

# Fox Sports NFL

Sunday, January 24, 2021

**Curt Menefee**

**Terry Bradshaw**

**Jimmy Johnson**

**Howie Long**

**Michael Strahan**

**Jay Glazer**

**Joe Montana**

**Greg Olsen**

**Tom Rinaldi**

**Aaron Jones**

**Erin Andrews**

**Aaron Rodgers**

**Tom Brady**

FOX NFL Sunday Show



weather here in Green Bay.

>> Their presence renders the cold warmer across the tundra, the sunshine brighter along the Gulf Coast, anticipation, expectation, a fervor head to toe.

>> We are moments away from kickoff at Lambeau Field.

>> Whatever you're doing right now, wrap it up because it's go time.

>> A showdown in title town for the NFC crown on Fox.

[MUSIC]

CURT MENEFE: All right. Two legends get ready for something they've never done. Tom Brady's playing in an NFC title game for the first time. It's his fourteenth championship contest overall in his 21-year career, and a win would get him into a record tenth Super Bowl.

But to get there, he has to outduel Aaron Rodgers, who, for the first time in his career, gets to host an NFC championship game in the elements at home in one of the most legendary venues in all of sports, Lambeau Field.

So icons abound as we get you ready for a dynamic matchup to crown the champion of the NFC. It's Brady and the Bucs against Rodgers and the Pack. The winner moves on to Super Bowl LV.

So why don't we get it rolling here on the one and only Built Ford Tough "Fox NFL Sunday" pregame show brought to you by the Ford F Series, the official truck of the National Football League.

Come on in and stay awhile, folks. I'm Curt Menefee. Thank you for joining us. And a special thank to Delroy Lindo for opening up today's broadcast. His movie "Da 5 Bloods" is streaming right now on Netflix.

HOWIE LONG: "Broken Arrow."

CURT MENEFE: He's a great, great actor.

Fox NFL Sunday 1-24-2021

[MUSIC]

>> It's game day, Packer Nation.

>> Game day, Fox Nation.

>> Aaron Rodgers and Tom Brady for the NFC championship game.

[MUSIC]

>> Sunday, game day for Tampa Bay and Green Bay.

[MUSIC]

>> Where pride still matters, a way of life, a devout faith in the Pack. The Bucs, the treasure of two cities. With this in common, the football will be snapped to a future hall of famer. Two men, seven Lombardis, a lifelong quest to be the best.

>> It is 78 degrees right here in Tampa Bay.

>> Temperatures in the 20s. It's what we call football

**ASAP** . . . when all is said, we're done.®  
sports

HOWIE LONG: Just getting it in there.

CURT MENEFE: Yeah. Just -- that's how he got his start, with you; right?

HOWIE LONG: Well --

CURT MENEFE: Oh, my gosh.

HOWIE LONG: -- you know...

CURT MENEFE: Hey, guys. We got Terry and Howie here. Michael and Jimmy will join us in just a second.

Before we get started here talking about football, I want to note the passing of an icon in Hank Aaron this week. Passed away at the age of 86. He was the first sports hero I had as a kid.

HOWIE LONG: You're an Atlanta guy.

CURT MENEFE: That's right. I grew up in Atlanta. He actually lived in the same neighborhood as my grandparents. Always meant something to that entire city to me as a fan, so --

HOWIE LONG: It was as much about the number as it was everything else --

CURT MENEFE: Yes.

HOWIE LONG: -- involved with that process and what he went through and what we went through as a country.

CURT MENEFE: Amen to that, brother. Rest in peace to him and our condolences to his entire family. You know, look, I mean, we all have that one sports idol growing up. But that also includes the idols who are idols now.

Both raised in the Bay Area, Brady and Rodgers worshiped Joe Montana, so why not start off our championship coverage with the guy they loved, Joe Cool, returning the favor.

>> What do you think makes a good ball player?

JOE MONTANA: You can't put your finger on it, but you know it when you see it.

>> I don't know.

>> You don't know?

>> No.

>> I've always dreamt about playing Division I football, and it's going to be a good opportunity for me.

JOE MONTANA: For two kids from North Cal, let's just say they had a front row seat.

>> When I was a kid, I remember watching Joe Montana, and I just remember feeling that that's what I wanted to do.

JOE MONTANA: It exists somewhere between loved and hated but always respected.

Some call it calm. We just call it cool. You might think it's all God-given. And sure, some of it's innate. But you know what's really cool? When it didn't come easy.

TOM BRADY: You know, I was the seventh quarterback on a depth chart at Michigan. I didn't know if I'd ever play.

>> The San Francisco 49ers select Alex Smith.

JOE MONTANA: Cool is being a closer, a killer. It's doing it on your own terms whether they like it or not and never asking anyone to do something you wouldn't do yourself.

>> Everybody give me your best. You know I'm going to lay it on the line for you.

JOE MONTANA: So when you finally crack that code, sometimes you've got to find a reason to have a chip on your shoulder again.

>> Going for it all. Rodgers has done it again.

JOE MONTANA: If you tell those two boys from California they have it all --

>> You'd have been everything I hoped and even more.

>> There's not much more I could ask for coming from San Mateo, so --

JOE MONTANA: -- they'll tell you it sure doesn't feel like it. That's cool.

