**Detroit Lions**

The Detroit Lions come in after a great 2023 campaign. They were unlucky not to go to the Super Bowl after a devastating loss following a superb first half in the championship game against the 49ers. The Lions were one of the most exciting teams to watch last season with some really bold play calls. The regular season finished at 12-5, and they went to the playoffs, managing to beat the Rams and the Bucs before the 49ers game.

The Lions started the offseason in a positive way, extending three huge players on their offence: quarterback Jared Goff, star wide receiver Amon-Ra St. Brown, and right tackle Penei Sewell.

The quarterback room is now set for the next few years with Goff signing the new contract. He will look to continue his development with offensive coordinator Ben Johnson, who once again turned down head coaching jobs to stay with the Lions. Goff finished 2023 with the second most passing yards at 4575 and fourth most passing touchdowns with 30. Hendon Hooker will back up Jared Goff this year after winning the role in pre-season.

The running back room is one of the best in football. David Montgomery and Jahmyr Gibbs were electric last year, both having over 1,000 yards rushing if you include the postseason. That doesn’t include either of their receiving yards, which were also excellent. This is seen as one of the scariest one two punches in the NFL and will once again be at the forefront of the Lions offence. They will be backed up by Craig Reynolds and running back/safety Sione Vaki who joined via the draft.

Amon-Ra will once again lead the Lions after a hugely impressive 1515 yards and 10 touchdowns in 2023, the receiving yards was the third highest in 2023 for all receivers. However, they do lose last year’s wide receiver two with Josh Reynolds leaving. This means they will be hoping for a big jump from Jameson Williams, who heads into year three and the first start to a season where he is available. Williams showed glimpses that he is ready to be more involved last season and will hope to show how good he is in 2024. Kalif Raymond, Isaiah Williams,Tre’Quan Smith and Antoine Green will battle it out for the wide receiver three spot.

If the Lions do struggle to find a wide receiver, they have one of the best catching tight ends in Sam LaPorta. He had one of the most impressive rookie tight end seasons in NFL history finishing with 889 receiving yards. La Porta is a huge target in the red zone finishing with 10 touchdowns. Brock Wright will back up LaPorta, who is a solid tight end two but not overly impressive. Parker Hesse also makes the roster.

The Lions' offensive line is one of the best in football. Left tackle Taylor Decker will start but he gets some depth via the draft with Giovanni Manu joining through the draft and Dan Skipper ready to step in as well. Graham Glasgow re-signs and will start at left guard he has Kayode Awosikwe and Netane Muti for company. Frank Ragnow will start at centre once again with Michael Niese backing him. The right side of the line has a new face with Kevin Zeitler joining and Vaitai departing, Christian Mahogany will be there for back up. Penei Sewell will continue at right tackle. Sewell has Colby Sorsdal and Connor Galvin for company at the spot.

The other side of the line gets a few new faces as well. Defensive end Marcus Davenport joins the squad from a brief stay at the Vikings but is mainly known for his time with the Saints. He will pair with former number two overall pick Aidan Hutchinson who finished the season with 11.5 sacks. They have some rotation pieces with James Houston, Josh Paschal, John Cominsky and Nate Lynn. The defensive tackles also got a huge improvement with DJ Reader coming from the Bengals in free agency. Alim McNeill is likely to partner Reader. Mekhi Wingo joins via the draft to add some depth to the room, alongside Levi Onwunzurike, Brodric Martin, and David Bada.

The linebackers stay strong. Jack Campbell, Alex Anzalone, and Derrick Barnes are likely to start for the Lions. There is also depth here with Jalen Reeves-Maybin and Ben Niemann is likely to get some vital reps as well in the group. The Lions also keep Malcolm Rodriguez and Trevor Noawaske in the side adding some depth to the group.

The secondary struggled last season, and the Lions addressed this in the offseason. They added two rookies with their first two picks of the draft, selecting Terrion Arnold and Ennis Rakestraw. They also traded for Carlton Davis and added impressive nickel corner Amik Robertson. They also have Khalil Dorsey, Kindle Vildor and Emmanuel Moseley to rotate in when needed. Safety Brian Branch and Kerby Joseph will stay in the starting spots despite losing C.J. Gardner-Johnson. Ifeatu Melifonwu, Brandon Joseph and Loren Strickland join the group to add some depth. The additions in the corner spots makes this group a potentially huge success in 2024.

