

# **Aaron Becker**

# **YARD BARKER**

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# **YARD****BARKER**

## **“GAME RECAPS”**

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- 2. Steelers rookie QB Kenny Pickett after NFL debut: ‘I just play with an edge’**
- 3. Ravens desperate for return of QB Lamar Jackson**
- 4. Steelers WR Diontae Johnson officially owns NFL’s unluckiest record**





Pittsburgh Steelers cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon (25) reacts after intercepting the ball with safety Minkah Fitzpatrick (39) and cornerback Cameron Sutton (20) in the second half against the Cincinnati Bengals. Katie Stratman-USA TODAY Sports



## Steelers no-blink mentality shows in win over Bengals

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 9/12/22

The [Pittsburgh Steelers](#) started a season without Ben Roethlisberger for the first time since 2004 on Sunday, but head coach Mike Tomlin told reporters that new starter Mitchell Trubisky "did not blink" in a dramatic 23-20 win over the Bengals.



**Pittsburgh Steelers**    
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Coach Tomlin on the win over the Bengals 



5:04 PM · Sep 11, 2022 

 2K  Reply  Share

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Although the offense struggled, the stars played well when Pittsburgh needed them most.

Trubisky showed why the Steelers signed him with a heads-up, backyard ball play that set up kicker Chris Boswell's winning 53-yard field goal. Trubisky evaded pressure and found second-year tight end Pat Freiermuth for 26 yards.



**Bob Pompeani**  
@KDPomp · [Follow](#)

This is the play that ultimately won the wildest game of the weekend. Trubisky kept play alive, chose not to dump it off AND they hit Pat Freiermuth— experienced decision



9:05 AM · Sep 12, 2022 

 1.3K  Reply  Share

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The Steelers' defense, led by safety Minkah Fitzpatrick, rose to the challenge in a big way, tallying seven sacks and five turnovers.

The biggest question is the status of outside linebacker T.J. Watt. The reigning Defensive Player of the Year left the game in the second half with an upper-body injury and never returned.

If Watt is out for an extended period, his replacement would be Malik Reed, whom the Steelers recently obtained from the Denver Broncos.

The offense, which gained only 267 yards, needs more from Trubisky and the playmakers, especially if Watt misses extended time. If the unit continues to struggle, Pittsburgh could give rookie QB Kenny Pickett the reins sooner rather than later.





Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Kenny Pickett. Charles LeClaire-USA TODAY Sports



## Steelers rookie QB Kenny Pickett after NFL debut: 'I just play with an edge'

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 10/3/22

The [Pittsburgh Steelers](#) suffered their third straight loss Sunday, a 24-20 defeat at the hands of the New York Jets, but rookie QB Kenny Pickett provided a spark in his first regular season game action. Pittsburgh may have found its new offensive leader.

"I just play with an edge," [Pickett told reporters](#). "I think that was something I wanted to bring to the table. I do not like to lose. It's not a good feeling. I don't want it to be a familiar feeling. I definitely want to get back out there and get a victory and get us back on track."



**Pittsburgh Steelers**   
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QB Kenny Pickett addresses the media following our game against the Jets.



4:49 PM · Oct 2, 2022 

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The Steelers' 2022 first-round pick rushed for two touchdowns, becoming the first quarterback in NFL history to have multiple rushing touchdowns in his first career game, [per ESPN Stats & Info](#).

Pickett, who replaced an ineffective Mitch Trubisky in the second half, showed toughness and demonstrated he was prepared.

"I knew every call in the plan," Pickett said.

Steelers head coach Mike Tomlin wouldn't commit to naming Pickett the full-time starter, but it's hard to believe he won't.

The Steelers face a gauntlet over the next several weeks, with games against the Bills, Buccaneers, Dolphins and Eagles. But it seems time for Pittsburgh to ride with the rookie.





Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson (8) stands on the sideline during the first half against the Pittsburgh Steelers at M&T Bank Stadium. Tommy Gilligan-USA TODAY Sports



# Ravens desperate for return of QB Lamar Jackson

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 1/4/23

The Ravens (10-6) are heading to the playoffs, but it isn't because of their offense. QB [Lamar Jackson](#)'s knee injury has lingered much longer than originally thought, creating concern in Baltimore.