>> How do these people know?

TOM BRADY: That sounds like Joe Montana right there.

JIMMY JOHNSON: The most impressive thing to me about Tom Brady is he brought to Tampa a championship discipline. You know, a year ago, Tampa Bay, they were 7-9, a sloppy team, turnovers and penalties, and then Tom Brady comes in.

Now, a slow start, but the turnaround was the fifth week of the season against Chicago. Here, they lose by one point, had 11 penalties, and Brady just gets off on the sideline all upset.

Well, the next week, they beat Green Bay, zero offensive penalties, and they went on a championship run, cutting the turnovers and the penalties down in half.

You know, you look at Tom Brady. He just brought to Tampa, you know, the same thing that he had been doing for years, keeping the mistakes to a minimum like he did in New England.

HOWIE LONG: You're exactly right, Jimmy. He changed the culture of that football team the minute he walked in the building. I think everyone in that building was doing the prerequisite amount of work, preparation. They thought they were doing enough.

Then he walks in the building, and you have an understanding why he was so successful in New England. He's brought that culture there. And slowly but surely -- it didn't happen overnight. They had to find a groove on offense, and they had to become more disciplined.

CURT MENEFE: You know, as we bring in Michael Strahan, we tend to overuse the word "legacy," Michael. Let's go with: How important is this to Aaron Rodgers, getting to a second Super Bowl, maybe winning a second one, when he retires and looks back on this?

MICHAEL STRAHAN: I mean, when it comes to legacy, this game is more important to Aaron Rodgers than it is to Tom Brady, in my opinion, Curt. But Aaron Rodgers, I mean, how amazing is this guy? He was slighted in the draft. He was slighted when they hired a running -- drafted a quarterback last year.

And how does he respond? 48 touchdowns, a career high, an MVP-type season, another NFC championship game. And as they say, T.B., he's going to show up today, and he's going to show out.

[LAUGHTER]

TERRY BRADSHAW: Well, I don't think he was slighted. He still got first round money. Tom Brady got seventh round money, if you want to go there. And I do -- yeah. And I do agree that, to a greater extent -- legacy, maybe not so much. But then again, maybe I could say his legacy is a little bit challenged here.

He needs to win a second Super Bowl, and he knows that guy he's going up against today in Brady, with six of those,

is already the guy that is the standard bearer. He's got it sitting right up here. Rodgers today -- and I agree -- more pressure on him than on Brady.

CURT MENEFE: Well, Rodgers and the Packers are looking to win it all for the first time in 10 years, but they'll have to do so while also mourning the passing of the man who built that championship team, long-time GM Ted Thompson. He passed away this week at the age of 68.

Aaron Rodgers was Thompson's first ever draft pick as Green Bay GM, so their Packer legacies will forever be connected. Pro Bowlers Rodgers, Davante Adams, and Aaron Jones, just a few of Thompson's draftees, will try to add to that legacy by winning an NFC championship today. More on the game, after a break.

ANNOUNCER: As we set our sights on the NFC championship, Aaron Rodgers comes into focus as he sits down with E.A. and embraces the spotlight of the big game. Then his teammate Aaron Jones opens up to Tom Rinaldi in a story that you won't want to miss.

And when Brady talks, he never strays too far from the truth. Also, we say hello to a familiar friend with great hands on "Fox NFL Sunday."

[COMMERCIAL]

ANNOUNCER: It's time to cast your vote and select the fan who will be inducted into the Ford Hall of Fans Class of 2021. Vote now for your favorite nominee at [fordhalloffans.com](http://fordhalloffans.com). Plus, enter for your chance to win a trip to Super Bowl LV.

CURT MENEFE: We have stepped outside for more of the Built Ford Tough "Fox NFL Sunday" pregame show. Thank you for sticking around with us and thanks to Greg Olsen, who joins us right now. 14 years in the NFL, multiple Pro Bowls, been to a Super Bowl. You're going to break down the tight ends in today's game in just a bit. But I understand, first, you've got some breaking news.

GREG OLSEN: Yeah. I'm going to play a little Jay Glazer right now for the show.

After 14 years of playing in this league, proud of what I was able to accomplish, proud of the relationships, everything that the game has given me. But sometimes when it's time, it's time. And my time in the NFL now has come to an end.

I'm excited for the next chapter. I'm excited that that chapter involves the Fox family. I'm going to be working with Fox moving forward in my post-career endeavors. So

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

I'm stepping away. I'm done. I've got it all out of my system.

HOWIE LONG: Great career. Great career and welcome aboard.

>> Welcome. Absolutely!

TERRY BRADSHAW: Let's give it up for Greg.

CURT MENEFEE: He's going to be in the broadcast booth for us this fall. So maybe as a warmup here, we'll get you to break down the tight ends between Green Bay and Tampa Bay.

And everybody talks about Gronk, but I know you love the guy for the Packers, Robert Tonyan.

GREG OLSEN: I do. I mean, Gronk gets all the headlines. Right? For years, we've seen him play in Super Bowls. We've seen him catch passes from Brady all over the place. Even last year, Kittle and Kelce, marquee names, but Robert Tonyan, I think, is a game away.