Michael Badgley is going to be the kicker. Although with how Dan Campbell and Ben Johnson play, he may not be needed all the time. However, when he is required and used, he does have a reliable kick. He starts on IR meaning that Jake Bates will take the role until Badgley is back, with the rumours it maybe next season Bates may have it all season.

This Lions team is one of the most exciting in football. They kept hold of Ben Johnson, who seemed destined to take a head coaching job. Johnson is one of the most explosive and best coordinators in the NFL. He utilises all of his best players and gets them into the spots required for huge plays all the time. The Lions also addressed their biggest area of need in the offseason with improvements to the secondary and could be the team to watch, potentially making an early run for the Super Bowl.

**Green Bay Packers**

The Packers had a successful season with new starting quarterback Jordan Love under centre. They finished the 2023 season with a loss to the 49ers in the divisional round after a 9-8 finish to get themselves into the playoffs. Their season highlight was the win in the wildcard round against the Cowboys, where they took a 48-32 victory. Remarkably, they were 2-5 after seven games and 3-6 after nine. They finished the season with everything clicking, going 6-2 in the last eight games and looking mighty impressive in doing so. The Packers did not make many off-season moves and will look to rely on the eleven players they selected in the draft to improve a very talented roster and hopefully take them deeper into the playoffs. That being said, the couple of moves they did make could be significant for the team.

The team will once again be led by Jordan Love in one of the youngest offences in football. Love, playing in his first season as starting quarterback, looked completely at home and impressed throughout. Love finished with 4159 passing yards and 32 touchdowns. Love will want to back up those stats in 2024. The Packers recently acquired Malik Willis from the Titans for the backup role. Willis has gone down the pecking order in Tennessee so this could be a good move considering how well Green Bay develop quarterbacks. Willis is not seen as a threat to Love but should anything happen to him they have a quarterback who can help.

The biggest change for the Packers comes at running back. They cut Aaron Jones after picking up Josh Jacobs via free agency. Jacobs will be looking to return to his 2022 rushing yards leader form after struggling last season in Vegas that finished with just 805 yards and his worst season in the NFL. Depth was added via the draft with Marshawn Lloyd joining, and with AJ Dillon re-signing, the Packers have some talent behind Jacobs if called upon. Emanuel Wilson jumps ahead f Dillon in the depth chart whilst Dillon goes to IR with a return date note know due to the severity of the injury.

The receiver room remains stacked. All the top four on the roster contributed massively last season and seemed to have a good relationship with Jordan Love. There is not really a wide receiver one either, as it is more receiver by committee. Christian Watson, Romeo Doubs, Jayden Reed, and Dontayvion Wicks will all look to continue their development and push the team further in 2024, all of whom are still on their rookie contracts. Jayden Reed led the team in receiving yards with 793 and 8 touchdowns, Doubs was less than 100 yards behind also with 8 touchdowns and Wicks less than 100 behind Doubs. Bo Melton and Malik Heath complete the receivers room.

The Packers also hit on their tight end picks with Luke Musgrave and Tucker Kraft. The Packers will be hoping for Musgrave to have an injury-free season this year and build on the chemistry shown with Love. When Musgrave did get hurt last year, the Packers could rely on Kraft to take over the lead role, and both could be valuable once again this season. Ben Sims and Tyler Davis also make the roster although Davis will start on IR.

There was a little depth added to the offensive line in the off-season. The Packers picked up the Titans' left tackle Andrew Dillon. On top of that, they added tackle Jordan Morgan in the first round of the draft. They also added two other depth pieces with guard Jacob Monk and tackle Travis Glover via the draft. The line looks set to continue with Rasheed Walker at left tackle, Elgton Jenkins at left guard, Josh Myers at centre, Sean Rhyan at right guard if Morgan is not quiet ready for NFL start, and Zach Tom at right tackle. This offensive line gave up thirty sacks last season, which was the third-best in the NFL, and they will hope to continue this form in 2024. Sean Rhyan and Kadeem Telford also make the roster for depth.

