

Post-Tribune SPORTS

VIKINGS 38, BEARS 10

BACK FOR MORE?



JOSE M. OSORIO/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Bears coach John Fox said after Sunday's season-finale loss that he "never worried about job security" and is "not going to start now."

Now it's time to find out what will happen with coach Fox's staff



BRAD BIGGS

The first three days of the offseason promise to be fascinating as the Bears have a little less than 72 hours to ensure general manager Ryan Pace and coach John Fox are in lockstep heading into Year 3 of the rebuild. We'll wait until 11 a.m.

Wednesday's 11 a.m. scheduled media session at Halas Hall to hear from these guys. That's barring something unexpected beforehand like chairman George McCaskey firing his third coach since the end of the 2012 season.

The Bears set new team lows in the 16-game era (1978-present) with 13 losses and an 0-8 road mark, achieving both as they were whipped 38-10 Sunday at U.S. Bank Stadium by a Vikings team with nothing at stake. The Bears didn't limp to the finish line as much as they

played dead, losing their final two games by a combined score of 79-31.

Injuries will be a popular topic until they strap on helmets and pads again and try to remain healthier as a team. The McCaskeys, who paid Marc Trestman to not coach the team the past two seasons, will point to close games against the Packers, Lions and Giants in the second half of the season with a depleted roster and hope a second-year turnaround directed by Fox comes only a year late.

The upshot is the Bears have

the third overall pick for the first time since selecting offensive tackle Lionel Antoine from Southern Illinois in 1972. They're hoping to get more of an impact player this time around.

The first focus of the off-season is what changes, if any, will be made to Fox's staff? It's difficult to imagine everything remaining intact. Rumors have been flying for more than half the season, including some that maybe these guys are not on the same page when it comes to the

Turn to **Bears, Page 4**

Worst seasons in franchise history

Year	W	L	Pct.
1969	1	13	.071
Head coach: Jim Dooley			
2016	3	13	.188
Head coach: John Fox			
1973	3	11	.214
Head coach: Abe Gibrón			
1997	4	12	.250
Head coach: Dave Wannstedt			
1998	4	12	.250
Head coach: Dave Wannstedt			
2002	4	12	.250
Head coach: Dick Jauron			

Note: The NFL went to a 16-game schedule in 1978.

By the numbers

14 Turnovers by the Bears over the last three games, including 10 interceptions and two fumbles by QB Matt Barkley.

1,313 Rushing yards by Jordan Howard this season, breaking Matt Forte's record of 1,238 set in 2008.

3 Placement of the Bears in the 2017 NFL draft. The Browns (1-15) hold the No. 1 overall pick.

.281 Winning percentage for Bears coach John Fox after two seasons, going 6-10 in 2015 and 3-13 in 2016.

11 Takeaways for the Bears, breaking a single-season franchise low set last season (17). The Bears finished with eight interceptions and three fumbles recovered.

NFL playoff pairings

NFC wild card

■ No. 6 Lions (9-7) at No. 3 Seahawks (10-5-1), Saturday or Sunday, TBA

■ No. 5 Giants (11-5) at No. 4 Packers (10-6), Sat. or Sun., TBA
First-round byes: No. 1 Cowboys (13-3), No. 2 Falcons (11-5).

AFC wild card

■ No. 6 Dolphins (10-6) at No. 3 seed Pittsburgh (11-5), Saturday or Sunday, TBA

■ No. 5 Raiders (12-4) at No. 4 Texans (9-7), Saturday or Sunday, TBA
First-round byes: No. 1 Patriots (14-2), No. 2 Chiefs (12-4).

2017 draft order

Team	W	L	T
1. Browns	1	15	-
2. 49ers	2	14	-
3. Bears	3	13	-
4. Jaguars	3	13	-
5. Titans	4	12	-
6. Jets	5	11	-
7. Chargers	5	11	-
8. Panthers	6	10	-
9. Bengals	6	9	1
10. Bills	7	9	-

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Late letdown leads to loss

Minnesota pulls away in OT to beat Purdue, snap 7-game win streak

BY JEFF WASHBURN
Associated Press

WEST LAFAYETTE — Nate Mason made sure it was a very special weekend in Indiana for the Pitino family — son Richard, who is the Minnesota coach, and father Rick, the Louisville coach.

Mason contributed 31 points, 11 assists and six rebounds on Sunday, and Minnesota pulled away in overtime for a 91-82 Big Ten victory against No. 15 Purdue in Mackey Arena.

On Saturday, Rick Pitino's No. 6 Cardinals dominated Indiana 77-62 in Bankers Life Fieldhouse. Rick was in the crowd Sunday to watch his son's team improve to

13-2, 1-1 in the Big Ten after struggling to an 8-23, 2-16 mark last season.

Louisville also defeated Purdue 71-64 on Nov. 30 in Louisville in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge.

But Sunday's game was all about Mason, who made 11 of 18 field-goal attempts and 7 of 10 free throws.

"It was a big win," Mason said. "It means a lot, not only to me but to the young guys. We were just so excited to get the big win. Everybody was locked in, and everybody was focused. The rim got pretty big for me. I just kept shooting, and they just kept falling."

Purdue guard P.J. Thompson, who spent most of the game trying to guard Mason, credited the Golden Gophers' leading scorer, who came in averaging 13.5 points.

"He's a good player," Thompson

said. "He came out ready to play and had his team ready to play. More than Nate Mason, it was on us. We've got to come out ready to play."

Richard Pitino was thrilled to complete the Pitino family sweep of the Boilermakers and Hoosiers.

"I think this is a great win," Richard Pitino said. "I don't know when the last time we won here. We deserved it, but we had to go out there and take it. It was great to play well right away and get our confidence going."

Eric Curry scored seven of his 10 in overtime for Minnesota. The teams traded baskets to begin the extra period before a Curry basket began an 11-0, victory-clinching run that snapped the Boilermakers' seven-game winning streak.

Turn to **Boilers, Page 2**



R BRENT SMITH/AP

Minnesota forward Jordan Murphy, right, drives to the basket on Purdue forward Vincent Edwards during Sunday's game.