

Green Bay great in dominant win over Lions

Parsons records first sack with Packers

BY LUKE REIMER
Green & Gold Express

Micah Parsons picked up his first sack in the green and gold, as the Green Bay Packers laid a beat down on the Detroit Lions, by a tune of 27-13 on Sept. 7 in Green Bay.

While the game was filled with a lot of positive notes for the Packers, none may have been as encouraging as Parsons' fourth-quarter sack on Lions quarterback Jared Goff. As Goff was rolling out to his right after a broken play, Parsons chased him down, reminiscent of a tiger taking down its prey.

"It looked like the speed of light, or a shooting star coming out of the sky and closing ground fast," said Packers head coach Matt LaFleur. "I mean, that's why he is here. I mean, that was really exciting to see. I know our crowd reacted the right way as well."

It was no secret that Parsons was the main attraction in this game, as the crowd cheered as loud as ever when he was announced during the defensive introductions. In total, Parsons finished the game playing 29 snaps and recording one sack on three pressures.

"I couldn't be more happy to get my first win in Lambeau," said Parsons, on his first game with Green Bay. "Having amazing fans – just everything overall, it was a one-of-one experience for me and I told (Jordan Love) that is our

first win, and we are going to keep staking them."

Parsons was just one cog in the system for a Packers defense that stifled the Lions all afternoon. Green Bay held Detroit's dynamic rushing duo of Jahmyr Gibbs and David Montgomery to just 44 yards, as the team totaled nine tackles for losses.

With Detroit struggling to run the ball, it was also unable to find success in the pass game. Goff finished the game completing 31-of-39 passes for just 225 yards and one touchdown, adding an interception. Packers safety Evan Williams was on the receiving end of Goff's interception.

On the offensive side of the ball, the Packers started out hot and never looked back. Green Bay went into halftime with a 17-3 lead, as Love threw two first-half touchdowns to Tucker Kraft and Jayden Reed. In total, Love finished the game completing 16-of-22 passes for 188 yards and two touchdowns. While the strong passing attack tapered off in the second half, Josh Jacobs and the running game picked up in the second half.

After finishing the first half of the game with just eight yards on the ground, Jacobs and the run game picked up late, as he finished the game with 66 rushing yards on 19 carries. Jacobs also added a touchdown late in the fourth quarter for his first

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On Micah Parsons' first snap, the 6-foot-3, 250-pound pass rusher bullied his way through Detroit's line to pressure Lions quarterback Jared Goff on a short third-down throw to running back Jahmyr Gibbs that lost two yards. It was the first of three pressures Parsons had in the game.

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The Lions were the NFL's top scoring offense a year ago, but the combination of pressure on quarterback Jared Goff and coverage on the back end relegated him to taking short, checkdown throws all game. Meanwhile, the Lions' two-headed rushing attack of David Montgomery and Jahmyr Gibbs was bottled up. On 20 carries, they combined for just 44 of Detroit's 46 total rushing yards. They combined for 14 receptions but gained just 49 yards on those.

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Defense front seven key to Green Bay's success this season

Parsons, Gary, Van Ness among most important Packers

BY LUKE REIMER
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In the team's first game of the season, it was no secret that Green Bay's driving force to a victory was the stellar play from its defensive line and linebackers. Last season, the Detroit Lions led the NFL in scoring and were sixth in the NFL in total rushing yards. On Sunday against Green Bay, the Lions were only able to muster six points, before a garbage time touchdown (to make it 13 points) and were only able to rush for

46 yards. With struggles in both rushing and scoring, seeing what the Packers were able to do on its front seven shows that this team is going to go as far as that unit takes it. During the game, Green Bay totaled nine tackles for losses, nine quarterback hits and four sacks. Out of those nine tackles for losses, seven players recorded them, including Quay Walker and Colby Wooden recording two each. Micah Parsons is going to be a big key to that front seven for the Packers, but

as it showed in this game against Detroit, just his presence alone is enough to free up other players to succeed in their roles. As he looks to come back from a back injury, as well as get back into football shape, Parsons played just 29 snaps. During those 29 snaps, Parsons was double-teamed on 23% of them, giving players like Lukas Van Ness, who recorded a half of a sack, and Rashan Gary, who recorded 1.5 sacks, the opportunity to get after the quarterback.