The defensive line also has continuity, with the sacks spread throughout the unit. Leader Rashan Gary (edge) had nine, Preston Smith had eight (edge), Kenny Clark had seven and a half (tackle). These are likely to be the starters alongside T.J Slayton to start the year (tackle). Devonte Wyatt had five and a half sacks out of rotation last season and will hope to do the same (tackle). The Packers will be hoping to see Lukas Van Ness (edge) and Karl Brooks (tackle) take bigger roles in their second season to easily rotate and take pressure away from the starters. The tackle depth comes through Colby Wooden and Jonathan Ford. The edge is supported by Kingsley Enagbare, Brenton Cox Jr and Arron Mosby.

The linebacker room gets arguably the best linebacker in the 2024 draft, as the Packers picked up Edgerrin Cooper in the second round, who could eventually start alongside Quay Walker, who led the team in tackles in 2023, and Isaiah McDuffie. However Eric Wilson will be wanting to keep his place in the starting lineup. The Packers also selected Tyron Hopper in the draft, who will be backing up this group. They also keep Ralen Goforth on the roster for depth.

The secondary has some improvements. The Packers picked up Xavier McKinney, a safety with a versatile skill set who played all 965 snaps for the Giants last year. He will be looking to help Javon Bullard, who joins from Georgia via the draft and likely takes the other starting safety role. The Packers also added Evan Williams and Kitan Oladapo in the draft to provide valuable depth alongside Zayne Anderson. Jaire Alexander will lead the cornerbacks, with Eric Stokes likely to pair with the two-time All-Pro. Corey Ballentine and Carrington Valentine will be there to help back up the pair. With LJ Davis adding further depth. The nickelback corner spot gets a huge boost with the return of Keisean Nixon, which not only helps the defence but also gives a huge boost on special teams.

Brayden Narveson won the kicker spot, the undrafted free agent out of NC state. The kicker will need to be reliable for the Packers next season, and both could be a significant part of the special teams.

The Packers have one of the best squads in the NFL. They have a young side with only one player over the age of 30. This means the squad can have continuity, which is evident in many of the position groups. The Packers look set for another playoff run if they can stay healthy. The group of young wide receivers will look to continue their growth, and the Packers will hope they can find the right pairing in the secondary. The division is tough, with the Lions being strong contenders, but the Packers seem likely to take the crown if the Lions struggle.

**Minnesota Vikings**

At the start of 2023, the Vikings seemed poised to mount a serious challenge, at least from the playoffs. However, their season was derailed by a slew of injuries. Star receiver Justin Jefferson, quarterback Kirk Cousins, and tight end TJ Hockenson all suffered significant injuries, with Cousins enduring a season-ending blow in Week 8. Additionally, defensive players Marcus Davenport, Jordan Hicks, and D.J. Wonnum all had stints on injured reserve. As a result, the Vikings finished with a disappointing 7–10 record, missing out on the playoffs. Cousins' injury was particularly devastating for a team that had started to look impressive. As the season ended, the Vikings made several significant off-season moves that reshaped the team's outlook for 2024.

Kirk Cousins is no longer with the Vikings, leaving in free agency and creating uncertainty at the quarterback position. In response, the Vikings added Sam Darnold and drafted JJ McCarthy. While McCarthy is likely seen as the quarterback of the future, it sadly will not be this year due to injury. Vikings will start Darnald in the season opener because of this. Nick Mullins and Brett Rypien also make the roster and will come in should Darnold struggle.

The running back situation also underwent changes, with Alex Mattison departing after an underwhelming season. The Vikings upgraded by acquiring Aaron Jones from Green Bay. When fit Jones can be explosive, however injuries took its toll last season with him managing just 11 games. Ty Chandler, who showed flashes of brilliance while filling in for Mattison last year, will serve as the backup. He will aim to build on his promising moments as he enters the 2024 season. Myles Gaskin also signs with the side adding much reliable depth to the side. The Vikings also keep fullback C.J Ham on the roster who adds a run, pass and blocking dimension to the running back room.

The wide receiver corps remains largely unchanged, led by the dynamic Justin Jefferson. Despite playing only 10 games in 2023, Jefferson still surpassed 1,000 yards, showcasing his elite talent. Jordan Addison, who impressed as a rookie, will be his running mate, forming an exciting wide receiver duo in the NFL. Meanwhile, Jalen Nailor and Brandon Powell will compete for the third wide receiver slot, adding depth to the position. Trishton Jackson and Trent Sherfield also make the roster.