I think a game of this magnitude on this platform, he's a game away from moving up into the upper echelon, maybe an underappreciated guy, 50 catches, kind of overshadowed by Rodgers, Davante Adams. 11 touchdowns.

This guy can play, now. He's a big part of their offense. I'm going to keep an eye. He's a breakout game away today from being a household name in the position.

HOWIE LONG: Yeah. Gronk's game has changed down there. You know, he's more of an end line blocker. You might see Gronk one-on-one in pass protection with one of the Smiths outside.

>> Yeah.

HOWIE LONG: And down in the red zone, he's such a big target. That, he can still do. But Tom is really kind of a -- the shift has gone to Cameron Brady. Cameron Brady is the guy that Tom trusts, and he's been kind of that -- the guy that drives the train there at tight end.

TERRY BRADSHAW: Yeah, but when you're inside the 20 or at the 20 going in what they call the red zone, I'm telling you, man, Gronkowski gets a lot of respect. And Brady may be the one that's coming around making all the catches, but the look is always on Gronkowski. You've got to pay attention to him; big, strong, powerful guy. And inside the 20, if I had him on my team, guarantee I'd use him.

GREG OLSEN: Yeah. Gronk's going to get his chances. He might not have the volume of catches and targets that we're accustomed to seeing him -- back with Brady and the Patriots. But when Brady needs a play, especially down in the red zone, as you said, Terry, that ball -- he's matched out one-on-one. That ball's going to be thrown up to the corner, and they're going to say, "Hey, Gronk, just go get it." And he's --

CURT MENEFEE: How easy is it for Gronk to make this transition? I mean, he's basically a blocker now, one catch the entire postseason.

GREG OLSEN: I think it's hard. I think people don't appreciate it, especially a guy that's accomplished what he has. I saw a little bit of it with my time in Seattle this year, and things aren't exactly what you're used to. They don't want to run the routes exactly the way you want them. And, you know, it's just you build up such a familiarity doing it one way.

I give him a lot of credit to reinvent him, to take a back seat in some of the passing game and say, hey, great, I'm not afraid to give you some third downs, red zone, but when I get my chances, don't -- he's going to make some plays today. We're going to see old Gronk. It might not be 10, but two or three times he's going to impact the game today --

TERRY BRADSHAW: He's actually put on weight, Curt, since the season started. Probably 20 pounds at least.

CURT MENEFEE: He's not the only one, just saying.

All right. We will hear more analysis from this man in the fall. He'll be in the broadcast. We thank you for joining us here. Welcome aboard, Greg Olsen.

Now, when we come back, we'll also cover the AFC title game. Still ahead, our own Erin Andrews chats with Aaron Rodgers, while Michael sits down with Tom Brady.

TOM BRADY: Four quarters for us to play a home Super Bowl is pretty amazing.

[COMMERCIAL]

>> Yeah, script is right in front of you.

>> We left room for you to improvise some lines.

>> Perfect. It's the Buffalo Bills versus the Kansas City Chiefs and the Chiefs are going to win for sure.

>> Yeah, we can't say that the Chiefs are going to win.

>> Ah, gotcha. Buffalo heads to Kansas City and I've just been informed the Bills are going to win for sure.

>> We actually don't know who's going to win.

>> That makes sense. Okay. Let's try one where --

>> Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. Bills-Chiefs, no one knows who will win. I'm worried Mahomes isn't 100 percent, so I'm taking the Bills. My wife has a crush on Travis Kelce. Can you blame her? If the Bills make the Super Bowl, they're just going to blow it again. Wings versus ribs. What's better off the bone?

>> Okay, I think we got it.

>> Are you sure? I didn't see the red record light on.

>> We got it.

CURT MENEFEE: Well, as you know, the voiceover guys are worried about Patrick Mahomes. Jay Glazer's here to give him an answerer.

JAY GLAZER: Yeah, I work for them. That's exactly right, Curt.

Look, let's first go with the concussion protocol. Patrick Mahomes has passed everything fine there. It wasn't a classic concussion. Anything from here up, you're going to get placed in a concussion protocol. Instead, he basically had the carotid artery cut off. Usually this happens in MMA fights, but in MMA fights, you sit there on canvas and on your stook for a while before they get you right back up.

That's not what happened to Patrick Mahomes. He's fine there. It's the toe that they're very concerned about, so much so they had to put a special orthotic in that shoe with carbon fiber to protect it. That is what they're concerned about. Probably going to need some surgery for that -- could need surgery for that in the offseason.

However, Howie, he does get back Clyde Edwards-Helaire this week. They're going to work him in in the rotation.

HOWIE LONG: Well, that's huge for them. The last time these two teams played, they were just coming off a loss to the Raiders where they threw the ball all over the field and didn't focus on the run game, and Buffalo played coverage and defied them to run the football and they did. They ran it for over -- for over 200 yards, and Helaire was a big part of that.

And despite being -- having the seventh highest blitz rate in the league, Buffalo blitzed zero times that week. And given, you know, Mahomes' situation, the fact that they get Matt Milano back, Tremaine Edmunds is healthy at linebacker, I'd expect them to play coverage, but I expect to see more blitzes.