The Ravens have strung together enough wins in the regular season, but they won't be in the postseason for very long if Jackson remains sidelined. Baltimore hasn't scored more than 17 points in five consecutive games for the first time since 2005.



**Jamison Hensley**   
@jamisonhensley · [Follow](#)

The Ravens have been held to 17 or fewer points in five straight games (Lamar Jackson has only played one quarter in this span).

The last time Baltimore failed to score more than 17 points in five consecutive games was 2005, when Kyle Boller and Anthony Wright were its QBs.

12:32 PM · Jan 2, 2023 

 437  Reply  Share

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As concerning as the Ravens' offense has looked, head coach John Harbaugh still believes they can turn things around.

"They're not challenges that we're going to sit here and say we can't overcome or we can't win games with," Harbaugh told reporters. "We've got to try to do everything we can to make those plays in the next game. That's all you can do in this league."



**Baltimore Ravens**   
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Coach Harbaugh on the offense:



2:39 PM · Jan 2, 2023 

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Overcoming those challenges might all be solved with the return of Jackson, but that might not be until playoff time comes. Baltimore seems to be exposed for its reliance on Jackson to make the offense work.

Jackson is in a contract year, and although he was hoping his play would make a case for a big, new contract, the lack there of might do all of the talking.





Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver Diontae Johnson. Jessica Rapfogel-USA TODAY Sports




# Steelers WR Diontae Johnson officially owns NFL's unluckiest record

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 1/11/23

Steelers WR [Diontae Johnson](#) entered Week 18 just two catches short of one of the NFL's least-desired records. With his two receptions in Pittsburgh's season finale, he officially owns it.

Johnson had 86 catches in 2022, which is now the most catches in a season by a player without scoring a touchdown.



**Field Yates**  
@FieldYates · [Follow](#)

A crazy stat: Steelers WR Diontae Johnson had 86 catches this season, but no touchdowns.

That's now the most catches by a player in a single season in NFL history without scoring a TD.

An awesome player with bad luck this season.

9:19 AM · Jan 9, 2023

6.1K [Reply](#) [Share](#)

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He passes former Tampa Bay Buccaneers WR James Wilder who had [85 catches](#) without a receiving touchdown in 1984.

Former Steelers QB Ben Roethlisberger gave his take on Johnson's unlucky season.

"Blows my mind because the guy is so stinkin' good," [Roethlisberger said](#) on his "Footbahlin with Ben Roethlisberger" podcast. "It was so apparent and obvious they were trying to get him the ball in the red zone when they were down on the goal line. He was wide open twice and the ball got tipped."

The fourth-year wide receiver was targeted 10 times in Week 18 in hopes of finding the end zone. Johnson still had a solid season, however, playing in all 17 games and finishing with [882 receiving yards](#).

"I felt bad for Diontae," Roethlisberger added. "Still, really good season. I know he's frustrated."

Johnson will now need to wait until next season to find pay dirt after having what was viewed by some as a disappointing season following his two-year, \$37 million contract extension.



# **YARD****BARKER**

## **“TRANSACTIONS”**

- 1. Ravens get Lamar Jackson ‘Flowers’ on contract signing day**
- 2. Steelers bring home Joey Porter Jr.; dad pleased**
- 3. Bengals offensive tackle requests trade**
- 4. Ravens release six-time Pro Bowl DE**



Boston College wide receiver Zay Flowers was selected by the Ravens. Kirby Lee-USA TODAY Sports



## Ravens get Lamar Jackson 'Flowers' on contract signing day

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 4/27/23

After signing QB Lamar Jackson to a [record-breaking](#) contract extension just hours before the draft, the Ravens continue to build around him with their first-round pick.

With pick [No. 22](#) in the 2023 NFL Draft, Baltimore selected WR Zay Flowers, a speedy receiver out of Boston College.

The Ravens already signed wide receivers Odell Beckham Jr. and Nelson Agholor in free agency, and adding Flowers to the group might just give Baltimore its best receiving corps since drafting Jackson.

Flowers, who is 22, had 78 catches for 1,077 yards and 12 touchdowns in 2022.

"Flowers is the best pure separator in the draft class. Defensive backs won't be able to stick with him across on his route breaks unless they're holding him," [Pro Football Focus](#) writes.