At tight end, the Vikings are hopeful TJ Hockenson can return to form after a severe ACL injury last season. Although he is rumoured to be ahead of schedule in his recovery, it's unlikely he'll be ready for the start of the season. This opens the door for backups Josh Oliver, Johnny Mundt, Nick Muse and to stake their claim for the starting role in his absence.

The offensive line looks solid, with the Vikings re-signing Dalton Risner and Blake Brandel, who will start at right and left guard, respectively. Risner starts the season on IR meaning Ed Ingram is also expected to start in some games. Michael Jurgens will be on the guard rotation. Christian Darrisaw is locked in at left tackle, while either Brian O’Neill or recently re-signed David Quessenberry will take the right tackle spot. The Vikings also added Walter Rouse in the draft, who will serve as a backup as well as Jeremy Flax. Garrett Bradbury will return as the starting centre, anchoring the line. Dan Feeney will serve as back up centre.

Defensively, the Vikings made several changes on the line. Key players like Danielle Hunter, DJ Wonnum, Marcus Davenport, and Khyris Tonga all left in free agency. They were replaced by Jonathan Greenard who led the Texans in sacks last season, Jihad Ward, and Andrew Van Ginkel on the edge, while first-round draft pick Dallas Turner also joined the mix and could be a steal for the Vikings. Pat Jones and Gabriel Murphy also make the roster in depth. On the inside, Jerry Tillery was acquired via free agency, with Jonathan Bullard re-signing to join Harrison Phillips in the 3–4 defence. The rotation spot in this system will be occupied by Tki Taimani, Jalen Redmond and Levi Drake Rodriguez.

The linebacker corps will be led by standout undrafted rookie Ivan Pace Jr., who shone last season. However, he won't have the veteran presence of Jordan Hicks or Anthony Barr this time around. Instead, the Vikings added former Texan Blake Cashman, who is coming off a breakout season, and Kamu Grugier-Hill, who will play a significant role in the rotation. Brian Asamoah II also makes the roster and will be in the rotation whilst the Vikings await Jordan Kubaszyk return from IR.

In the secondary, the Vikings' starting cornerbacks are likely to be Stephon Gilmore and Shaquill Griffin, following the tragic loss of rookie Kyhree Jackson. Fabian Moreau and Akayleb Evans will be the rotation pieces, Dwight McGlothern and Mekhi Blackmon will be the depth. Byron Murphy looks to have won the starting nickel spot from Josh Metellus who will back up Murphy. The safety position remains strong, led by former All-Pro Harrison Smith and Camryn Bynum, with Theo Jackson and Jay Ward providing depth alongside Bobby McCain.

On special teams, the Vikings drafted Will Reichard, the NCAA Division 1 FBS leading scorer. Reichard missed only three kicks last season, all from over 40 yards. The Vikings are hopeful that Reichard will be a reliable kicker in crucial moments.

Heading into 2024, the Vikings find themselves with the quarterback of the future, but questions remain about when he will take the reins. The team has lost several key players across the roster, suggesting they may be in a slight rebuild. However, with game-changers like Justin Jefferson, the Vikings still possess the potential to win games. The defensive losses could impact the team significantly, but first-round pick Dallas Turner will be eager to prove himself as a top defensive talent, possibly even vying for Defensive Rookie of the Year honours. While it may be challenging for the Vikings to make the playoffs this season, they have the opportunity to solidify key pieces for their future, giving them hope of returning to postseason contention soon.

**Chicago Bears**

The Bears had a fairly good 2023, securing 7 wins in the tough NFC North division. This was a significant improvement from their three-win season in 2022. Optimism is high for the Bears, who acquired the first overall pick in a trade with the Panthers, enabling them to select Bryce Young in the 2023 draft. The Bears chose Caleb Williams, the impressive college quarterback from USC, and made several other notable moves to support the rookie in his first season.

Starting with the quarterbacks, the Bears selected Caleb Williams, but to make room for him, they traded Justin Fields to the Steelers for a 6th-round draft pick. Caleb Williams will start as the Bears' quarterback from day one. Williams comes with a huge reputation from college as a player who can create something from nothing and the Bears will hope he is the real deal. Tyson Bagent is the backup in the position. Bagent impressed when needed in 2023.

