

The Packers' Charles Woodson reacted to a pass interference call during the second half of an NFC wild card playoff game against the Cardinals on Sunday in Glendale, Ariz. **Below:** The Cardinals' Larry Fitzgerald celebrated after his team defeated the Packers, 51-45, in overtime. The Cardinals advanced to face the Saints in the NFC divisional round at 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

Associated Press

## Dansby's fumble return ends season for Packers

**By Bob Baum**  
Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Old master Kurt Warner and playoff newcomer Aaron Rodgers staged a passing duel to rival any the NFL has seen. And when the highest-scoring postseason game in league history ended abruptly in overtime, Rodgers flung his helmet to the sideline in disgust.

He can blame the Arizona defense for his misery. Karlos Dansby returned Rodgers' fumble 17 yards for a touchdown to give the Cardinals a 51-45 victory over the Green Bay Packers on Sunday.

Rodgers, intercepted on the game's first play but marvelous after that, was stripped by Michael Adams. The ball careened off Rodgers' foot and into the hands of Dansby, who ran untouched for the score.

"He made a sack, the ball went in the air, I just made a play on the ball," Dansby said.

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## Turnovers, bad defense to blame for bitter loss

**By Andrew Bagnato**  
Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. — With seven wins in eight games to close out the regular season, the Green Bay Packers entered the playoffs as the hottest team in the NFC — and with one of the best defenses to boot.

They exited the playoffs by giving away the football early and late in a 51-45 overtime loss to the Cardinals in an NFC wild card game Sunday.

In between, the Green Bay defense had no answer for Kurt Warner and the Cardinals, surrendering the most points in the franchise's 41 postseason games.

"We're done now, so that's what I'll be thinking about laying in bed tonight," said quarterback Aaron Rodgers, who had a fumble returned for the winning touchdown.

The turnovers and defensive collapse were uncharacteristic for a team that led the NFL in turnover margin and finished second in total defense.

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### BOWLING: CHIPPEWA VALLEY MATCH GAMES

# Apo claims Match Games title once again

**By Ben Peterson**  
Leader-Telegram staff

It wasn't the first time, and it may not be the last time that Adam Apo is crowned champion of the Chippewa Valley Match Games.

The four-time tournament champion



Burkart

defeated top-seeded Brandon Henderson, 202-185, in the final match of the two-day tournament. "I'm pretty satisfied right now," Apo said. "Now I can relax. I'm calm now."

Apo finished match play in second place overall with 2,424 total pins, but because of the ladder-style play of the finals, the Rochester, Minn., native defeated Chad Nelson, 212-194, to advance to the championship match.

"He started off in the middle of the pack, but he really stepped up his play today," tournament director Denny Burkart said. "He was just fun to watch today."

- Apo started strong with three straight 9-spares, picking up the 10, 3 and 7 pins in succession. His only open frame came in the sixth, when he left the 10-pin on a 4-7-10 split.

### CHIPPEWA VALLEY MATCH GAMES

Total Pins

1. Brandon Henderson... 2,441
2. Adam Apo... 2,424
3. Bob Wolfe... 2,406
4. Nick Hellman... 2,375
5. Chad Nelson... 2,373
6. Jerry Holdorf... 2,347
7. Eric Schacht... 2,335
8. John Meltzer... 2,322
9. Dan Bock... 2,268
10. Pat Burkart... 2,263

## The Top 10

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Still, the Vikings won't back away, at least in their public analysis and assessment, from their intent to re-establish the run.

"You just want to be able to wear down your opponent so you can make it easier for your pass," said Pro Bowl left tackle Bryant McKinnie, one of several players who benefited from the first-round bye to rest and heal. He was bothered by an ankle injury in December, and his struggles in pass protection were apparent several times.

Linemen usually like run-blocking better, because of the control.

had six two years ago as a rookie, including two over 220 yards.

"We know that if we open holes he's going to hit them," center John Sullivan said. "He's going to be successful."

The unspoken assumption, though, is that this is Favre's show. The success or lack thereof will be on his shoulders.

Favre is typically given an either-or call for each play, giving him the authority to survey the defense and choose run or pass based on the alignment and pre-snap movement. Sullivan calls the blocking scheme, with his own freedom to choose a more aggressive option.

of it all.

"That's what offense is," Sullivan said. "You can't be one-dimensional. They both have to be a threat, and they feed off each other."

The Vikings returned to the field Sunday after their week off to rest and heal, and every player participated in the short practice. "The mental break was welcomed as much as the opportunity to get off their feet for a few days.

Childress said he saw "a little more pep in their step," and defensive end Jared Allen claimed the excitement of the playoffs made him smile during practice for the first time in weeks.

# Bowling/Apo trails just Wirz

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With the win, Apo took home a check for \$1,200 and now has the second-most wins in the history of the tournament behind Eau Claire's Mike Wirz.

When asked if he would return to challenge Wirz's record, Apo said he wouldn't miss it.

"These guys love to compete," Burkart said. "They love the adrenaline, and that's what keeps them coming back."

With this being the 52nd annual tournament, the Match Games is the longest running tournament in the Midwest.

## CHIPPEWA VALLEY MATCH GAMES FINALS

Match 1: Chad Nelson def. Nick Hellman, 224-208. Match 2: Nelson def. Bob Wolfe, 219-192. Match 3: Adam Apo def. Nelson, 212-194. Championship: Apo def. Brandon Henderson, 202-185.

The \$1,200 payout for first place is also one of the prime reasons that the tournament sees growth every year. That amount is comparable to several national tournaments and is several times more than the average payout of a tournament of similar size.

Another point of pride for Burkart is the number of local participants. Though the tournament draws bowlers from all over the country,

including former PBA Tour participants like Apo, three of the top 10 finalists were Eau Claire natives.

"These are the guys that we bowl with in league on Monday nights," Burkart said. "That just shows the level of talent we have in the Chippewa Valley."

### Notes

In the 11 games Apo bowled Sunday, he finished with an average of 246.18. He also finished with the high game for the day at 287. ... Bob Wolfe was the highest-ranked local player. Wolfe fell to Nelson, 219-192, in a quarterfinal match but finished the day with an average of 244.8.

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