

Favre fantastic against old team Packers

No. 4 now 4-0 with Vikings

By DAN POMERLEAU
Epoch Times Staff

Monday night's game between the Minnesota Vikings and Green Bay Packers had all the makings of a historic football matchup.

The unbeaten Vikings were hosting their nemesis the Green Bay Packers in the loud and intimidating Metrodome, led by the very man who made the Packers the franchise they have become, No. 4 Brett Favre.

The Vikings' 30-23 win over the Packers could have been the most hyped Week 4 football game of all time. And the game lived up to the hype, with Favre playing one of the cleanest games he ever has, going 24-31 for 271 yards and three TDs. It was his 66th game of three or more TDs.

Favre also added a new record to his resume; he is now the only QB in NFL history to have beaten all 32 NFL teams.

PRE-GAME BUZZ

There was a buzz in the air well before the game began, with speculation on how the highly emotional Favre would handle facing his former team.

Favre maintained all week that he

was after the "W" and nothing else.

"My statement has been what I've done over my career," Favre said after the game. "One game does not define my career, good or bad. I know what I've done and I'm proud of what I've done. I know I can play. I'm here to help this football team win and I wasn't out to prove anything, I just wanted to do everything that it would take to win."

"It was sweet but it didn't have anything to do with revenge. [The Packers] chose to go in a different direction, and we'll play them again. We were fortunate enough to beat them tonight."

He did concede that this wasn't just any ordinary game for him, a fact that he appeared to downplay all week.

"I was about as nervous as I've ever been before a game. I didn't think I would be. As the week progressed I felt fine, but when I got to the hotel yesterday it kind of dawned on me."

"I felt a lot like I did when my dad passed away. But both games I played well so maybe that [nervousness] is a good thing," Favre said.

"I am emotional, but I'm always emotional," he admitted.

But emotions aside, competition and love of the game are the characteristics for Favre. It's what has driven him back now from two retirements.

"All it means is that we are 4-0, and I'm pretty proud of that," Favre responded after being questioned on what Monday's win meant to him.

"It's why I play the game. It was fun. It never gets old to me, even though I do."

STRONG ARM

There has been a lot of speculation on whether or not Favre can keep up the pace and not have a repeat of last season's deterioration with the Jets.

Favre's throwing arm has been holding up well this year after last year's injury—in fact, he says it is back to full recovery and is feeling great.

He said the most telling sign of his strong arm was how he threw on an incompleteness to Bernard Berrian; that bullet of a pass escaped through a tiny hole between Berrian's hands.

"That is a throw I wouldn't have even come close to completing last year," he said.

"My arm feels great. It didn't feel very good last year. I'm not going to make excuses. But my arm feels a lot better and I think it's showing."

When asked how he felt about his new record of having beaten all NFL teams, Favre responded in classic fashion: "I guess you have to be remembered for something."

FAN SUPPORT

Vikings fans showed their support for No. 4 by standing well into the first possession and creating an atmosphere of pure sporting revelry all night long.

"Our fans were awesome tonight,"

Favre said. "That place was rocking. And I know how it feels to be on the other side."

Packers QB Aaron Rodgers agreed with Favre's assessment.

"This dome is always a very difficult place to play. It was really loud from the first snap to the last, and we didn't really execute as well as we could have," he said in a post-game interview.

"[I played] below my expectations, definitely," Rodgers said. "To have three possessions where you're in their territory and come away with zero points, two of them are directly related to mistakes by myself, that's disappointing."

Still, credit needs to be given to Rodgers, who threw 26-37 for a career-high 384 yards and with two touchdowns despite a weak offensive line that allowed eight sacks—four of them from Jarrod Allen.

"The offensive line was outstanding," Favre said.

Rodgers has increased his passing yardage every game this season. Granted, he is no replacement for Favre, but the rookie has showed that he can deliver under some of the most intense defensive pressure he has seen so far—and get up strong after taking a beating.

