

Detroit Lions 2008 NFL Predictions

Contributed by Jimmy Boyd
Thursday, 10 July 2008

QB John Kitna fell three games short of his 10-win prediction prior to last season as the Lions fell off miserably in the second half of the year. Still, their 7-9 mark was the Lions' best in the Matt Millen Era. Sportsbook.com has the Detroit Lions listed at 80 to 1 odds to win Super Bowl 43. The Lions have not had a winning season since 2000 and they haven't been in the playoffs since 1999, but the organization believes they might get both of those monkeys off their backs this year. Find out if Jimmy Boyd thinks the Lions are being overly optimistic in his 2008 NFL Predictions for the Detroit Lions season in this preview for Point-Spreads.com.

Offense - Jon Kitna is a veteran QB and will get the starting nod when the 2008 season kicks off because of it. But if his play heads south, don't be surprised if the Lions start developing Drew Stanton, a second round pick last year. Without Mike Martz calling the shots, we can expect a much more balanced attack under new coordinator Jim Colletto.

The Lions released 2004 first rounder Kevin Jones with the announcement that they want to become a more run-oriented team. Detroit questioned his durability. Colletto will employ a zone-rushing scheme so the Lions will look to two zone rushing backs to carry the torch. Tatum Bell was productive in Denver's zone scheme and third round draft pick Kevin Smith threatened Barry Sanders' college rushing record in Central Florida's zone rushing attack.

I expect Detroit's passing game to actually improve now that the threat of the run is being implemented into the offense. When Martz was calling the shots, opposing teams just left their safeties deep to take away the big play because they knew that Martz might only call a run play 5-10 times a game. Roy Williams and Calvin Johnson are two big time talents, and hopefully an infusion of run plays will open things up for them more.

The Lions ranked second to last in rushing in 2007 and third worst in sacks allowed. The offensive line is not entirely to blame. The Lions rarely ran the rock and it is much easier to mount a pass rush when you know a team is always passing. With that said, the offensive line unit is not the cream of the crop.

Defense - The Lions will not be successful with head coach Rod Marinelli's Tampa Two defense until he can mount a pass rush. The Lions traded away their best defensive player, tackle Shaun Rogers, and they don't have a dominant edge rusher. They will be breaking in several new draft picks in the defensive line.

The linebacker corps is an area that the Lions have addressed, but one that has not panned out. 2003 and 2004 second round draft picks, Boss Bailey and Teddy Lehman, were allowed to leave in free agency. The Lions did make one good linebacker choice recently with Ernie Sims. He holds down the fort and then some on the weak side, but they need to find a force at middle line backer.

The Lions secondary has pathetic in 2007, allowing opponents to complete 70.1 percent of their passes. This was not helped by a defensive line which was not able to put enough heat on the QB either. An infusion of new players such as cornerbacks Leigh Bodden and Brian Kelly and safeties Dwight Smith and Kalvin Pearson should improve this unit.

Special Teams - This will be Jason Hanson's 17th season kicking field goals in the NFL and few have done it better. Punter Nick Harris is also one of the best in the league. The Lions don't have a Devin Hester to return kicks but who does? They drafted wide receiver Kenneth Moore to hopefully fill that need.

2008 NFL Predictions for the Detroit Lions – 4th NFC North

Getting used to a new offensive coordinator and a new system will take some time but the offense will still be the strength of this team. The loss of Shaun Rogers in the middle will be huge and the defense will continue to hold the Lions back.

Jimmy Boyd's NFL picks will have you beating the NFL odds from week one clear through the Super Bowl.

Sportsbook.com has posted football betting odds on various 2008 NFL Predictions to win Super Bowl 43:

Arizona Cardinals
50 - 1

Atlanta Falcons
100 - 1

Baltimore Ravens

75 - 1

Buffalo Bills

50 - 1

Carolina Panthers

40 - 1

Chicago Bears

35 - 1

Cincinnati Bengals

60 - 1

Cleveland Browns

25 - 1

Dallas Cowboys

6 - 1

Denver Broncos

50 - 1

Detroit Lions

80 - 1

Green Bay Packers

25 - 1

Houston Texans

60 - 1

Indianapolis Colts

7 - 1

Jacksonville Jaguars

12 - 1

Kansas City Chiefs

100 - 1

Miami Dolphins

90 - 1

Minnesota Vikings

18 - 1

New England Patriots

7 - 2

New Orleans Saints

20 - 1

New York Giants

15 - 1

New York Jets

35 - 1

Oakland Raiders

50 - 1

Philadelphia Eagles

20 - 1

Pittsburgh Steelers

14 - 1

Saint Louis Rams

75 - 1

San Diego Chargers

7 - 1

San Francisco 49ers

80 - 1

Seattle Seahawks

25 - 1

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

40 - 1

Tennessee Titans

40 - 1

Washington Redskins

50 - 1