TERRY BRADSHAW: Buffalo today, folks, listen, you're going to love watching Josh Allen play. Mahomes we all know about. There's not a better arm in the NFL than Josh Allen. You'll see it on display today. He will fire it deep. Could be as many as 80 passes thrown today because one thing Buffalo will do, they will hardly run. They will throw. Go back to last week against Baltimore. 16 straight passes out of 17 first plays.

Now, here's another thing that's going to be good. It's going to be in the slot guy. You're going to have Sneed on -- L'Jarius Sneed.

CURT MENEFEE: L'Jarius Sneed out of Louisiana Tech. He'll be a -- he'll be the guy out of the slot.

HOWIE LONG: 80 passes.

CURT MENEFEE: Yeah, that AFC championship game coming your way a little bit later, but right now let's get back to the NFC title game.

And this has really been a memorable season for Packer running back Aaron Jones. Been named to his first pro bowl. A lot of things have stood out, but it's been a single moment stands apart.

Tom Rinaldi has more on Jones' special season, some special cleats, and a very special little boy.

AARON JONES: Through the cleats, I hope she sees her son just saying, "I love you, Mommy. Everything's okay. I'm right here with you."

[LAUGHTER]

TOM RINALDI: Growing up in Western New York, Ethan Haley was always playing and smiling and sketching.

>> He loved art. He was always coloring or drawing.

>> He would just stop and then all of a sudden say, "I want to draw." I think he could make his dreams a reality.

TOM RINALDI: Ethan's reality changed in 2018 the week of his tenth birthday when doctors saw a shadow on a scan.



>> We told him what it was and that it was cancer and that he needed surgery. And he just, you know, okay, let's do this, we're going to fight it.

TOM RINALDI: So began the surgeries, the courses of radiation, fighting the tumors in his brain and then his spine, as Ethan twice beat back the cancer.

[Bell ringing]

>> He just had a strong will to live. Like, he was not going to lay down and just not let it dictate who he was.

TOM RINALDI: In the winter of 2020, scans revealed four new tumors in Ethan's brain, with nothing more doctors could do.

>> He told me he was dying unless there's a miracle. This time he just said it. He knew it, but he accepted it and lived fully, knowing that he was dying.

TOM RINALDI: Ethan drew comfort from his faith, family and his art. Entering a contest to design shoes for Green Bay Packers' running back Aaron Jones to help raise awareness for pediatric cancer research.

As part of the NFL's "My Cause, My Cleats" campaign, in November, Jones surprised see than on a Zoom call.

AARON JONES: Hey, what's up, Ethan. This is Aaron Jones. I wanted to let you know that not only you're a finalist, but you're the winner. And I got your cleats right here. I sent something to your house as well. It's only right you get a pair of the cleats you designed.

ETHAN HALEY: Awesome.

TOM RINALDI: Week 13, Jones had the longest run of his career in Ethan's shoes.

>> He's got a chance at the 10, to the 5, to the end zone.

>> What a run.

>> Touchdown, Aaron Jones.

>> What a run.

AARON JONES: He was right there with me and he knows when I got in the end zone, that was for him. I might have had Jones on the back of my jersey, but I had Ethan right here in the front.

>> To see Aaron run in Ethan's cleats, that was just -- it was super special.

TOM RINALDI: Two weeks after that game, December 20th, Ethan Haley died. He was 12 years old. For his memorial, he recorded a lesson for all who knew him.

ETHAN HALEY: I have learned that my body's just an outer shell. It's my heart that really matters. I hope that my walk through cancer has been a light to you.

AARON JONES: I'm always going to have a connection to him forever. I'm sad because I wanted to grow our relationship and build upon it, but I'm glad I had a positive effect and left his family with something that they can always remember.

TOM RINALDI: As the Packers play their biggest game of the season, one family will be watching, cheering, remembering.

AARON JONES: I hope they see their son right there with me and they know that everything that's happening is for him.

>> We'll see a guy running for Ethan and we'll see Ethan cheering. He would have been super excited. My boy.

[MUSIC]

TOM RINALDI: The Haley family wanted to share Ethan's story as part of the testimony to his great faith, but also to continue to raise awareness for pediatric research, these great foundations on Alex's lemonade stand that you saw featured on the cleats that Jones wore. The family hopes that one day they'll be able to thank Jones in person, but this day they'll be watching and they believe that Ethan will, Curt, as well from on high to see if Jones can help carry the Packers to a Super Bowl.

CURT MENEFE: Thank you, Tom --

HOWIE LONG: Wow.

CURT MENEFE: -- and Ethan's family for finding a way to bring words to an unspeakable tragedy. I mean that.

HOWIE LONG: And anybody that has a child, to have that kind of faith and poise and courage, pretty amazing. Inspirational story.

CURT MENEFE: Absolutely. Maybe that's the word, inspirational.

All right. We will get back to football on the other side as we take a quick break brought to you by Truist and get you all set for Tom Brady and the Buccaneers heading to



Lambeau, getting ready to try and get to the Super Bowl. Super Bowl LV is on the other side, but of course, so is Aaron Rodgers who will try and prevent that from happening, get to his second Super Bowl game and maybe win his second Super Bowl. The first time he's been at home in an NFC championship game.