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Jordan Love finished that first drive with a 15-yard touchdown pass to tight end Tucker Kraft on third-and-nine, fitting a pass over the middle into a tight window. It was the third of four straight third-down conversions on the first two drives, completing four passes to four targets for 68 yards as Love was on his way to a 128.6 passer rating (16-of-22, 188 yards, two touchdowns, zero interceptions).

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Love's QB rating against Lions third best in career

Green bay defeated Detroit 27-13 in the home opener at Lambeau Field on Sept. 7.

Following are several postgame notes.

- The game against the Lions at Lambeau Field was the first Week 1 home game since 2018 and the first for Matt LaFleur.
- The Packers have won their first home game of the season in 13 consecutive seasons (2013-25), which ties the Miami Dolphins (1976-88) for the longest winning streak in home openers in NFL history.
- Green Bay limited the Lions to their lowest point total since Dec. 10, 2023, at Chicago (28-13 loss). Detroit had scored 16-plus points in 21 consecutive regular-season games, averaging 32.6 points per game in those 21 contests.
- The Packers allowed only 46 rushing yards on 22 attempts (2.1 avg.), the fewest rushing yards posted by Detroit since Oct. 15, 2023, at Tampa Bay (40 yards).
- Green Bay had 10 players record at least one reception Sept. 7, its first time doing so since Nov. 19, 2023, vs. the Los Angeles Chargers (10 players).
- The Packers did not allow a sack. Dating back to last season, Green Bay has not allowed a sack in four of its last seven contests.
- The Week 2 home game against the Washington Commanders marks



Green Bay Packers alumni John Kuhn, top, and LeRoy Butler and coach Mike McCarthy, bottom, were among the past greats attending the home opener against the Lions, bringing with them memories of Super Bowl victories. At right, Josh Jacobs found more success as the game wore on, rushing for 58 yards on 13 attempts in the second half, including a mid-fourth-quarter touchdown that gave the Packers a three-score lead for the first time at 24-6.

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the first time since 2012 that Green Bay has opened the season with two home games over a five-day span.

- Quarterback Jordan Love brought his streak of consecutive passing attempts without an interception to 195, the longest streak of his career.
- The contest was Love's eighth straight game without an interception (minimum 10 attempts), the longest streak by a Packer since Aaron Rodgers' eight-game streak in 2019 (Oct. 20-Dec. 15).

- Love's 128.6 passer rating (16 of 22, 188 yards, two touchdowns, no interceptions) was the third-best mark of his career (minimum 15 attempts).
- Running back Josh Jacobs posted a rushing TD in the fourth quarter, extending his franchise-record streak of games with a rushing TD to nine. Jacobs set a team record with nine straight games with a TD, besting the mark of wide receiver Davante Adams (eight straight in 2024). Jacobs

has posted 13 rushing TDs over his last nine contests.

- Wide receiver Romeo Doubs' 48-yard reception in the second quarter was the longest catch of his career.
- Defensive lineman Micah Parsons posted his first sack in a Green Bay uniform on Sept. 7, giving him 12 sacks over his last 10 games.
- Defensive lineman Rashan Gary registered 1.5 sacks, bringing his career total to 40.5 sacks as he became just the eighth

player in team history to post 40-plus sacks.

- Defensive lineman Colby Wooden made the second start of his career and registered a career-high two tackles for a loss.
- Linebacker Quay Walker matched his career high with two tackles for a loss.
- Safety Evan Williams posted an interception in the second quarter, the second straight season he has recorded an interception in Green Bay's home opener.

- Kicker Brandon McManus connected on both of his field goal attempts (34, 38 yards), bringing his streak of consecutive field goals made to 17. That tie Chris Jacke (1993) for the fourth-longest streak in franchise annals behind only Mason Crosby's streaks of 27, 23 and 19.
- Punter Daniel Whelan posted two punts of 60-plus yards (65, 61), tying his single-game career high (vs. Minnesota on Sept. 29, 2024; vs. Houston on Oct. 20, 2024).