The Bears' running back room is in excellent shape. The free agency signing of D'Andre Swift is a big boost for an already strong group, Swift finished 2023 with his first 1000 rushing season and is known for having dual threat abilities. Swift joins veteran running back Khalil Herbert, and Roschon Johnson who is entering his second season. These two were the Bears running back one and two in 2023. Travis Homer is also there adding value when required. Khari Blasingame was signed as the teams full back.

The wide receiver corps receives a significant boost through free agency and the draft. The Bears added Keenan Allen from the Chargers. Allen finished 2023 with statistically his second best season in a 11 year career, he joins and will support star wide-out DJ Moore who had his best season in 2023. The Bears selected first-round receiver Rome Odunze who comes with a huge reputation, all of which give the Caleb Williams very reliable targets in 2024. While the Bears lost Darnell Mooney in free agency, they still have Tyler Scott, Velus Jones Jr and also Dante Pettis and Nsimba Webster who s tart the year on IR for depth. DeAndre Carter also joins as a kick and punt return specialist, providing additional depth to the Bears' offence.

In the tight end room, Gerald Everett joins to compete with Cole Kmet for the starting job. Kmet will continue to be a major offensive threat, with Everett adding valuable depth. The addition of Everett is another really good bit of business for the Bears meaning they have several pass catching threats in the tight end room and are capable run blockers as well. They also add Marcedes Lewis to the room making a nice group.

The Bears strengthened their offensive line by adding Coleman Shelton to start at centre after losing Cody Whitehair in free agency. Shelton joins tackles Darnell Wright and Braxton Jones, alongside starting guards Teven Jenkins and Nate Davis. The offensive line also gains depth with free agency signing Ryan Bates looking to win the starting centre job. Matt Pryor, Bill Murray were signed as backup guards. Doug Kramer Jr another depth piece at centre and guard, with Kiran Amegadjie and Larry Borom at tackle aiming to form a strong unit to protect Caleb Williams.

Defensively, the Bears starting tackles Andrew Billings and Gervon Dexter Sr will look to set the tone for the outside guys. Zacch Picking and Chris Williams will back them up. Jacob Martin joins on the edge in a likely rotational role once back from IR, supporting Montez Sweat and DeMarcus Walker, who are both aiming for big seasons. Austin Booker, drafted for depth, hopes to make an impression on the starting unit. Daniel Hardy, Darrell Taylor, Dominique Robinson fill out the room.

The linebacker group remains largely unchanged, with Tremaine Edmonds, T.J. Edwards, and Jack Sanborn as the starters. Noah Sewell aims to make a significant impact in his second year, with Amen Ogbongbemige providing valuable depth.

The secondary receives a huge boost with second-team All-Pro Jaylon Johnson re-signing with the Bears. Tyrique Stevenson will play on the opposite side. Jaylon Jones and Terrell Smith will back the two up. Despite losing Eddie Jackson to free agency, the Bears acquired Kevin Byard and Jonathan Owens, who will join Jaquan Brisker to form another strong positional unit. Elijah Hicks and Douglas Coleman III also add some depth to the position. Kyler Jordan will start at nickel with Josh Blackwell also taking reps.

Torey Taylor, drafted in the 4th round, joins as the new punter, potentially playing a significant role in special teams by helping the defence with strong starting positions. Cairo Santos will be the place kicker coming off a 92% success rate on field goals last time out.

The Chicago Bears appear well set across the board, with a lot of talent in the starting positions. If Caleb Williams can replicate his college performance, the Bears could be an exciting team to watch. With numerous offensive weapons, the team could achieve significant success. However, given the tough division featuring the Vikings, Packers, and Lions, dethroning the Lions from the top spot may be ambitious for this year. Nonetheless, the Bears can make substantial progress toward that goal.

**Outlook and Predictions**

The Lions narrowly missed out on a trip to the superbowl last year. They keep some key pieces of the team and that includes offensive mastermind Ben Johnson. Green Bay added some really good pieces that could give them a boost and it may be enough to make the jump required. The Vikings suffer two huge blows at quarterback losing Cousins and then rookie JJ McCarthy to injury look less impressive this time out. The Bears head into the new season with a new belief in the side with rookie Caleb Williams.

**Prediction:**

1. Lions
2. Packers
3. Bears
4. Vikings