

Robert's Rant: Bengals upset Chiefs, Rams end losing streak to 49ers

By **Robert Belardi**

Opinion

The National Football League conference championships were nothing short of exciting.

The Cincinnati Bengals, against all odds, went to Arrowhead Stadium and took down Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs.

The Los Angeles Rams ended their six-game losing streak against the San Francisco 49ers as the host stadium of the Super Bowl will see the host team take part.

Kansas City blew 18-point lead

Kansas City were flooring the Cincinnati Bengals. By halftime it was 21-3 and everything had seemed as if the Chiefs would make their third consecutive Super Bowl appearance.

Immediately when the second half began the tables had turned. The Bengals defence had stifled Patrick Mahomes. Travis Kelce was completely taken out of the game and Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow was rolling on offence.

The Bengals stormed back and scored 24 unanswered points. But Mahomes gave the Chiefs a chance to tie and kicker Harrison Butker sent the game to overtime.

The Chiefs won the toss and Mahomes threw an interception. Burrow gave sensational rookie kicker Evan MacPherson the chance to send the Bengals to the franchise's third Super Bowl appearance ever and he fired it right between the pipes.

There were two incidents in this matchup that baffled viewers. On the cusp of halftime, The Chiefs found themselves on the one-yard line. Mahomes tried to score a touchdown, passing the ball to wideout Tyreek Hill. But the Bengals prevented that, and it seemed as if it took the wind right out of the Chiefs' offence.

The second incident was the entirety of the second half. The Chiefs accrued only 83 yards of total offence and Mahomes was held to 16 pass yards. Mahomes could not decide what to do pretty much on every play and was forced to run in circles around the pocket.

On the other end, the former Heisman Trophy winner and college national champion with LSU will become the first quarterback taken No. 1 overall to reach the Super Bowl within his first two years in the league.

The Ohio native becomes the second quarterback to defeat Mahomes in the playoffs and the third quarterback in franchise history to reach the Super Bowl.

Rams erased 10-point deficit in fourth quarter

On a day of comebacks, the Rams stormed back in the fourth quarter to end their six-game losing streak against the San Francisco 49ers.

For the second consecutive year, the host team of the Super Bowl will take part in the big dance. Last year the Tampa Bay Buccaneers hosted the Super Bowl and won.

In a game that looked to be all but over thanks to a George Kittle touchdown, the Rams, who were struggling on offence all game

simply found a way to break down a tough 49ers defence.

Stafford found triple-crown winner Cooper Kupp wide open in the end zone on third and one at the beginning of the fourth quarter. In what could have been a game changing interception, down 17-14, Stafford threw the ball right to 49ers safety Jaquiski Tart who dropped the ball with nobody around. That led to a game-tying field goal and then eventually another field goal from Matt Gay with just under two minutes left.

On the ensuing 49ers drive, 49ers quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo threw an unwarranted interception while being tackled down to the ground giving the Rams the victory.

On the anniversary of being traded to the Rams one year ago, this moment was particularly special for Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford.

Stafford spent eleven years with the Detroit Lions, having never won a playoff game. In his first year as a Ram, Stafford is heading to the Super Bowl.

It will be the battle of the first-overall picks. Stafford was chosen by the Detroit Lions first overall in 2009. Burrow was selected first overall by the Bengals in 2020.

In what should be an enthralling Super Bowl bout between the underdog and the favourite, I see the Los Angeles Rams taking home the Super Bowl.

Prediction: 28-24 Rams.