Highlights

FALL 2023

BRONCOS

MAGAZINE FOR KIDS

in partnership with HIGHLIGHTS MAGAZINE

FREEZE FRAME!

Pat Surtain II and the Broncos defense are planning for bigger and better things in 2023!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SIDELINES

6 FOOTBALL 101

21 5 QUESTIONS

22 JR. REPORTER

GAMEZONE

10 HIDDEN PIECES

12 GAMEDAY RECIPE

14 CROSSWORD PUZZLE

18 TIC TAC ROW

PUBLISHER
Denver Broncos

EDITORS & CONTRIBUTORS
Michael Agado, Aric DiLalla, Jamie Kingston, Ted Santiago, Erich Schubert, Ben Swanson, Marisol Villagomez

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Kevin Johnson, Bailey Mincer

PHOTOGRAPHY
Eric Lars Bakke, Gabriel Christus
Ben Swanson, Associated Press

COVER ILLUSTRATION
Drew Litton

© Highlights for Children, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

BM4K ADVERTISING
Denver Broncos Sponsorship
Empower Field at Mile High
1701 Bryant Street, Suite 900, Denver, CO 80204
720.258.3100 | Marketing.Partners@Broncos.NFL.net

Publication Printers.com
The Official Printer of the Denver Broncos
Quality Web Printing

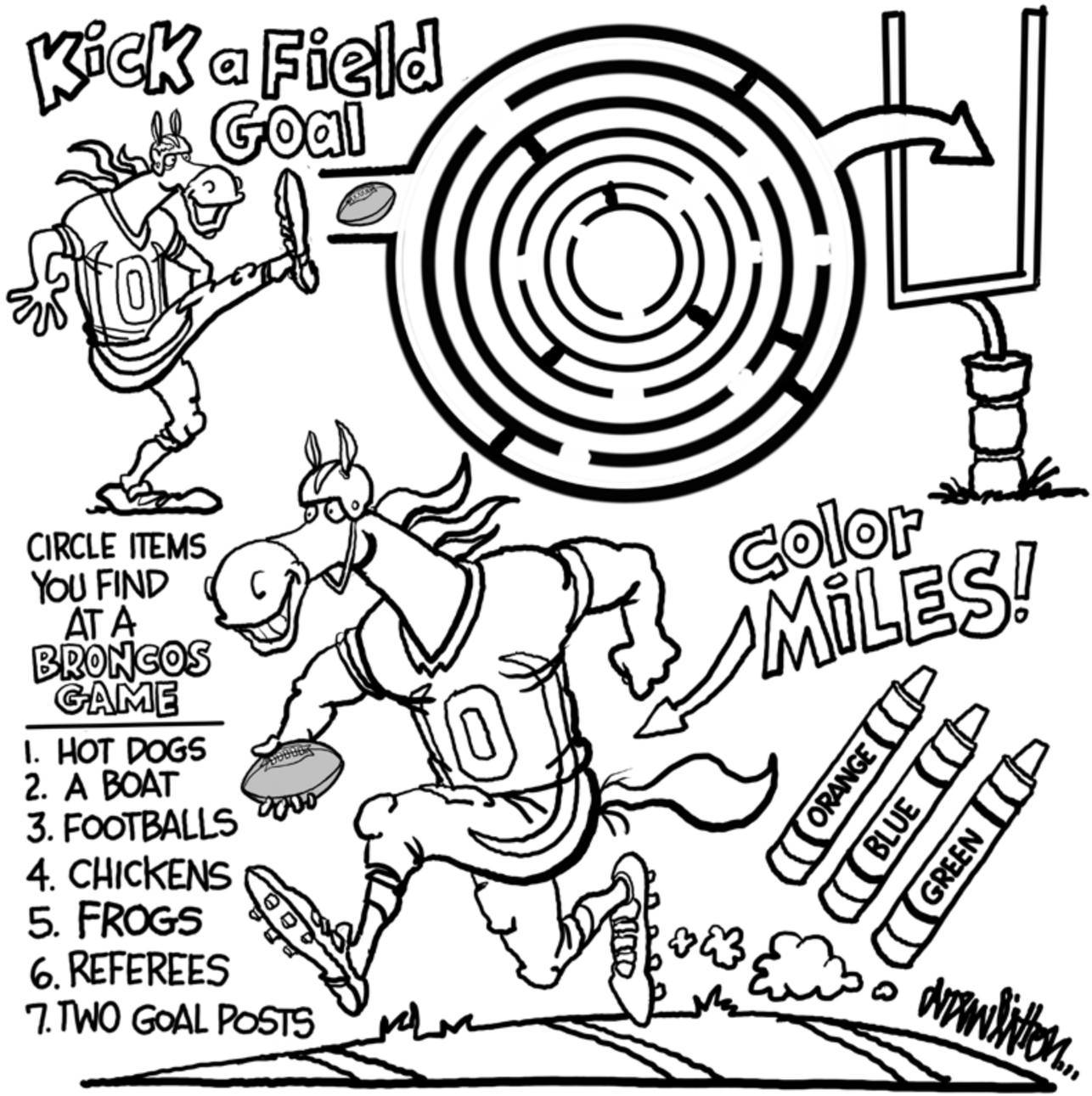
Printed in the USA

usbank

FUN PAGE!