After the Ravens didn't have a receiver eclipse 500 yards in 2022, Flowers certainly adds more firepower to the Baltimore's aerial attack, and he knows it.

"Anytime I touch the ball, I feel like I can score," Flowers said after being drafted.



**Baltimore Ravens**    
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"Let's go get some wins... Anytime I touch the ball, I feel like I can score." 

: NFL Network, ABC, ESPN.



Watch on Twitter

WR Zay Flowers *Boston College*  
3-time team leader in rec yds & TD (2020-22)

LIVE BAL RD1 PK 22 NEXT • MIN JAX NYG DAL BUF CIN NO PHI KC RD2 PIT ARI DET IND LAR

PODCASTS they recap the 1st round of the 2023 NFL Draft. 

10:53 PM · Apr 27, 2023 

 3.2K  Reply  Share

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Jackson has had the Ravens on a roller coaster of emotions this offseason since requesting a trade on March 2. However, he must be smiling ear to ear in what has been a day to remember for the 2019 NFL MVP, and all seems to be well in Baltimore following night one.





Penn State's Joey Porter Jr. Dan Rainville / USA TODAY NETWORK



## Steelers bring Joey Porter Jr. home; dad pleased

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 4/28/23

After mulling [multiple offers](#) for the top pick in the second round, the Steelers stuck with their love of family ties and brought another Porter to Pittsburgh.

With pick [No. 32](#) in the 2023 NFL Draft, the Steelers selected Penn State CB [Joey Porter Jr.](#), who will now play for his father's old team.



**Field Yates**  
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Joey Porter, Jr.

Like father, like son.



7:16 PM · Apr 28, 2023

♥ 4.7K    💬 Reply    ↗ Share

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His father, Joey Porter, played linebacker for the Steelers for eight seasons (1999-2006), helping them win Super Bowl XL. Porter Jr. will now try to bring Pittsburgh another championship just like his pops.

At a news conference in Pittsburgh, Porter Jr. said his dad was jacked.

"He was probably louder than me a little bit," he said of the news he became a Steeler.



**Emily Giangreco**  
@EmilyGiangreco · [Follow](#)

I asked Joey Porter Jr. what his dad's reaction was to him being drafted by the Steelers

"He was probably louder than me a little bit"



9:18 PM · Apr 28, 2023

♥ 164    💬 Reply    ↗ Share

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"Porter is the press cornerback you want in the class. At 6-foot-2 and 198 pounds, he attacks receivers at the line of scrimmage the same way his father attacked offensive tackles," [Pro Football Focus](#) writes.

It was surprising that the 22-year-old fell out of the first round and with the Steelers reportedly considering him at pick No. 17, it was a no-brainer at No. 32.

Porter Jr. totaled 112 tackles, one interception and 16 passes defended from 2020-22. He'll provide some much-needed depth to Pittsburgh's secondary that recently signed free-agent CB Patrick Peterson, who should be the perfect mentor.

It would be difficult to write a better story than this as the Steeler bring Porter Jr. home.





Jonah Williams. Mark J. Rebilas-USA TODAY Sports



## Bengals offensive tackle requests trade

By Aaron Becker | Last updated 3/17/23

The Bengals made a big splash in free agency by signing LT Orlando Brown Jr. to a [four-year, \\$64.09 million](#) contract Wednesday. But not everyone on the team was happy with the move.

Offensive tackle [Jonah Williams](#) has officially requested a trade after protecting QB Joe Burrow in 47 games. Still just 25, Williams will become the top tackle available if Cincinnati is willing to move on.



**Ian Rapoport**   
@RapSheet · [Follow](#)



Rarely are legit starting LTs available. But circumstances have changed in Cincy. Jonah Williams is due \$12.6M guaranteed on his 5th year option.



**Ian Rapoport** @RapSheet

In the wake of the Orlando Brown signing, #Bengals OT Jonah Williams has requested a trade through his agent Ryan Tollner, sources say. Just 25 years old with 47 career starts at LT protecting Joe Burrow, Williams becomes the top tackle available if Cincy is willing to move on.



10:38 AM · Mar 17, 2023



1.6K Reply Share

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Williams is due \$12.6 million guaranteed on his fifth-year option and is coming off of a season where he allowed a [league-high 12 sacks](#), according to Pro Football Focus.

