pair had fought, however. Adesanya had fought against — and lost to — Pereira two times before they ever fought

in the UFC, as both fighters were originally kickboxers competing in the "Glory of Heroes" event. With a total of three losses against Pereira, it was not looking good for Adesanya.

As the match began, Pereira came out strong with a flurry of power kicks to the legs, the same strategy he used in their last fight. In that fight, the kicks wore down Adesanya's defense over time until there was an opening for Pereira to score his knockout. As the Brazilian went for this tactic a second time around, it seemed as if it would work again. The constant abuse of Adesanya's legs was evident as he stumbled and struggled with kicks of his own, even causing his leg to buckle a few times. It was at one of these moments that Pereira went in for a brutal combo of punches, kicks, and knees; clearly trying to imitate his previous knockout. The offensive move left Pereira with one fatal flaw, however: he had dropped his defense. Thinking he had already won, Pereira

didn't bother to remain defensively responsible during his flurry, and Adesanya took the chance to strike back. Waiting for the right moment, Adesanya slipped one of Pereira's punches and landed a devastating right-hand counter. Stumbling back, Pereira only had a second to regain his thoughts before a second right-hand put him down for good; bringing the match to a close in

the second round.

Fans all around the world applauded Adesanya's performance as something straight out of a movie, akin to Rocky or Miracle on Ice. While some said that the win was deserved and that Adesanya made a brilliant tactical move by waiting for Pereira to get overconfident and sloppy before attacking, others believe that the win was a fluke. These people

say that Pereira was destroying Adesanya for the entire fight up until Adesanya got a hit in, a hit many called "lucky." In my opinion, it doesn't matter whether or not the hit was "lucky" or if Adesanya won by "being a coward," because at the end of the day, Israel is the one walking out of that ring with a belt, and that's what really matters.



Adesanya stands over his defeated opponent in his iconic Naruto-inspired Rock Lee pose.

## Frank Lampard Replaces Graham Potter to Become Interim Chelsea Manager

ALEX LEE

After a short and disappointing six-month stint as Chelsea manager, Graham Potter was sacked as Chelsea looks to turn around their recent underwhelming performances. Shortly after, in that week, Frank Lampard was appointed to finish the season as manager. In his opening interview, he called the

opportunity to return to Stamford Bridge "an easy decision," mentioning his history with the club. Lampard has an impressive 649 appearances for Chelsea, scoring 211 goals, the most in the club's history. He has previously coached at Chelsea, where he brought them to an FA Cup final in 2020. After having little experience the first time around, Lam-

pard returns to Chelsea with more managerial experience under his belt, following his time at Everton. He cites his commitment to giving fans "what they want" and finishing the season on a strong note.

A chance at one of UEFA's three major European competitions has seemed to slip away from Chelsea as they find themselves 11th in the Premier League.

They have also just been dumped out of the Champions League by Real Madrid, losing 4-0 on aggregate. This situation leaves Lampard in a tough position regarding his goals during his time at the job. While Premier League managers who get brought in late in the season are usually pushing to avoid relegation or make it into the top seven European spots, Chelsea has no concrete ambitions for the end of the season, and considering Lampard's temporary role, it is hard to predict how he will be perceived by the fans. It seems he has been brought in just to get Chelsea over the line into the summer, when they will try to bring in a permanent manager. Still, though, there is a lot of work that he can accomplish.

So far, Lampard has utilized a 4-3-3 formation in the Premier League, opting for a relatively balanced midfield and attacking full-backs. This, though, has

not brought him success yet, losing his first two games in the league as manager. Despite the lackluster start, fans can still be hopeful as Lampard has in the past shared his focus on being honest and upfront with his players, creating a more cohesive team-oriented environment.

A recurring theme for Chelsea this season is the discontent among fans due to their exorbitant spending in the previous winter and summer transfer windows. Despite this excessive spending, their team needs to perform to the standards expected of them. The fans have been growing increasingly frustrated with this as their hopes of Europe fall further away. While it is unrealistic for Lampard to get them back into European competition, a positive run of form to finish the Premier League could bring hope back to the fans and relieve pressure off the owners.



Chelsea manager Frank Lampard looking on from his technical area.





## Serie A - Matchday 30 Recap



MATTIA MOLINARI

What a few weeks it has been for Italian football! With three teams out of the last eight in the Champions League, two in the last eight of the Europa League, and one in the last eight of the Conference League, Serie A teams are showing signs of their past selves from decades ago, with the thrill of Matchday 30 showing just that.

### US Cremonese 1 - 0 Empoli FC

In Cremona, 19th place Cremonese found their third win of the season against 14th place Empoli and are now at two wins and one draw in their last five games, their best form of the season. While relegation looks almost certain for them, with a good run, they could just overcome the relegation zone.

### Spezia Calcio 0 - 3 SS Lazio

The second match of the weekend saw Lazio extend their run of good form by putting three past Spezia away from home. Ciro Immobile opened the scoring with goals from Felipe Anderson and Marcos Antonio to follow.

### Bologna FC 1 - 1 AC

### Milan

After conceding a goal 32 seconds into the match, A. C. Milan were held to a draw against Bologna, who are now level in points with Juventus. Despite having 19 efforts at goal, Milan were only able to put one past Bologna in the 40th minute through Tommaso Pobega. It is now two more draws for Milan, whose spot in the top four looks less and less safe.

### SSC Napoli 0 - 0 Hellas Verona FC

In Napoli, Verona picked up an important point against Serie A's leaders with a strong defensive performance. The match finished 0-0 after Napoli had a goal disallowed and Victor Osimhen, the league's top scorer, struck the crossbar. Cyril Ngonge had a chance of a lifetime to put Verona up in the 91st minute but scuffed his shot in a one on one with the keeper. Nonetheless, an essential point for the visitors still trying to make it out of the bottom three.

### AC Monza 1 - 0 Inter Milan

Monza once again showed their class with a 1-0 win over Inter Milan at San Siro. The newly promoted team sits comfortably in 13th place. Inter Milan now

has four losses in the last five games and is struggling to crack back into the top four.

### US Lecce 1 - 1 UC Sampdoria

Lecce opened the scoring in their fixture during the 31st minute with Assan Ceesay. Last place UC Sampdoria equalized in the 75th minute through the ex-Madridista J□s□.

### Torino FC 1 - 1 US Salernitana

In Torino, Tonny Vilhena scored early to give the visitors Salernitana the lead. In the second half, it was Antonio Sanabria to equalize for Torino and bag his 9th goal of the season, but it was not enough to see them move up into the top ten.

### US Sassuolo Calcio 1 - 0 Juventus FC

It really is a season to forget for Juventus, who picked up their second loss in a row, this time to Sassuolo. Gr□goire Defrel put the ball in the net 64 minutes in, with Juventus unable to respond. The result has again mounted pressure on Juventus manager Massimiliano Allegri, with the majority of fans once again in favor of his dismissal at the end of the season. He will be looking to satisfy the fans on Thurs-

day with a win against Sporting CP in the Europa League.

### AS Roma 3 - 0 Udinese Calcio

Third place Roma, playing at home in the Stadio Olimpico, put three past visitors Udinese. The goals came from Edoardo Bove, Lorenzo Pellegrini, and Tammy Abraham, and Roma now sits five points behind their rivals Lazio. Udinese had a chance to get a goal back in the 69th minute with a penalty, but Ro-

berto Pereyra was not able to capitalize.

### ACF Fiorentina 1 - 1 Atalanta BC

Fiorentina leveled the scoring in the second half after Joakim M□le put them 1-0 up in the 37th minute. Atalanta continues to struggle to break into the top four.

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