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Packers vs. Buccaneers odds, predictions, betting trends for 2021 NFC championship game

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers meet the Green Bay Packers in the NFC championship game at Lambeau Field on Sunday.

The game is scheduled for 3:05 p.m. and will be televised on FOX.

Green Bay returns to the NFC championship game for the second straight season. The Packers advanced with a 32-18 victory against the Rams in the divisional playoffs. Aaron Rodgers continues to play at a stunning MVP-caliber level under second-year coach Matt LaFleur.

Tom Brady is making his 14th conference championship appearance, but this marks his first one in the NFC. The Buccaneers defeated the Saints 30-20 in the NFC divisional playoffs.

Bruce Arians is in his second season with Tampa Bay, and the franchise make-over with Brady has been impressive.

It's an exciting matchup between two teams led by young quarterbacks.

Here's everything to know about betting on Packers vs. Buccaneers in the 2021 NFC championship game, including updated odds, trends and our prediction for who will reach Super Bowl 55.

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Packers vs. Buccaneers odds

Spread: Green Bay -3

Over/under: 51

Moneyline: Tampa Bay +160, Green Bay -190

The Packers opened as a 3.5-point favorite, but the line has dropped a half-point. The Packers were also a three-point favorite in the regular-season matchup.

Packers vs. Buccaneers all-time series

The teams played each other twice a year in the NFC Central until 2001. Green Bay leads the all-time series 33-22-1, and the Packers won the lone postseason matchup 21-7 in the NFC divisional playoffs at Lambeau Field on Jan. 4, 1998.

Tampa Bay beat Green Bay 38-10 in Week 6.

Three trends to know

- The Packers are 11-6 ATS this season. Green Bay is 8-1 SU and 6-3 ATS at Lambeau Field this season. The Packers are 7-2 ATS this season when favored by seven points or fewer.
- The Buccaneers are 10-8 ATS this season. Tampa Bay is 6-2 SU and 4-4 ATS on the road this season. The Buccaneers are 3-1 ATS as an underdog this season.
- A total of 54 percent of the wagers are coming in favor of the Packers covering the spread. A total of 53 percent of the wagers are coming in favor of the Buccaneers and the money line.

Three things to watch

Packers' running game

Green Bay has averaged 191.5 rushing yards per game in its past four home games behind the three-headed attack of Aaron Jones, Jamaal Williams and A.J. Dillon. Green Bay, however, could not generate a consistent running game in the first meeting. The Packers totaled just 94 yards, and Tampa Bay linebackers Devin White and Lavonte David combined for 18 tackles and five tackles for loss. The Packers' offensive line must be effective at the second level, and that will be a challenge without Pro Bowl tackle David Bakhtiari.

Buccaneers' 1-2 punch

Leonard Fournette did not play in the first meeting, and he's a physical back who will challenge Green Bay's interior defense. Ronald Jones II had 117 yards and two TDs in the first meeting. If that trend continues, then Brady should have success in the short passing game. Tight end Rob Gronkowski poses a matchup problem in coverage for Green Bay's linebackers, though Krys Barnes — who had 10 tackles in the last meeting and has been a late-season star — will play with a fractured thumb.

Rodgers vs. Brady

Quarterback matchups don't come up like this often, and both quarterbacks are going to make big plays in the passing game. Who makes the rare mistakes? Rodgers threw two interceptions in the first meeting — the only game this season in which he threw multiple picks. That ignited a 28-point second quarter for Tampa Bay in a blowout. Rodgers threw just two picks at home this season. The Buccaneers were 0-4 in games when Brady threw two or more interceptions in 2020. Brady had thrown just one interception in Tampa Bay's past six games.

Stat that matters

The Packers ranked first in the NFL in red-zone TD percentage at 78.5 percent this season, and Green Bay ranked 10th in red-zone defense, with TDs only at 58.2 percent. Tampa Bay ranked 11th on offense at 63.9 and 21st on defense at 63.2. In a game like this, the red-zone offense on both sides will be the key. The Packers have the edge, but the Buccaneers can change that.

Packers vs. Buccaneers prediction

The Packers and Bucs will trade TDs in the first quarter, but Rodgers will give Green Bay a one-score lead before halftime with a TD pass to Davante Adams. Fournette and Jones will take turns pounding at Green Bay's defense in the third quarter, and that will wear on the back seven. Brady won't make the big mistake, and he will tie the game at with a TD pass to Brown, who slips past the defense for a game-tying score. Rodgers will get the ball last, however, and he'll take a page out of Brady's book. Mason Crosby's last-second field goal will end a thriller that sends the Packers back to the Super Bowl for the first time in a decade.

Final score: Packers 31, Buccaneers 28