Parsons' presence pleases Packers

Pass rusher plays in first game with Green Bay, and it looks like he'll fit in just fine

The Green Bay Packers acquired Dallas Cowboys defensive lineman Micah Parsons in exchange for defensive lineman Kenny Clark and first-round draft selections in 2026 and 2027, Packers general manager Brian Gutekunst announced Aug. 28.

Parsons (6-3, 250), a fifth-year player out of Penn State University, was originally selected by the Cowboys in the first round of the 2021 NFL Draft. He has registered 12-plus sacks in each of his first four NFL seasons, joining defensive end Reggie White (1985-88) as the only players in league history (since 1982) to accomplish that feat.

"Reggie is like one of the GOATs. I'm just looking at his stats and the fact he had like 70 sacks in like five years is just outrageous to me. I just learned more history about him today, just about how he's the first free agent and how he came here and won championships," Parsons said during this Aug. 29 press conference in Green Bay. "People make the comparisons, but I just looked at him like somebody who won. He came here and did that. I think I can do that, too. I think I can do anything I put my mind to. I looked on that wall and I saw Brett Favre, I saw Reggie, I saw all those legends, and I was like 'I've got to be there.' You go in the draft room and they're all having their hands up. They're all having that moment. I'm looking for that moment. I'm going to take advantage of this moment and maximize it to reach that moment."

In Parsons' first game with Green Bay, a Week 1 win over the Detroit Lions, head coach Matt LaFleur said the newest Packer had a huge impact on the

score of the season. Jacobs' late-game touchdown also gives him the franchise record for most consecutive games with a rushing touchdown with nine.

While the Packers had somewhat of its way with the Lions' defense, it was

put into some tough spots. In fact, on Green Bay's opening drive, Love completed passes on third-and-long three times, including a 15-yard touchdown pass to Kraft on third-and-nine, that Love fit through a very tight window.

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With Parsons taking his time to recover and staying a part of a rotation, Van Ness, Gary, Walker, Wooden and Devonte Wyatt can all get those much needed positive reps to build their confidence.

That confidence will inevitably pay off when Parsons returns to full strength. If the Lions game was any indicator, this front seven will be playing with high confidence all season long.

"You see Van Ness, you see (Karl Brooks), Rashan, you know I don't have to be in a rush to get back, this team is so loaded and the sky is the limit," said Parsons. "I think we are going to be a really good football team."

Stopping the run and putting pressure on the quarterback is ultimately the key to dominating the game on the defensive side of the ball. If you can turn the opponent into a one dimensional offense, the guessing game is eliminated. With a team being one-dimensional and a strong front seven, the defensive backs won't need to cover as long, leading to more pass deflections and interceptions.

Without the household names in the cornerback room for the Packers, getting as much pressure as possible will be key in giving Jordan Love and the offense as many opportunities as possible to score points.

"When you have them backed up and they have to punt and you have a short field and you capitalize on that and go score a touchdown, that is the epitome of complimentary

football," said Packers head coach Matt LaFleur. "That's what we have got to do."

LaFleur talking about complimentary football, goes back to the front seven's effort in limiting opposing offenses. If the defense does its job, it makes the offense's job that much easier, which in turn makes the special teams' job that much easier, leading to that complimentary football.



Micah Parsons (1) battles Penei Sewell (58) while Edgerrin Cooper (56) tackles Jahmyr Gibbs (0). Even when Parsons wasn't directly in on a tackle, his presence allowed other players to shine and make big plays.

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defense overall.

"I thought it was very impactful," LaFleur said. "I think you look at that interception Evan Williams had, it looked like he (Parsons) beat Penei (Sewell) pretty quickly. It looked like he got a pressure. There was another sack where he got pressure on the quarterback, I'm not quite sure who got the sack, but I thought he was pretty impactful in the limited snaps he got."