However, it is rare for a player of his caliber to become available as Williams was the 11th overall pick in the 2019 NFL Draft.

The Bengals should at least entertain Williams' request to see what compensation they could get for him. It would be a win if Cincinnati could land a day two pick but that's a lot to ask for a one-year rental unless the suitor is willing to sign him to an extension before playing a down for them.

The Bengals are also preparing to pay Burrow soon and the draft provides players on cheap rookie deals. But one thing is for sure, Cincinnati doesn't need to worry about left tackle with Brown Jr. locked up for the foreseeable future.





Calais Campbell Mitch Stringer-USA TODAY Sports



## Ravens release six-time Pro Bowl DE

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 3/13/23

As the Ravens prepare to pay QB Lamar Jackson, the team announced that it is releasing 15-year veteran defensive end [Calais Campbell](#).

"Calais defines what it is to be a Raven," general manager Eric DeCosta said in a statement. "While this is the worst part of the business, we have not closed the door on the possibility of him returning to our team in the future."



**Baltimore Ravens**   
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We have released DE Calais Campbell.

Calais defines what it is to be a Raven. He personifies professionalism, and his contributions to our organization – both on and off the field – are immense.

With his passion, leadership and toughness, Calais has undoubtedly produced a Hall of Fame-worthy career.

While this is the worst part of the business, we have not closed the door on the possibility of him returning to our team in the future.

Statement from Executive Vice President and General Manager Eric DeCosta





12:35 PM · Mar 13, 2023 

 4.9K  Reply  Share

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Campbell, the 2019 Walter Payton NFL Man of the Year, totaled 113 tackles, 11 sacks, two forced fumbles and one fumble recovery during his time with Baltimore, and although his time with the Ravens may not be at its end, it is surely up in the air with Jackson's massive contract looming.

Many wondered if the 36-year-old would retire following the 2022 season. However, he reportedly [wants to keep playing](#) and believes he still has good football left.

If it isn't going to be with Baltimore, Campbell should have at least a couple of suitors given he has had a tremendous impact on and off the field throughout his career.

The move does save the Ravens \$7 million against the cap. Whether or not Campbell plays a 16th season, he is on his way to Canton, Ohio if it were up to DeCosta.

"With passion, leadership and toughness, Calais has undoubtedly produced a Hall of Fame-worthy career," he added.

# **YARD****BARKER**

## **“SERIES”**

- 1. Pittsburgh Steelers Pro Football Hall of Fame watch**
- 2. Baltimore Ravens stock up, stock down**
- 3. Three biggest concerns for Cleveland Browns before the draft**
- 4. Best, worst offseason moves for Cincinnati Bengals**





Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker T.J. Watt. Bob Donnan-USA TODAY Sports



# Pittsburgh Steelers Pro Football Hall of Fame watch

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 6/5/23

The Pro Football Hall of Fame will induct the class of 2023 on Aug. 5. Here are players and a coach from the 2023 Steelers who could join the immortals in Canton someday.

## Guaranteed Hall of Famer

**Mike Tomlin, head coach:** Tomlin not only won a Super Bowl in just his second season in Pittsburgh, but he also owns the NFL record for most consecutive non-losing seasons to begin a coaching career (16). He has the 16th-most wins ([163](#)) and 22nd-best win percentage ([.636](#)) by a head coach in NFL history and is only 51.

Tomlin has received a lot of criticism in recent years because the Steelers have not won a playoff game since the 2016 season. However, he always seems to have Pittsburgh in contention by the end of the season, which is something not a lot of teams can say. His true test, life without Ben Roethlisberger, has already begun. If he wins a Super Bowl with another starting quarterback, he may be a first-ballot Hall of Famer.

## Fringe Hall of Famer

**T.J. Watt, linebacker:** In 2021, Watt won his first Defensive Player of the Year award after tying Michael Strahan's season sack record with 22.5 sacks in just 15 games. He probably would have broken the record if he had played the full season. Although an impressive feat, that alone won't get him into the Hall of Fame.

If Watt has another season or two similar to 2021 and adds a Super Bowl ring by the end of his career, his case for Canton will be as strong as any. With 77.5 sacks, the five-time Pro Bowler is just 3.5 sacks from becoming Pittsburgh's [all-time sack leader](#). Watt is only 28.