For the Vikings, it's now looking like they have found the missing ingredient to win the Super Bowl. And an away win this Sunday against the 0-4 St. Louis Rams would give Favre one more personal record of his own: his first 5-0 season start.



HISTORIC WIN: Brett Favre is now the only QB in NFL history to have beaten all 32 NFL teams. JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES



RED BULL: Germany's Sebastian Vettel won the Japanese F1 Grand Prix last Sunday. TOSHIFUMI KITAMURA/AFP/GETTY IMAGE

Vettel wins Japanese Formula One Grand Prix

Drivers' and constructors' championship hopes still alive

By JAMES FISH
Epoch Times Staff

Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel led from the green flag to the checkered flag at the Japanese Formula One Grand Prix at Suzuka, extending the battle for both the drivers' and constructors' championships into the next race at Brazil, if not further.

After a rained-out practice and accident-filled qualifying, the Japanese Formula One Grand Prix at Suzuka on Sunday started out as a calm and controlled race. Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel jumped off early to a healthy lead and kept it, while behind him the field kept its cars on the track. The racing was fast, but the drivers, perhaps chastened by the numerous crashes in Saturday's qualifying, raced without drama.

Vettel was by far the fastest driver on the track. He was never challenged and cruised to victory with a five-second cushion.

"With pole position and also strategy-wise, we were the favorites, but first of all you have to do the start," said Vettel. "We've had good starts in the past, so we were confident to defend the position. Going into Turn One all of a sudden I saw a silver arrow [Hamilton's McLaren] on the left-hand side. I had the inside so it was my advantage, but it was closer than I thought it would be."

"After that I just put my head down and tried to push every

single lap. I was able to pull a gap quite quickly. Until the end, it was pretty much in control."

Vettel held a 10-second lead through most of the race. Then on lap 44, Toro Rosso's Jaime Alguersuari crashed coming through Turn 15. He was uninjured, but the crash brought out a full course caution and bunched up the field.

The race went green with four laps to go. Vettel started strongly and immediately reopened a gap and went on to win the race.

Jarno Trulli took second, showing that Toyota, which had contemplated leaving Formula One, made the right choice to stay another year.

Lewis Hamilton brought the McLaren home in third. He held second for much of the race, but lost time in the final third, possibly due to a malfunctioning KERS system.

"Just before or just after the last stop, I lost KERS, so that lost us a good few tenths per lap," Hamilton explained. "Also when that happens the brake balance changes, all these different things ... so it was very hard."

"These two [Vettel and Trulli] did a fantastic job today," Hamilton concluded. "We'll battle them again in the next race."

The Brawns, relegated to mid-pack for ignoring a yellow flag in qualifying, were unable to catch the leaders, though they did manage to finish in the points, with Barrichello seventh and Button eighth.

Vettel's win for Red Bull gained him nine points in the drivers' championship and kept his team's hope alive in the constructors' championship. Vettel is now only two points behind Rubens Barrichello and 16 behind leader Jenson Button.

If Brawn has the kind of luck in the final two races that it had at Suzuka, the team could end up losing both championships.

Yankees, steroids, but no 20-game winners

Reviewing some of the noteworthy happenings in the 2009 baseball season

By KARL YU
Epoch Times Staff

Well, the 162-game marathon—163 if you're the Detroit Tigers or Minnesota Twins—that is the MLB regular season has ended and 2009 saw both the familiar and unfamiliar.

While 2008 saw the rise of the Tampa Bay Rays in the AL East, 2009 saw the Yankees get back to their best, buoyed by their new stadium.

During last year's playoffs, while the division champion Rays went on their Cinderella run to the World Series, the New York Yankees were only spectators and that didn't sit well with ownership or GM Brian Cashman.

The Bronx Bombers were moving into the new Yankee stadium and another season without a postseason appearance wouldn't be good for the bottom line.

While the Yanks made many offseason moves in anticipation of 2009, the biggest move came with the signing of former Milwaukee Brewer ace CC Sabathia.

While Sabathia went 2-3 in the first month of the season, he finished the regular season tied for league lead in wins with 19.