And speaking of Lambeau Field and frozen tundra, how about One Ice Sculpture Company. They've been able to carve out a new business model. Here's a look at them sponsored by Intuit QuickBooks.

[COMMERCIAL]

>> There is a lot to live up to if you are the mayor of Titledown U.S.A. is, Bart Starr won five championships in seven years, including the first two Super Bowls.

After a long cold winter in the tundra, Brett Favre returned the franchise to glory, adding a third Lombardi. Sure, Aaron Rodgers got them a fourth Super Bowl title, but it's been ten years and the Titledown natives are getting restless.

CURT MENEFE: Well, they've got a hot team coming into this one. The Packers have won seven straight games. The Bucs, on the other hand, they're winners of six in a row. Each team playing its best football heading into today's title game.

Jay Glazer, though, who will be in and who will be out, brought to you by GEICO?

JAY GLAZER: We know that Antonio Brown is out of this game, but what you didn't know going into today is that Antoine Winfield, Jr., one of their best surprises this year on this team, Bruce Arians, I talked to him this morning, said, "I think he's going to be okay." They brought him out here for pregame warm-ups. He was not able to accelerate. He is out of this game. This is a huge loss for that secondary trying to go against Aaron Rodgers and those weapons.

And then on the other side also, when I talked to Matt LaFleur last night, he too was nervous about one of his defensive backs, Kevin King. He missed the first go-around when they played the Bucs early in the season jerk. Kevin King had back spasms, but he is good to go in this game. Also, Krys Barnes, he broke his thumb last week. He's just going to cast it up. He's going to be good to go. But huge loss for the Buc in Winfield.

CURT MENEFE: Absolutely. He has been a key rookie for them. All right. Thanks a lot, Jay.

You know what? The last time Green Bay actually hosted

an NFC title game, it was January 2008. It was also Brett Favre's final game as a Packer. Michael Strahan and the Giants beat them to go on to the Super Bowl.

We were there and it was so cold, Jimmy filled up a glass of water to start the pregame show. By kickoff, it was frozen solid.

Erin Andrews, it was negative 3 degrees back then, minus 24 windchill. The question is -- it looks a little bit warmer today. How is it?

ERIN ANDREWS: It's not bad, although can I just say Jimmy's hair is still flawless in those temperatures. I mean, we got to get back to that. What is his secret?

As you guys mentioned, it's been a while since the NFC championship was here at Lambeau. And as Aaron Rodgers told me, it feels right.

I'll tell you what else feels right, his mindset. And you know, as I was preparing for week six of this very matchup, I spoke to Rodgers' lineman, David Bakhtiari. He was telling me a story when the Packers went to camp. He said Rodgers was happy, he was laughing, having a good time. David telling me a happy excited Aaron Rodgers is a dangerous one. I just got to get him to February. Well, we have four quarters till that big game in February.

and Before we even think about this, can we just enjoy this backdrop? Lambeau Field, NFC championships and the two -- two of the best ever to play.

[MUSIC]

ERIN ANDREWS: You don't need me to set this out. I mean, the NFC championship is back at Lambeau. If last week felt normal, how do you think this week is going to feel?

AARON RODGERS: I think normal as well. I mean, it's been 13 years since we hosted an NFC championship. I remember that day. Yeah, it's been a while.

ERIN ANDREWS: Last year you told me you remember 14 after you lost to Seattle, and you said you were just in shock.

>> And this championship game goes to Seattle.

ERIN ANDREWS: Do you ever reflect on the emotions on those NFC championships?

AARON RODGERS: All the time.



>> Both seasons have ended in heartbreak.

AARON RODGERS: I think there's a lot of lessons to be learned from your experiences and for me in my sport, I've had a lot of them. A lot of highs and some tough ones as well. The one thing you definitely take with them is that emotion, remembering how you felt when it's just kind of over. Sitting with that, I think, is important. Not running away from it or not acknowledging with it. Sitting with it and understand how special it is, because the opposite of -- of that highest of high is that sadness because you put so much into it.

>> MVP!

ERIN ANDREWS: Everyone believes that you're on your way to your third MVP of your career. But you're trying to savor the moment this year.

>> Taking himself to the end zone. He's in there.

>> Aaron Rodgers is playing maybe the best ball of his life and he's 37.

ERIN ANDREWS: What has it allowed you to enjoy more this year that maybe you hadn't in years past?

AARON RODGERS: Well, I think it's just all the little things that are so special that -- that pass by most people without thinking about them. Sometimes you've got to pinch yourself and realize how special it is. You know, we fly private. We have police escorts. It's -- you know, it's not real. Like, it's not real life.

>> Rodgers looks to throw.

AARON RODGERS: This whole thing is about the experience and the journey and there's just some cool moments along the way.

>> Great job.

AARON RODGERS: The conversations you can have. If you maybe take your headphones off and -- and engage with the person next to you. I think there's a lot of cool moments that you might miss if you're putting it on autopilot and kind of flying through the season.

>> The Bucs, with the help from a 43-year-old quarterback named Brady, get into the NFC championship game for that matchup against Aaron --

ERIN ANDREWS: Speaking of Tom, you've been here before, he's been here before. How do you manage the magnitude of this game, this moment?

