

VIKINGS' 1,000TH GAME

A grand old time

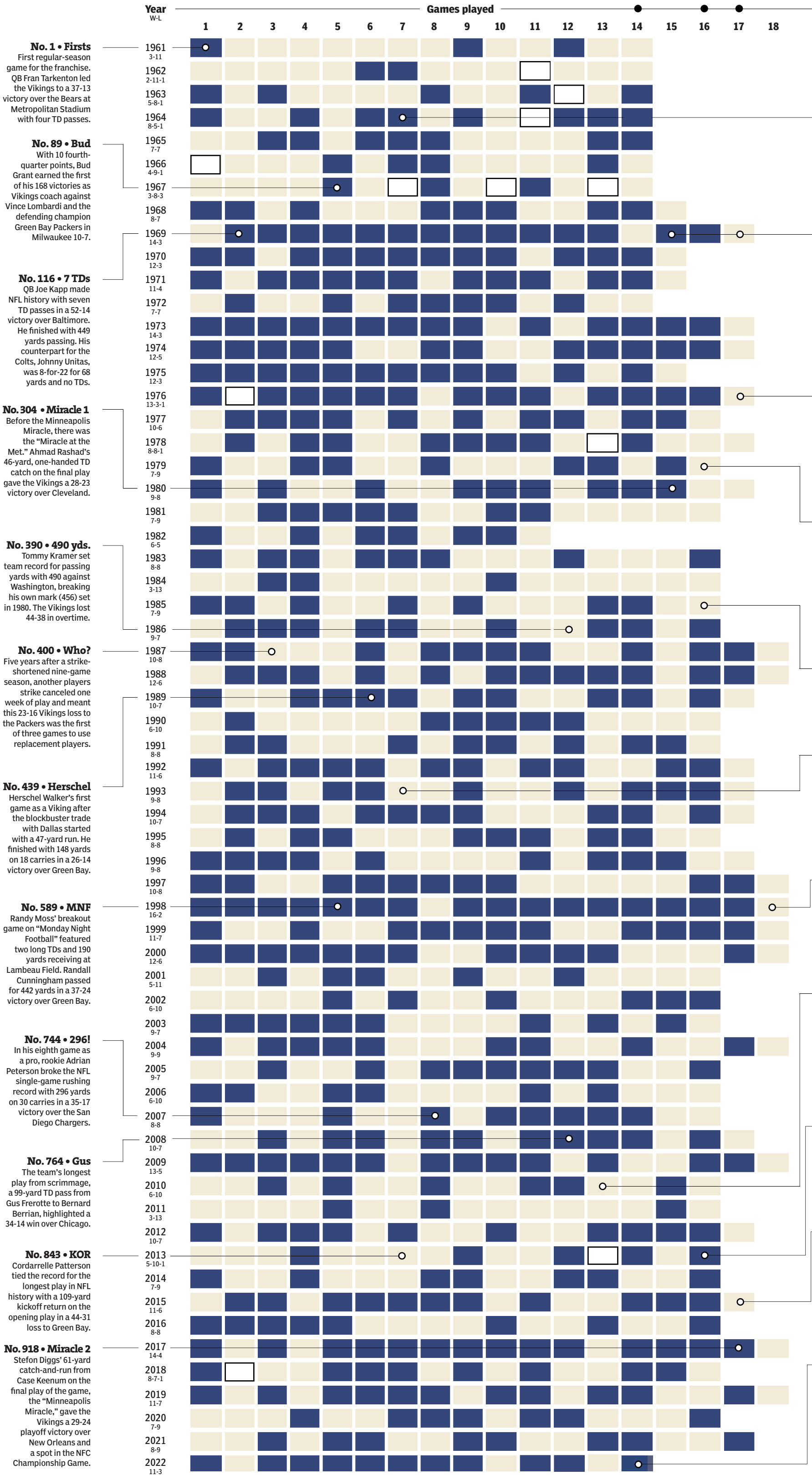
By STEVE ZIMMERMAN and C.J. SINNER • Star Tribune staff

Adding together their regular-season and postseason games — games that have thrilled us and tortured us and sewed stitches into Minnesota's fabric for 62 seasons — the Vikings played Game No. 1,000 Saturday with a game that did all of that and more.

From the opener in 1961, to frozen games in numbing windchills, to toasty ones under an inflatable roof, to four Super Bowls, with 949 regular-season games and 51 more in the postseason, a miracle or two, a missed kick or three, here's a grand in games:

THE VIKINGS AT 1,000 GAMES • 535 WINS • 454 LOSSES • 11 TIES • .540 WINNING PCT.

■ win ■ loss □ tie



The seasons
Game 14 marked the end of the NFL regular season from 1961 to '77. It was expanded to 16 games in 1978 and 17 in 2021.

No. 49 • Uh oh
Despite Jim Marshall's infamous "wrong way" return of a fumble forced by Carl Eller 66 yards into his own end zone, the Vikings still defeated San Francisco 27-22.

No. 128 • Playoffs
Vikings defeated the Los Angeles Rams 23-20 in the first NFL playoff game played in Minnesota. The Vikings outscored the Rams 16-3 in the second half.

No. 130 • SB IV
The first Super Bowl berth for Vikings ended in a 23-7 loss to Kansas City in New Orleans.

No. 240 • SB XI
Vikings made their fourth Super Bowl appearance but trailed by 16 at the half and lost to John Madden's Oakland Raiders 32-14 at the Rose Bowl. It was the largest crowd (103,438) the Vikings have ever played in front of.

No. 289 • The end
This 27-23 loss to New England was Jim Marshall's 270th regular-season game and last for the Vikings, still the most in franchise history.

No. 381 • Farewell
Bud Grant's final game on the Vikings sideline, in his second stint as head coach, was a 37-35 loss to Philadelphia.

No. 500 • History
A 24-7 loss to the Raiders at the L.A. Coliseum was the first NFL game between two Black head coaches, Art Shell and Dennis Green. The Vikings quarterback in the game? Jim McMahon.

No. 602 • The kick
Gary Anderson's missed 38-yard field goal late in the fourth quarter, his first miss of the season for the 15-1 Vikings, led to a 30-27 overtime loss to Atlanta in the NFC Championship Game.

No. 800 • No dome
The 21-3 "home" loss to the Giants was played at Ford Field in Detroit after the Metrodome roof collapsed in a snowstorm the day before. The game also marked the end of Brett Favre's NFL record streak of 297 consecutive starts.

No. 852 • Lights out
The Vikings' final game at the Metrodome is a 14-13 win over Detroit. Cordarrelle Patterson scored both TDs, including the go-ahead score in the fourth quarter.

No. 885 • Brrrr
The coldest game in team history was a wild-card game at TCF Bank Stadium. The temperature at kickoff was minus-6 with a minus-25 windchill. The Vikings lost 10-9 to Seattle when Blair Walsh missed a 27-yard field goal.

No. 1,000 The Comeback
After entering halftime of their 1,000th game down 33-0 to the Colts, the Vikings pulled off the largest comeback in NFL history with a 39-36 overtime victory that clinched the NFC North.

Editor's note: The NFL held a third-place game from 1961 to '69, which the Vikings participated in at the conclusion of the 1968 season, but these games, known as the "Playoff Bowl," are recorded as exhibition games, like preseason games, and not included in our count. Source: Star Tribune analysis of FiveThirtyEight and Pro Football Reference NFL data