

NFL Predictions: St. Louis Rams NFC West Preview

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Thursday, 14 August 2008
Last Updated Friday, 15 August 2008

The start to the 2007 season could not have gone worse for the Rams. Any hopes the team had of being a contender in the NFC West were slayed by a 0-8 run to open the year. If St. Louis does not rebound and do so convincingly, Head Coach Scott Linehan could find himself looking for work in the off season. NFL Betting odds at SBGglobal are not overly optimistic about the Rams chances as the team is listed at +600 odds to win their division.

'The Greatest Show on Turf' era came to an abrupt end last season. The once feared Rams offense generated just 16.4 points per game and 297.5 yards per game in 2007. To help improve those numbers this year Linehan brought in former Kansas City/Washington offensive coordinator Al Saunders.

Saunders did not do that much in Washington, but in Kansas City he coordinated an offense that averaged 27.0 points per game over a five year period. St. Louis would love to see those type of numbers duplicated in the next few years.

The Rams are not without talented skill players and Saunders knows how to get the best out of those positions. If Marc Bulger remains healthy, this offense has a chance to put last year's woes behind them. Steven Jackson is one of the premiere running backs in the league and Torry Holt is an outstanding wide out. Jackson, however, has not reported to training camp and he is threatening to go into the season with his holdout. This development along with the spotty play of the offensive line (48 sacks allowed last year) are big concerns for the team.

Last season the Rams defense may have been more dreadful than their offense. Their bend-don't-break style of play both bent and broke as evidenced by the 27.4 points per game they allowed. That said, there is a certain amount of hope for the unit in 2008. While they did yield a large number of yards to opponents, it was not the kind of totals that typically translate into a 27 point per game allowed average.

The addition of Chris Long to a line featuring Adam Carriker, Leonard Little, and La'Roi Glover should help the defense correct some of last year's problems.

NFL Betting odds at SBGglobal.com list St. Louis at +4500 odds to win the Super Bowl, +2400 odds to win the NFC Championship, and -135 odds to win over 6.5 games.

Prediction: 3rdPlace NFC West.