AARON RODGERS: Well, yay, this is what we do.

ERIN ANDREWS: But still, I don't care how much you're paid or how long you have been doing it, it is massive.

AARON RODGERS: If it was easy, everybody could do it. That's why we're in this position, because it isn't easy. You know, when the playoffs kind of shut down and you saw the seven teams, I felt like, you know, at some point we're going to have to beat Tampa to get to the -- to the Super Bowl. And we're out there doing what we're supposed to do, we're going to be there at -- right at the end.

ERIN ANDREWS: I can't wait for this. And of course, right over my shoulder, 2010, the last time Aaron Rodgers played in his one and only Super Bowl, I asked him what's the key in getting back there. He said, "We have to stay consistent and take care of the ball." Loved his answer. When all eyes and cameras are on him, when the going gets tough, he said, "I'm used to it. They're always on me."

Terry, that's like you. I mean, how do you even share the spotlight with these two quarterbacks? It's not even fair.

TERRY BRADSHAW: You know, he's right. Come on, Erin. It's always about quarterbacks in these game. We've got four great quarterbacks playing today, the AFC and NFC combined. The thing about Aaron Rodgers, I'm sure a lot of folks out there are hoping that he wins this game because they're tired of Tom Brady. Well, I happen to like Tom Brady quite a bit and I like Aaron Rodgers. Don't turn the football over, protect it. Carlton wraps play action passes. Hit the big plays. Don't get behind early. Recall last years game against the 49ers. They were down 27-0 at halftime. Game over.

I don't think that's going to happen today. We're in for a real treat watching Aaron Rodgers in this running attack and he's got an offensive line that gives him time. They have everything in Green Bay that they need offensively to go to the Super Bowl.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: And, you know, T.B., there's so much said about -- you know, you said about quarterbacks, but it's also about the weapons that these quarterbacks have. Everybody was saying Aaron Rodgers, he has no weapons going into the season. Well, Davante Adams has emerged as possibly the best wide receiver in the league. You also have Aaron Jones in that running game. Marques Valdes-Scantling and Alan Lazard, they stepped up big in these playoffs and whenever they've been needed throughout the season. And Robert Tonyan, the tight end, has caught 11 touchdown passes this season as well.



But the overlooked weapon for this team is the offensive line. Aaron Rodgers' only been sacked 20 times this season. That is the least amount of sacks he's ever had in his 13-year career, in a season. They have to keep him clean today. But so much has been made about what Brady has and the weapons. If you look them up and you match them up man for man, Green Bay has as many if not more weapons than Tampa Bay does.

HOWIE LONG: Yeah, Michael, and I agree, and it's certainly a great matchup with the quarterbacks and wide receivers. But the two defenses -- this defense of Green Bay is built to kind of complement this explosive offense. And in many ways, how this offense goes, particularly early on, how close the game, do they get behind, will dictate the terms of how they play on defense.

The knock on them last year in the playoffs and during the regular season was their inability to stop the run game. And in -- and in some ways earlier in the year, the same question was being asked. They've been better as of late.

Anybody who saw that Tampa Bay run game last week with Jones and Fournette, it was impressive. They were patient. They pounded New Orleans, who in my mind is a better defense. Mike Patton and that defense have their hands full with this group.

TERRY BRADSHAW: I thought Fournette made a real good statement last year because he came in from Jacksonville. He said, "Hey, this is what I can really be." He's been awfully impressive running the football.

CURT MENEFEE: Jimmy, what have you got, bud?

JIMMY JOHNSON: Hey, turn that thermos -- hey, turn that thermostat down to 62. I want to get ready for this ballgame now. You know, Coach Matt LaFleur, he understands this game is going to come down to pass protection and the explosive plays.

Now, Michael, you mentioned that offensive line. You know, that offensive line did not play as well against Tampa the first time. The blitz really hurt 'em. And I expect to see the blitz more in this ballgame.

What Tampa Bay did, they played man coverage, all-out blitz. They kept a linebacker in a spot position taking away the crossing routes and, you know, Rodgers' scrambles.

Now, what Rodgers can do, the quick throws, the outside throws, the double moves, and then the deep post. If he can protect, they'll get some explosive plays.

CURT MENEFEE: Well, it's a little bit colder than 62 in Green Bay, by the way, Jimmy.

But as our coverage heats up, we're less than half an hour away of kickoff of the NFC championship game. Tom Brady on the road at Lambeau, we'll talk to him, next.

[COMMERCIAL]

ANNOUNCER: Coming soon to Fox, watch as four playoff teams compete for the love of their lives on "The Trophyette."

>> Wow, I've never seen anything like her, probably because I never won a Super Bowl. Holy Gronkowski. She's going to make one heck a trophy wife.

>> You can call me cheesy, but I think I'm falling in love. These guys have no chance. The trophy and I met last year, and we went all the way.

>> Oh!

>> Ha, ha. Sorry about that!

I see a table, I got to jump through it. It's a Buffalo thing.

>> They move the chains of love.

>> I went for the fourth down with a backup quarterback. That's how crazy I am for you. Don't worry. I brought protection. Do you mind if I feed you?