## A young player who could develop into a Hall of Famer

**Minkah Fitzpatrick, safety:** Pittsburgh's trade for Fitzpatrick may go down as one of the best in franchise history. Fitzpatrick has 17 interceptions since joining Pittsburgh in 2019 from Miami and he is still only 26. The three-time Pro Bowler tied for the league lead in interceptions in 2022 with six.

With 19 career interceptions, Fitzpatrick still has a long way to go to be among the league's [all-time pick artists](#). After signing a [four-year contract](#) extension, he doesn't seem to be going anywhere anytime soon. If Fitzpatrick can continue playing at a high level in the prime of his career, he may help the Steelers win a Super Bowl and earn his way into the Hall of Fame.





Baltimore Ravens safety Kyle Hamilton. Tommy Gilligan-USA TODAY Sports



# Baltimore Ravens stock up, stock down

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 5/30/23

With training camps two months away, teams continue to evaluate their rosters. Here are the Baltimore Ravens whose stock is trending up — and down.

## Stock Up

**Lamar Jackson, quarterback:** The Ravens have given Jackson the best supporting cast he has had since entering the league in 2018. Baltimore added wide receivers Odell Beckham Jr. and Nelson Agholor in free agency and WR Zay Flowers with its first-round pick in the 2023 NFL Draft.

Jackson, the 2019 NFL MVP, has yet to make it past the divisional round of the playoffs. He won't have any excuses if Baltimore doesn't advance past that round this season. CBS Sports [predicted](#) Jackson will have the best season of his five-year NFL career, throwing for "at least 4,000 yards." However, Jackson believes he can blow through that number.

"I want to throw for like 6,000 yards with the weapons we have," Jackson recently told reporters.

If that's the case, new offensive coordinator Todd Monken has a lot of scheming to do.

**Kyle Hamilton, safety:** Hamilton didn't exceed expectations in his [rookie year](#), posting 62 tackles, two sacks, one forced fumble and five passes defended. However, Baltimore's 2022 first-round pick is ready to be the starter after the Ravens traded veteran safety Chuck Clark earlier this offseason.

"I feel like I can slide into that role for sure and perform at a high level," [Hamilton said on "The Ravens Lounge" podcast](#) recently.

The 22-year-old improved each week in 2022 and likely will continue to do so. Now with a less crowded secondary, Hamilton will have the opportunity to make a difference for a team that has long prided itself on having one of the league's top defensive backfields.

## Stock Down

**Patrick Queen, linebacker:** Queen had a [career-high](#) 117 tackles, five sacks and two interceptions in 2022, but his time as a Raven seems to be nearing an end. He is entering the final year of his rookie deal and Baltimore drafted his potential replacement in LB Trenton Simpson with a third-round pick in the 2023 NFL Draft.

In January, LB Roquan Smith a [five-year, \\$100 million](#) deal, making a similar payday for Queen unlikely. Baltimore could trade him if Simpson looks good early.

**Nelson Agholor, wide receiver:** Agholor was the first wide receiver to join Baltimore's revamped unit this offseason. However, he seems to be already lost on the depth chart. Since signing a one-year deal, the Ravens added Beckham Jr. and Flowers, who have much higher ceilings.

Baltimore didn't have a wide receiver eclipse 500 yards in 2022. As a Patriot last season, Agholor only had 362 yards receiving. With WR Rashod Bateman returning from injury, Baltimore may not give Agholor much playing time.





Cleveland Browns general manager Andrew Berry. Trevor Ruskowski-USA TODAY Sports



# Three biggest concerns for Cleveland Browns before the draft

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 3/27/23

The Browns, who finished 7-10 and last in the AFC North in 2022, are trying to make a splash once again this offseason. Cleveland has a roster that appears ready to compete with almost any team in the league, so what's holding the Browns back? Here are their three biggest concerns.

## 1. What are Cleveland's plans without a first- or second-round pick in the 2023 NFL Draft?

General manager Andrew Berry continues to do his best impression of trade-happy Les Snead, the Los Angeles Rams GM. After trading three first-round picks as part of the package for QB Deshaun Watson a year ago, he traded the team's second-round pick for WR Elijah Moore and a third-round pick.