Parsons definitely opened up some opportunities for other members of the defense.

"I thought all those guys collectively as a unit, I can't remember too many games that I've been a part of where there's nine TFLs and four sacks," LaFleur said. "So that's a credit to the defensive line. Quay Walker had two TFLs; he had a great game. Nine-tackles. Although I did get on him, he had an oppor-

tunity at a pick. We've got to make that play."

The coach said the excitement of adding Parsons matched the excitement of watching him play.

"I think he just, he definitely has an aura about him, and just his style of play fits with our other guys, and I think all those guys are excited to play with him. And they all benefit from that."

Parsons' 52.5 sacks since entering the NFL

in 2021 are the fifth-most sacks by a player in his first four seasons in league history (since 1982). He also has 18 career multi-sack games, tied for the second most in an NFL player's first four seasons (White, 23).

Parsons became the first NFL defensive player since Aaron Donald to be named to the Pro Bowl in each of his first four seasons and the fourth Cowboy in team history to

accomplish that feat (Zack Martin, Emmitt Smith, Mel Renfro).

Parsons has earned All-Pro honors from The Associated Press three times, garnering first-team honors in 2021 and 2022 and second-team recognition in 2023. He was the first Cowboy to win AP defensive rookie of the year and the first defensive rookie in franchise history to be named to the AP All-Pro team.

Packers quarterback Jordan Love said Parsons made a definite impact in his first game, and a good defense helps the offense.

"I think he was limited in some of the opportunities, and he was definitely out there on third downs, and obviously the offense is going to have a plan to try and put as many hands on him as possible, but I think he was definitely making an impact and his presence was felt out there on the field," Love said. "I think our whole defense was doing a great job. The D-line was getting pressure and making (Jared) Goff get the ball out, some checkdowns (and) things like that. They were rallying and making plays, so I think they did a good job of taking away those big, explosive plays."

Clark, who was selected by the Packers in the first round of the 2016 NFL Draft, ranks No. 10 in franchise history in sacks with 35 and No. 4 in games played among Green Bay defensive linemen with 140, trailing only Robert Brown (164), Dave Hanner (160) and Ezra Johnson (148).

Clark earned three trips to the Pro Bowl (2019, 2021, 2023), joining Henry Jordan (1960-61, 1963, 1966) as the only Packers defensive tackles to make three-plus Pro Bowls.

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"I think we had a great plan coming in for our third downs, and obviously third downs come down to executing and going out and making plays," said Love. "I think early on they were playing a lot of man and guys were going out

and winning their one-on-one matchups. You know, I think the O-Line did a great job. They gave me a lot of time back there and kept me clean. I think it all starts up front."

Green Bay converted five third-down plays.

With it seemingly like both Green Bay and Detroit are going to be in contention for the NFC North title, starting off with a win over the Lions is obviously a great start to the season for the Packers, as it already gives the team

an early tiebreaker when it comes to playoff seeding.

"It all starts with the NFC North," said Love. "So to have a North team come in here Week 1, be able to get the job done and go 1-0 in the North is the start we wanted."

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"How many times did they rush? And we held them to 50 yards rushing, so we got some real dogs up front," said Parsons. "That allows me to take my time to get all the way back."

Parsons is alluding to a back injury that has limited him throughout the summer, as well as in the first game of the season. The Packers signed Parsons to a four-year contract, meaning that he is going to

be a part of the team until at least the 2028-29 season. While it would be nice to have him on the field on every single play, he is right, there really does not need to be a rush to get him back.

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MOMENTS

PACKERS BEAT LIONS 27-13 IN SEASON OPENER



Green Bay Packers cornerback Evan Williams (33) eyes up Jahmyr Gibbs as the Detroit running back tries to make his way downfield. Williams also had the game's only interception, jumping in front of Lions quarterback Jared Goff's pass for wide receiver Amon-Ra St. Brown for a pick in the red zone, his second career interception.

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DEFENSE STANDS TALL

LIONS HELD TO 44 RUSHING YARDS, GOFF PICKED OFF ONCE

HO-CHUNK



GAMING

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