The Pinstrippers would not only recapture the AL East title, they would rack up the most wins in the majors (103).

This past season was also special for two long-time Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter and relief pitcher Mariano Rivera.

Jeter reached two milestones this season

First, he passed Luis Aparicio to become the short stop with the

most hits on Aug. 16 and then he surpassed Lou Gehrig to be the Yankees all-time leading hitter on Sept. 11.

Known as a rock solid closer, Rivera earned his career regular season 500th save against the New York Mets on June 28 and he also set an All-Star game record when he earned his fourth save at this year's Midsummer Classic.

MORE STEROID SCANDALS

Performance-enhancing drug (PED) scandals have dominated the MLB headlines in the past, but two big names came to the forefront this season.

While Barry Bonds and Mark McGwire have never actually 'fessed up to taking performance enhancers, New York Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez did admit to steroid use during his days in Texas.

"I felt an enormous amount of pressure," Rodriguez told ESPN's Peter Gammons in an exclusive

one-on-one.

"I felt like I had all the weight of the world on top of me and I needed to perform, and perform at a high level every day."

Mind you, the heat was on A-Rod anyway as he was implicated in a Sports Illustrated article, but he still did what many others, like Manny Ramirez, failed to do.

The Los Angeles Dodgers left fielder had the proverbial book thrown at him when MLB handed him a 50-game suspension for PED use.

According to mlb.com, Ramirez tested positive for human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), which is a fertility drug used by women and is also used by steroid users to kick-start natural testosterone production after a steroid cycle.

ESPN reported that he also "had testosterone in his body that was not natural and came from an artificial source."

Ramirez blamed it on medication given to him by his doctor and

served the suspension.

NO 20-GAME WINNERS

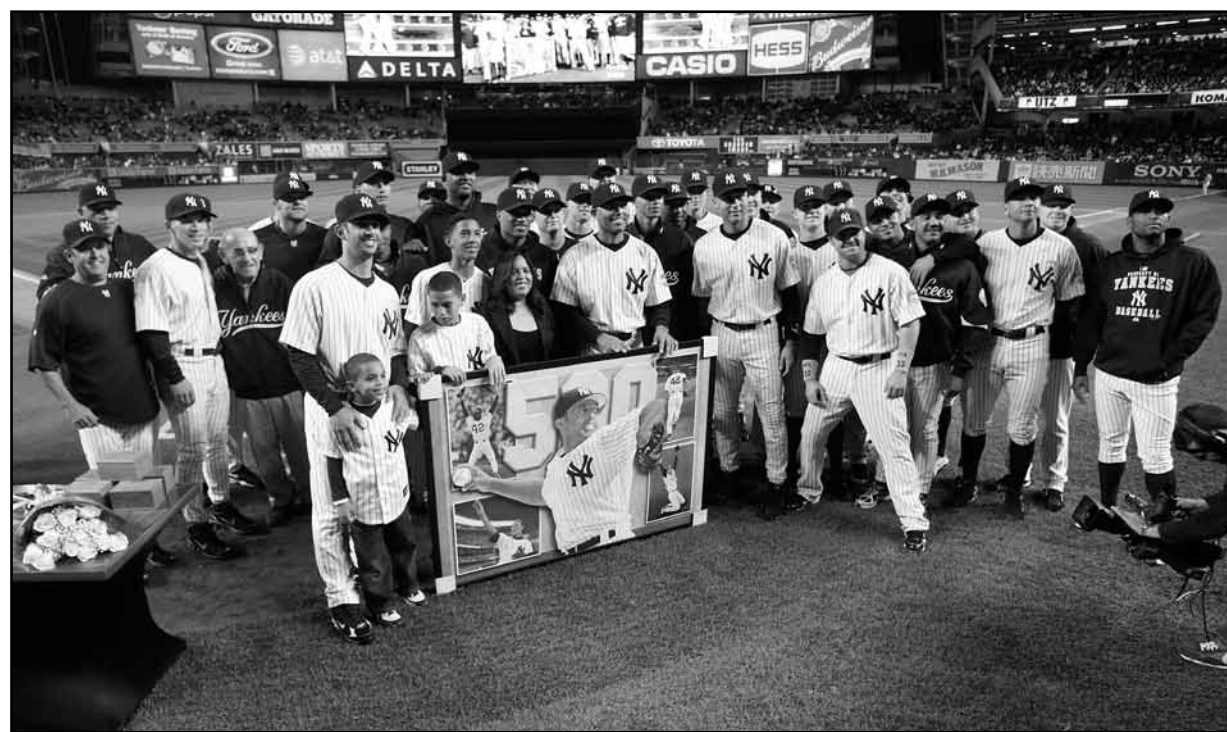
While Yankee dominance and steroid scandals are something many MLB fans are familiar with, not seeing a pitcher rack up 20 wins isn't.