[LAUGHTER]

>> You're so funny.

>> And penalty flags will fly.

>> You never listen. Why can't I get caught --

>> No, you're not.

>> You always said we could because we got Brady.

>> Give me a break. But that's just what old people do. They move to Florida.

>> You've never even been with a Super Bowl trophy before. You wouldn't even know what to do with her.

>> I've seen videos!

>> And hearts will be broken.

>> I didn't even care that she's been with 54 other teams.

>> But in the end, only one team will take home the trophy.

>> Me.

>> Me.

>> Probably not me, but I'll try.

[MUSIC]

>> "The Trophyette."

CURT MENEFE: And I think we found the one TV show that Michael Strahan is not the host of.

[LAUGHTER]

CURT MENEFE: Speaking of Strahan, we bring him in once again to talk about his buddy Tom Brady from New York.

JIMMY JOHNSON: Where is the tie? Where is the tie?

CURT MENEFE: The last sack you ever had in your career was in the Super Bowl against Tom Brady. You've even got -- I can see up in the upper corner there the Sports Illustrated cover.

Were you able to stop Tom Brady? I think this has been --

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Yeah. You know what?

CURT MENEFE: -- kind of a hallmark thing in your career. You got a chance to sit down with a guy who's now your buddy.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Yeah. He is my friend, Curt. I've got to say that. That Fox 45, that was a funny piece, by the way. Whoever did that, very well done. Way to finish up our season.

But, you know, that was my last -- the last sack of my career, and it was one that took -- it was one of the plays that was made during that game so that Tom Brady and the Patriots -- we kind of ruined their perfect season. He was not very happy about that. He kind of hated me.

But in all seriousness, he is a good friend. He has turned it around. It's nothing short of amazing what he's doing. He looks like he's 24 instead of 43. And now he has this Bucs team on the verge of a Super Bowl. And if they can make it, it would be the first time a team in the NFL has a game at home for the Super Bowl. And if anybody can do that, it

is Tom Brady. He is the man who's always making history.

All right. This piece is started with a quote that you made saying, "Yeah, the cold weather is something I'm definitely..."

TOM BRADY: You know, I think there's one thing I definitely won't ever miss. I don't know if I'm going to see the cold weather outside of ski season.

>> Welcome to Green Bay, baby.

TOM BRADY: Here we go. I know. Let's figure this out. Come back to bite me a bit. But if I'm going to be in the cold, Green Bay in January is a pretty good place to be.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: I remember telling the guys, "Cold is temporary. Winning is forever."

TOM BRADY: I like that. I like that. We've got an opportunity to do something about it. Sometimes you're never in this position. Or sometimes, you know, you work hard and, you know, you get a bad bounce, or sometimes you're injured. And this is the year we've got to take advantage because there are four really good football teams left.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Yeah. You said getting to the championship game is actually harder than the Super Bowl.

What did you mean by that? Why do you think that's the case?

TOM BRADY: Winning a road playoff game is a very difficult thing to go. You know, when it's the Super Bowl, neutral site, two weeks to prepare, you know, a team you don't know very well. I think there's just a lot of familiarity with these interconference teams.

>> Hang in there.

>>Pass to the end zone. Gronkowski, he makes the catch.

TOM BRADY: You know, when you look at the schedule every year, you think, All right. Green Bay's going to be in it, like they've been in every year since Aaron's been playing. And they've got a great defense. They've got great playmakers.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Sounds like you're trying to kind of butter them up a little bit if they see this.

TOM BRADY: You taught me better than anyone how to butter people up. Nobody can butter people up quite like



you.

>> Brady takes the snap, throws a deep ball downfield.  
Touchdown!

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Have you really sat back and thought about this? Very little offseason, new players, new coaches, new city, COVID, all these adjustments, and you're one game away from a Super Bowl. That really is amazing.

TOM BRADY: Yeah. That would be an amazing accomplishment. But you don't get to the championship game by winning one game. You know, you've got to go the distance. You've got to play 16.

[MUSIC]

TOM BRADY: So if you want to go to the next step, you've got to play great football against the best teams, and that's what the Packers are all about.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: What kind of game, you against Aaron Rodgers? Hand it off? Run the ball? Or do you want a passing shootout?

TOM BRADY: I like that. That would be pretty fun. I don't know. Look, he shoots it out as good as anybody, so -- you know, he's an incredible player, the way he can throw the football. He's one of a kind. He's one of the great quarterbacks in NFL history.

So it's one football game. We know there's a lot at stake. It's got to be our best football. It's got to be our best plays. And it's got to be everyone executing at their highest. The fact that we're in this position means that we're prepared. We're four quarters away.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: And one thing about Tom Brady, he keeps everything in perspective, and he's full of confidence. And there is no secret to why the Bucs are one game away from going to the Super Bowl, and it's because of this guy, Tom Brady.

This is a team that had all the talent. They just didn't have the right perspective. They didn't have the right confidence. They didn't have the right leader.

Now they have the right leader. And if he can lead them through this game, this could be one of the biggest accomplishments we've ever seen out of any player in the NFL, to go from conference to conference, from team to team, and especially with all of the troubles and all of the things he had to go through for this season.

