

# FEARLESS FOOTBALL FORECAST

MIRROR SPORTS STAFF

GUEST PICKER



NFL NOTEBOOK

## Bengals officially sign LJ

*The Associated Press*  
CINCINNATI — Larry Johnson might have his career up-and-running sooner than expected.

The running back who was banished from Kansas City for bad behavior signed on for a backup role with the Cincinnati Bengals on Tuesday, giving the AFC North leaders depth for the rest of this season. He might not be watching for long.

A day after coach Marvin Lewis referred to Johnson as an insurance policy in case of injury, he said it's possible the running back could play in some form Sunday in Oakland if starter Cedric Benson is still limited by a strained hip.

"I'm not saying that it can't happen, I'm not saying that it will happen, but stay tuned," Lewis said, with Johnson sitting by his side. "He'd like to play, I know that. And we'll see what happens as we go through the week, as I said earlier, regarding Cedric with his injury."

Johnson has his own goal for getting on the field: Dec. 27, when the Bengals play the Chiefs at Paul Brown Stadium.

"I'd be lying if I said I ain't looking at that game as a game I want to definitely play in, but we take it a game at a time, one situation at a time," Johnson said. "I'm just trying to get on the field as of right now. If that happens, it'd be the best Christmas gift I can get."

### Bills fire Jauron

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Dick Jauron was fired by Buffalo on Tuesday with the Bills off to a 3-6 start and among the lowest scoring teams in the NFL.

The team said Jauron's replacement would be announced later. Jauron's successor is expected to come from the current staff and be on an interim basis only. Candidates include assistant head coach Bobby April and defensive coordinator Perry Fewell.

### Bowe suspended

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Dwayne Bowe, in and out of his coach's doghouse all year, is in much deeper trouble now.

Kansas City's third-year wide receiver was suspended without pay for four games Tuesday for violating the NFL's policy against performance-enhancing substances. Neither the Chiefs nor the league would make further comment.

### Tequila sues Merriman

SAN DIEGO — Reality TV star Tila Tequila filed a lawsuit against San Diego Chargers linebacker Shawne Merriman alleging domestic violence.

Attorney Cyrus Nownejad told The Associated Press that Tequila is seeking \$1.5 million in damages.

### Cribbs hurt

CLEVELAND — Following wide receiver Josh Cribbs' scary last-second injury, Browns coach Eric Mangini said he wishes he would have handled the final play of Monday night's game differently.

Cribbs was taken to a hospital after he was flattened on a last, meaningless play in Baltimore's 16-0 win over the Browns.