**Ian Rapoport**   
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Sources: The [#Browns](#) are trading for [#Jets](#) speedy WR Elijah Moore. A new threat in Cleveland.

Terms: It's pick No. 42 for Moore and pick 74.

3:41 PM · Mar 22, 2023 

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Cleveland isn't scheduled to make its first selection until pick No. 74 in the third round of the 2023 NFL Draft. The team still has eight picks in the draft but just two in the top 100.

There are still gems to be found deep in the draft. The Browns may need to take a best-player-available approach to find some.

## 2. Will QB Deshaun Watson return to his 2020 form?

Cleveland made a long-term commitment to Watson when it signed him to a [five-year, \\$230 million](#) fully guaranteed contract last offseason. However, he looked far from his normal self upon his return from suspension.

Watson, whom the NFL suspended 11 games in 2022 for violation of its personal conduct policy, threw for 1,102 yards, seven touchdowns and five interceptions in his first [six games](#) as a Brown. He still has rust to kick off after not playing in 2021, but the team is hoping he can return to his 2020 form when he led the NFL in passing yards.

If he does, Cleveland will be a Super Bowl contender. If he does not, the Browns are in deep trouble after going all in on the 27-year-old.

## 3. Will a defender not named Myles Garrett make a significant impact in 2023?

The Browns didn't have a player not named Myles Garrett [exceed three sacks](#) in 2022. They have added a few new pieces to their defensive line through free agency, but will they make a difference?

Cleveland signed DE Obo Okoronkwo to a [three-year, \\$19 million](#) contract and DT Dalvin Tomlinson to a [four-year, \\$57 million](#) deal on the first day of free agency.

Okoronkwo posted a career-high [five sacks](#) in 2022; Tomlinson had [2.5 sacks](#) last season. The team is hoping both players have an immediate impact alongside Garrett. Both signees are in their late 20s..



Orlando Brown Jr. Sam Greene/The Enquirer / USA TODAY NETWORK



# Best, worst offseason moves for Cincinnati Bengals

By Aaron Becker | Last updated 4/6/23

The 2023 NFL Draft will be held in Kansas City from April 27-29. The Bengals have made a couple of splashes in free agency but have also lost some key pieces. Here are the best and worst moves they've made so far.

## BEST | Signing Orlando Brown Jr.

Signing the best free-agent offensive tackle is a no-brainer, especially when you've got one of the best quarterbacks in the NFL to protect in Joe Burrow. Brown Jr.'s four-year, \$64.09 million contract was a steal for Cincinnati, making him the 17th highest-paid tackle in the NFL.

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And for the [#Bengals](#), they get a great deal. Orlando Brown is now the 17th highest paid tackle in the NFL.

**Ian Rapoport** @RapSheet

In Orlando Brown's new, 4-year deal with the [#Bengals](#), he gets 67.87% of the \$64.092M fully guaranteed, with \$42.3M through year 2 and \$49.9M through 3. By that point, he'll be ready for the next deal.

10:32 PM · Mar 15, 2023

3.8K Reply Share

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The four-time Pro Bowl tackle and Super Bowl champion stands at a massive 6-foot-8, 345 pounds and allowed just [four sacks](#) in 2022, according to Pro Football Focus. The addition of Brown Jr. is all the more important as Cincinnati takes the left tackle from the Chiefs who they've met in the AFC Championship Game in back-to-back years.

## BEST | Adding Irv Smith Jr.

The Bengals lost TE Hayden Hurst to the Panthers in free agency, so they responded by signing 24-year-old Smith Jr. to a cheap, [one-year deal](#). Only time will tell if the move was an upgrade or downgrade, but Smith Jr. certainly has upside.

The 24-year-old has struggled to stay healthy, playing in just eight games in 2022 and missing all of the 2021 season. However, when healthy, he has shown just why the Vikings selected him with their second-round pick in 2019, totaling 91 catches for 858 yards and nine touchdowns in [his career](#).

Smith Jr.'s arrival in Cincinnati provides the team with insurance at tight end heading into the 2023 NFL Draft as well. It seems likely the Bengals will add to the room in the draft but they can now address other needs earlier on.

## WORST | Losing Jessie Bates III & Vonn Bell

The "[dark day](#)" defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo didn't want to think about arrived in Cincinnati after losing both starting safeties from 2022. The Bengals did sign safety Nick Scott to a [three-year, \\$12 million](#) contract to play alongside safety Daxton Hill but their secondary certainly took a hit.