And to end up in this position, end up in a Super Bowl would be the biggest accomplishment possibly of Tom Brady's career, Curt.

CURT MENEFEE: Yeah, you know, he went to nine Super Bowls with the Patriots. This may be more impressive by switching conferences and all the things that Michael just talked about.

By the way, Michael, that was a great interview.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: It was.

CURT MENEFEE: Just seeing Tom Brady just sit back and relaxed and comfortable.

HOWIE LONG: Well, that's him. That's him. I made him comfortable.

TERRY BRADSHAW: It think America will get an idea, hey, that's a pretty cool guy, that Tom Brady. Obviously I'm a little embarrassed. I didn't realize that I -- he was such a big fan of mine, wearing my T.B. hat and my T.B. shirt.

CURT MENEFEE: Tom Brady. That's for Tom Brady.

TERRY BRADSHAW: Oh, okay. Thank you for that.

He is to me by far the best quarterback we've seen in the last 25 years. He has everything. Both these quarterbacks do, but Tom, poise, leadership, just an amazing -- go back to the first Super Bowl 20 when -- when they beat the Rams. He came in and led them down for the field goal. If you look at Carolina, he came down and led them to a field goal. He is just an amazing comeback player.

Don't forget two years ago when Patrick Mahomes was the MVP in the league and throwing for 50 touchdown passes. Who went into Kansas City and beat them? Tom Brady and the New England Patriots.

Today, I don't think there'll be any difference. There's an old Eagles song, "There's going to be a Heartache Tonight," and I think that heartache's going to be in Green Bay.

HOWIE LONG: We'll get the official pick in just a second. That's some good stuff right there.

TERRY BRADSHAW: Top that, big guy. Can you top that?

JIMMY JOHNSON: Hey, Terry. Terry, you said the best in the last 25 years. Well, what did you play 26 years ago?

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY JOHNSON: Is that what it was?

TERRY BRADSHAW: I played 55 years ago, old man.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY JOHNSON: You look at this Tampa Bay offense and they've had to make adjustments all year long. And that's understandable, you know, with new players, no preseason. You know, you look at it, you know, Brady struggled with the deep pass early on. Then Antonio Brown comes on and they started getting the explosive plays. Now Antonio Brown's out, so the running game's going to be big. Fournette was new. Ronald Jones, he was injured. So the running game was inconsistent. You look at it against New Orleans. They only rushed for 8 yards and then they struggled in a -- right before the bye-week when they didn't run the football very well.

Well, now they feel like they've got two runners that can really control the game. The running game will be big today and they rushed in the playoffs right now, rushing for 135 yards a game.

You know, they will -- will have balance today and that'll be a key for Tom Brady.

HOWIE LONG: Yeah, I think the key for this Tampa Bay defense, which is young, big, fast, athletic -- Devon White's a great example. Watch him today. They sprinkle in a little Ndamukong Suh, who looking to, I'm sure, reacquaint himself with Aaron Rodgers. Jason Pierre-Paul, Michael's old teammate. The key to this game for this defense is winning on first down. Everything revolves around protection, the deep balls that Green Bay gets. It all centers around the running game. And there's a three-headed monster at running back and this defense, if they win on first down, they take away the play action pass. For example, Aaron Rodgers, 22 of his 50 touchdowns are a byproduct of play action passes.

TERRY BRADSHAW: You think Tampa Bay knows that?

HOWIE LONG: Yeah, they do. But it comes down to stopping it.

CURT MENEFEE: Before we get these guys to give their official picks on both championship games today, time for us to give away another truck. Ha, Terry's Ford F-150. Last week we gave it to a woman named Terri who lives in Maryland. Now it's your chance. Someone is guaranteed to win. All you've got to do is download the Fox Super 6

app and play the game. Not only will someone win an F-150, someone else can win half a million dollars in our picks contest.

Let's get to the official picks, starting with the NFC championship game. Jimmy, you go first. Who you taking to go to the Super Bowl?

JIMMY JOHNSON: I've got Green Bay by three points playing at home in the snow.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: All right, Jimmy. I have Tampa by seven.

HOWIE LONG: I'm going to go Tampa by four.

TERRY BRADSHAW: Heartache tonight. You know who I'm going with. I'm going with Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the T.B., Tom Brady.

TONY GONZALEZ: Oh. Oh, that's a good choice. I'm going to go opposite of that. I'm going to go with Green Bay. I think Green Bay is one of the most complete teams. That defense is playing really well. A lot of talk of offense, but the defense is playing really well.

CURT MENEFEE: Hello, Tony Gonzalez.

TONY GONZALEZ: Hey, guys, how are you?

CURT MENEFEE: The championship game, Bills and Chiefs, Jimmy.

JIMMY JOHNSON: Kansas City by 7 at home.

MICHAEL STRAHAN: Terry Bradshaw forgot his own initials. I just want to throw that in there.

Kansas City by nine.

HOWIE LONG: I'll go Buffalo by four -- Buffalo by three.

CURT MENEFEE: Do we even need to ask.

All right. Chiefs are going to win this game. He's taking his Chiefs. That's later on.

Up next is the NFC championship game. Either Tom Brady or Aaron Rodgers is going to the Super Bowl. We'll find out!