As mentioned, the Yanks' CC Sabathia was tied for the league lead in wins with three other pitchers, St. Louis's Adam Wainwright, Seattle's Felix Hernandez, and Detroit's Justin Verlander.

It marked only the second time in history that no pitcher reached the 20-win mark in a full 162-game season.

Some have hypothesized that the 20-game winner will become extinct, but seeing as this is only the second time that the majors have gone without a 20-game winner, one would think the days of the 20-win pitcher will return next year.

Twenty-game winner or not, baseball fans won't be thinking about that anomaly. Baseball playoffs are here and that's all that matters.



MEMORABLE NIGHT: Mariano Rivera recorded his 500th save on Sept. 29 against the Kansas City Royals in an impressive season by the New York Yankees. JARED WICKERHAM/GETTY IMAGES

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TENNIS RANKINGS			
Women		Men	
Name	Points	Name	Points
1. (1) Dinara Safina (Russia)	8,250	1. (1) Roger Federer (Switzerland)	11,255
2. (2) Serena Williams (U.S.)	7,806	2. (2) Rafael Nadal (Spain)	8,845
3. (3) Venus Williams (U.S.)	6,367	3. (3) Andy Murray (Britain)	8,390
4. (4) Elena Dementieva (Russia)	6,015	4. (4) Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	7,330
5. (5) Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark)	5,710	5. (5) Juan Martin del Potro (Argentina)	6,555
6. (6) Svetlana Kuznetsova (Russia)	5,201	6. (6) Andy Roddick (U.S.)	4,920
7. (7) Vera Zvonareva (Russia)	5,160	7. (7) Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (France)	3,690
8. (8) Jelena Jankovic (Serbia)	4,820	8. (8) Nikolay Davydenko (Russia)	3,665
9. (9) Victoria Azarenka (Belarus)	4,512	9. (9) Fernando Verdasco (Spain)	3,460
10. (10) Flavia Pennetta (Italy)	3,490	10. (10) Gilles Simon (France)	3,250
11. (12) Agnieszka Radwanska (Poland)	3,130	11. (11) Robin Soderling (Sweden)	3,020
12. (11) Ana Ivanovic (Serbia)	3,075	12. (12) Fernando Gonzalez (Chile)	2,775
13. (14) Marion Bartoli (France)	2,905	13. (13) Gael Monfis (France)	2,455
14. (15) Samantha Stosur (Australia)	2,692	14. (14) David Nalbandian (Argentina)	2,225
15. (25) Maria Sharapova (Russia)	2,680	15. (15) Marin Cilic (Croatia)	2,195
16. (16) Li Na (China)	2,552	16. (17) Radek Stepanek (Czech Republic)	2,055
17. (13) Nadia Petrova (Russia)	2,440	17. (18) Tommy Robredo (Spain)	2,045
18. (17) Kim Clijsters (Belgium)	2,310	18. (20) Tommy Haas (Germany)	1,780
19. (18) Virginie Razzano (France)	2,301	19. (19) David Ferrer (Spain)	1,770
20. (19) Amelie Mauresmo (France)	2,279	20. (21) Juan Carlos Ferrero (Spain)	1,680

Rankings as of October 5, previous rankings in parentheses