Week 12 GAMES	John Hartsock	Philip Cmor	Buck Frank	Mike Boytim	Todd Irwin	Scott Franco	Cory Giger	Jeff Pentland
Holidaysburg vs. Johnstown	Johnstown	Johnstown	Johnstown	Johnstown	Johnstown	Holidaysburg	Holidaysburg	Johnstown
Portage at Bellwood-Antis	Portage	Portage	Bellwood-Antis	Bellwood-Antis	Bellwood-Antis	Bellwood-Antis	Bellwood-Antis	Bellwood-Antis
Tyrone at Central	Central	Central	Central	Tyrone	Central	Tyrone	Tyrone	Tyrone
Bedford vs. Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse	Westinghouse
Penn State at Michigan State	Michigan State	Penn State	Penn State	Penn State	Penn State	Michigan State	Penn State	Penn State
Connecticut at Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Notre Dame	Connecticut
Ohio State at Michigan	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Michigan	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State
Oregon at Arizona	Oregon	Oregon	Oregon	Oregon	Oregon	Arizona	Oregon	Oregon
North Carolina at Boston College	Boston College	Boston College	Boston College	Boston College	Boston College	North Carolina	North Carolina	North Carolina
Purdue at Indiana	Purdue	Purdue	Purdue	Indiana	Purdue	Indiana	Purdue	Indiana
Kansas at Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas	Texas
LSU at Mississippi	LSU	Mississippi	LSU	Mississippi	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU
Louisville at South Florida	South Florida	South Florida	South Florida	South Florida	South Florida	South Florida	South Florida	South Florida
North Carolina State at Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech	Virginia Tech
Wisconsin at Northwestern	Wisconsin	Wisconsin	Wisconsin	Wisconsin	Wisconsin	Northwestern	Wisconsin	Northwestern
Oklahoma at Texas Tech	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Texas Tech
Vanderbilt at Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee	Tennessee
Steelers at Chiefs	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers	Steelers
Eagles at Bears	Eagles	Eagles	Eagles	Eagles	Eagles	Eagles	Eagles	Eagles
Dolphins at Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Panthers	Dolphins	Dolphins	Dolphins	Dolphins	Panthers
Colts at Ravens	Colts	Colts	Colts	Colts	Colts	Ravens	Colts	Colts
Browns at Lions	Lions	Lions	Lions	Lions	Lions	Lions	Lions	Lions
49ers at Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	Packers	49ers
Bills at Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars	Jaguars
Seahawks at Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings	Vikings
Falcons at Giants	Giants	Giants	Giants	Giants	Giants	Giants	Giants	Giants
Chargers at Broncos	Chargers	Chargers	Chargers	Broncos	Chargers	Chargers	Chargers	Broncos
Jets at Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Patriots	Jets
Bengals at Raiders	Bengals	Bengals	Bengals	Raiders	Bengals	Bengals	Bengals	Raiders
Titans at Texans	Texans	Texans	Texans	Texans	Texans	Texans	Titans	Texans
Last forecast	23-7	18-12	18-12	18-12	22-8	21-9	18-12	17-13
Overall	253-77	240-90	238-92	238-92	236-94	235-95	232-98	203-127

Last week's guest picker was Nate Foreman. Anyone wishing to be a guest picker should call 946-7444.

# Polamalu 'questionable at best' for KC

BY ALAN ROBINSON

*The Associated Press*  
PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers apparently won't be without injured safety Troy Polamalu for more than one game.

The sigh of relief began in coach Mike Tomlin's office and no doubt spread throughout the Steelers' practice building.

Polamalu hasn't been ruled out of Sunday's game at Kansas City despite injuring his left knee for the second time this season. However, it seems more likely he will miss one game and attempt to return for an AFC North game at Baltimore on Nov. 29.

Polamalu is "questionable at best" for the Chiefs (2-7), according to Tomlin.

Questionable is a lot better than out, which is what the Steelers (6-3) feared their defensive star would be after he strained a posterior cruciate ligament tackling running back Cedric Benson early in Cincinnati's 18-12 victory on Sunday.

"He is in a great frame of mind. He feels really good, but we're going to follow the expert advice that we get from our medical staff in terms of



Mirror file photo by J.D. Cavrich

Troy Polamalu likely will not play Sunday.

how we proceed," Tomlin said Tuesday. "In the short term, we're going to take it day to day. But [it's] really encouraging, more encouraging, I think, than was initially anticipated."

## STEELERS NOTEBOOK

Polamalu, a five-time Pro Bowl player, missed the Steelers' second through fifth games with a medial collateral ligament sprain, and he played less than a half in their opener against Tennessee. The Steelers (6-3) lost two of the four he missed, and all three of their losses occurred when Polamalu was out or played only a single series.

The latest injury is not as bad as initially feared, Tomlin said, because it did not affect the previously injured ligament.

### Backup LB cut

He's watched game tapes, analyzed and criticized, and now coach Mike Tomlin is doing something about the Pittsburgh Steelers' miserable kickoff coverage.

Backup linebacker Arnold Harrison was waived on Tuesday, making him the first player to lose his job after the Steelers allowed a league-high three kickoff return touchdowns in four games.

**Courtesy**

YEAR END WRAP UP

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