Bates III and Bell leave big shoes to fill as they combined for 148 tackles, three forced fumbles, eight interceptions and 16 passes defended in 2022. Scott does bring a lot of experience, helping the Rams defeat Cincinnati in Super Bowl LVI, but the team shouldn't feel fully confident in its new safety duo quite yet.

## WORST | Jonah Williams' trade request

After the Bengals signed Brown Jr. to be their new starting left tackle, Williams was clearly the odd man out and knew it. He requested a trade on March 17, and although Cincinnati has its answer at left tackle, the team is still in need of a right tackle since right tackle La'el Collins tore his ACL and MCL late in the season.

Williams is not interested in switching sides and the Bengals will likely entertain his trade request. He would have solved Cincinnati's problem at right tackle but the team is now forced to address the position elsewhere, likely in the draft.



# **YARD****BARKER**

## **“MISCELLANEOUS”**

- 1. Steelers Hall of Fame RB Franco Harris; an immaculate player and person**
- 2. Why Aaron Rodgers trade could affect Steelers' draft plans**
- 3. Mike Tomlin approves of 'cool nickname' for Steelers GM**
- 4. Bengals QB Joe Burrow: A football guy, not 'a boat guy'**





Pittsburgh Steelers former running back and football Hall-of-Famer Franco Harris. Erik Williams-USA TODAY Sports



# Steelers Hall of Fame RB Franco Harris, an immaculate player and person

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 12/22/22

There's so much to be said about the player and person Franco Harris was, but it feels as though not enough words could do him justice.

Steelers head coach [Mike Tomlin](#) tried to find the words heading into the 50th anniversary of the "Immaculate Reception."

"With a heavy heart, this organization, this community, the football world, we lost a great one in Franco Harris," Tomlin told reporters. "We do look forward to honoring him and his legacy this weekend."

 **Pittsburgh Steelers**    
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Coach Tomlin on the passing of Franco Harris:



4:31 PM · Dec 21, 2022 

 2.4K  Reply  Share

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Harris helped lead the Steelers organization to its first playoff win, changing the trajectory of the team and catapulting them into a dynasty. He taught everyone around him how to be great on and off the field, and Pittsburgh went on to win four Super Bowls in six years.

 **NFL Research**    
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Franco Harris was one of the greatest ever on the NFL's biggest stage.

RIP to a legend.

[@steelers](#) [@ProFootballHOF](#)



Player	Yards
Franco Harris	354
Larry Csonka	297
Emmitt Smith	289
Terrell Davis	259
John Riggins	230

6:09 PM · Dec 21, 2022 

 269  Reply  Share

[Read 2 replies](#)

"I just admire and love the man. There's so much to be learned from him," Tomlin added. "He embraced it all, and did it with such grace and class and patience and time for people."

Even after his time came to an end on the football field, he still found a way to impact those in the community and the younger players next in line.

"He didn't want anything from them. He just wanted the absolute best for them, and that unconditional love, guys feel that," Tomlin finished.

Harris will forever be remembered as a great player, but maybe an even better person. His immaculate legacy lives through, not just those who worked with and cheered for him, but everyone in the football community.





Aaron Rodgers (12) Dan Powers/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin / USA TODAY NETWORK

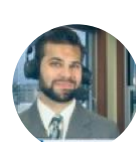


# Why Aaron Rodgers trade could affect Steelers' draft plans

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 4/25/23

[Aaron Rodgers](#) is finally being traded after the Jets and Packers agreed to terms on Monday. However, New York and Green Bay aren't the only teams affected by the trade ahead of the 2023 NFL Draft.

As part of the deal, the Jets agreed to swap first-round picks with the Packers. It's significant because the Steelers, who've been reportedly interested in a trade up for an offensive lineman, may not have to trade up as high now.



**Mike Nicastro**  
@MikedUpSports1 · [Follow](#)



Interesting wrinkle for the Steelers.

Jets are going to take an offensive lineman.

They are now picking at 15, just two spots ahead of Pittsburgh.



**Adam Scheffer** @AdamScheffer

Trade compensation, per sources:

Jets get:

Aaron Rodgers, pick No. 15, a 2023 5th-rd pick (No. 170).

Packers get:

Pick No. 13, a 2023 2nd-rd pick (No. 42), a 6th-rd pick (No. 207), a conditional 2024 2nd-rd pick that becomes a 1st if Rodgers plays 65 percent of the plays.



4:24 PM · Apr 24, 2023



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New York is rumored to have interest in adding to its offensive line as well. So, moving from pick No. 13 to No. 15 could benefit Pittsburgh.

The Steelers would have had to move up to pick No. 12, which is owned by the Texans, if they wanted to jump the Jets for a top offensive lineman. Now, they would only need to get to No. 14, which is owned by the Patriots.

Of course, a number of other things could affect the Steelers plans come Thursday night, but if a player Pittsburgh loves is there for the taking, don't be surprised about a trade up.

"We're not opposed to moving up in an effort to pinpoint someone that might be special," head coach [Mike Tomlin told reporters](#) at the team's pre-draft news conference. "We're ready and comfortable for whatever."

If the Jets are one of the teams that the Steelers are trying to jump, things may have just got a little easier for Pittsburgh thanks to Rodgers.





Mike Tomlin. Jessica Rapfogel-USA TODAY Sports



# Mike Tomlin approves of 'cool nickname' for Steelers GM

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 5/2/23

The Steelers have had an offseason to remember under general manager Omar Khan and it has earned him a new nickname.

"What do they call him, the "Khan Artist?" I like that," [Mike Tomlin](#) told reporters. "I saw that. That's pretty good. It's a cool nickname."



**Daniel Valente**  
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"The Khan Artist"

A perfect nickname for the Steelers GM. Seriously loving how much fun Mike Tomlin and Omar Khan seem to be having together.



7:36 PM · Apr 29, 2023

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Khan shrugged off the new nickname but laughed, "I've been called worse."

Pittsburgh has been uncharacteristically active in free agency, and many believe the Steelers had one of the best draft classes in the league.

However, Khan's rise in popularity began during the 2022 season when the team traded WR Chase Claypool for the Bears' 2023 second-round pick.

That pick has since turned into fan favorite CB Joey Porter Jr., who now gets to play for his dad's old team.

Pittsburgh then added [a dozen](#) new players in free agency and had an aggressive draft strategy. The team traded up to jump the offensive tackle-needy Jets for Broderick Jones and traded down on day two to land two players they wanted all along (TE Darnell Washington and LB Nick Herbig).

Of course, only time will tell how good the Steelers' newest additions are. But for now, the "Khan Artist" is alive and well in Pittsburgh.





Joe Burrow David Butler II-USA TODAY Sports



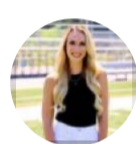
## Bengals QB Joe Burrow: A football guy, 'not a boat guy'

By [Aaron Becker](#) | Last updated 12/30/22

It's the season of giving, and Bengals QB [Joe Burrow](#) showed his appreciation for his offensive line. He gifted each of his linemen a cruise as a Christmas gift.

However, when asked if he'll be joining them, his answer had him and everyone else laughing.

"No, I don't like boats, not a boat guy," Burrow told reporters. "You're stuck out there. What if something happens?"



**Olivia Ray**   
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Joe Burrow wouldn't reveal who helped him "shop" for his offensive line's Christmas present...but he's proud of the CRUISE he gifted them.

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However, he will not be joining them - "not a boat guy"  
[#Bengals](#) | [@WLWT](#)



5:53 PM · Dec 29, 2022



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Cincinnati's offensive line is certainly deserving after turning things around this season. It allowed [13 sacks](#) in the first two weeks, but just [26 sacks](#), averaging just two sacks a game, with two weeks remaining.

The rough start had Bengals fans, and surely Burrow, sweating after watching him tear his ACL in 2020. But the group just needed some time to gel together, looking like a stout unit since.

Burrow is thankful for the turnaround, and although he won't be joining them, hopes they enjoy the gift.

"Well, I know they like. I figured they would like it," Burrow added. "I think it was a good gift."

Hopefully Burrow's generosity incentivizes his offensive line to keep him untouched the rest of the year, especially since losing right tackle [La'el Collins to a torn ACL and MCL](#).

Maybe that could be their gift to him.