ADD UP THE FINAL SCORE

	1ST QTR	2nd QTR	3rd QTR	4th QTR	FINAL
BRONCOS	7	17	14	14	
VISITOR	0	3	7	0	



RUN, THUNDER, RUN!

How the Broncos are planning to make big improvements in 2023

By Ben Swanson

There may be a simple way to measure how the Broncos can improve this year:

Is Thunder running more at games?

The team's real-life horse mascot sprints across the field after each Broncos touchdown or field goal. In 2022, the Broncos just didn't give him enough chances to run.

For Head Coach Sean Payton, that is one of the biggest goals as he prepares for his first season leading the Broncos. Denver scored the fewest points in the NFL last year and won just five games. How Payton can highlight the strengths of quarterback Russell Wilson and the rest of the offense will go a long way toward improving both of those marks.

The good news? Payton has done it before!

Before joining the Broncos, he was head coach of the New Orleans Saints for 15 years. In his first year there, he helped the Saints go from 31st in points to fifth.

While that doesn't mean the Broncos will do the same thing, it seems that Denver has the talent to make a similar kind of jump.

Wilson, who has been picked to the Pro Bowl nine times, had a down year last season, but Payton will hopefully help him have another Pro Bowl season this year.

"He's super competitive," Payton said of Wilson during the offseason. "He's won at a high level. He's someone that I think moves well. He's someone that I think works extremely hard. It's hard to find guys with all those traits."

Payton and Wilson will have great players to work with across the board, too. Wide receivers Jerry Jeudy and Courtland Sutton are a great duo, and Greg Dulcich was a solid performer as a rookie.

The Broncos also worked hard to sign free agents to improve the offensive line. Tackle Mike McGlinchey and guard Ben Powers were some of the best linemen available, and Denver should be very scary in the trenches now!

On defense, Denver didn't need as much change, as the Broncos had the seventh-best defense in 2022.

The unit includes two of the best players in the entire NFL with cornerback Pat Surtain II and safety Justin Simmons leading the group. Surtain was an All-Pro and Pro Bowl selection in just his second season, and many people consider him the best cornerback in the league. Simmons, meanwhile, was picked as a second-team All-Pro for the third time in the last four seasons. These two make life very hard for opposing quarterbacks!

Nearly all of the starters from last year's defense returned for 2023. The Broncos also signed defensive end Zach Allen in free agency, and he is expected to make a big impact against the run and pass.

If the defense is as good as last year or even better, they'll help the offense get more chances.

If that happens, this year Thunder will run a lot more, and hopefully the Broncos will be back in the playoffs where they belong!

2023 IMPACT PLAYERS

#99 ZACH ALLEN

Height: 6'4" **Weight:** 281 lbs. **Age:** 25 **Experience:** 5 **College:** Boston College
Accolade: Recorded a career-high 5.5 sacks in 2022!

#72 GARETT BOLLES

Height: 6'5" **Weight:** 300 lbs. **Age:** 31 **Experience:** 7 **College:** Utah
Accolade: Earned second-team All-Pro honors in 2020!

#10 JERRY JEUDY

Height: 6'1" **Weight:** 193 lbs. **Age:** 24 **Experience:** 4 **College:** Alabama
Accolade: Posted a career-high 67 catches, 972 yards and six touchdowns in 2022!

#93 D.J. JONES

Height: 6'0" **Weight:** 305 lbs. **Age:** 28 **Experience:** 7 **College:** Mississippi
Accolade: Has recorded at least two sacks in each of the last four seasons!

#69 MIKE McGLINCHEY

Height: 6'8" **Weight:** 310 lbs. **Age:** 28 **Experience:** 6 **College:** Notre Dame
Accolade: Member of 2018 NFL All-Rookie team!

#49 ALEX SINGLETON

Height: 6'2" **Weight:** 240 lbs. **Age:** 29 **Experience:** 5 **College:** Montana State
Accolade: Set a Broncos record for the most tackles in a single game with 21!

#31 JUSTIN SIMMONS

Height: 6'2" **Weight:** 202 lbs. **Age:** 29 **Experience:** 8 **College:** Boston College
Accolade: Tied for the NFL lead in interceptions in 2022!

#2 PAT SURTAIN II

Height: 6'2" **Weight:** 202 lbs. **Age:** 23 **Experience:** 3 **College:** Alabama
Accolade: Earned first-team All-Pro honors in just his second season!

#3 RUSSELL WILSON

Height: 5'11" **Weight:** 215 lbs. **Age:** 34 **Experience:** 12 **College:** Wisconsin
Accolade: Threw 40 touchdown passes in 2020, which was a career high!

FOOTBALL 101

Football is back, which means it's time to brush up on your knowledge! Check out a list of key football terms to see which ones you know and which ones are new information!

The Basics:

The Snap: The action that starts a play from scrimmage. A snap occurs when the center passes the ball through their legs back to the quarterback, punter or holder.

Touchdown: The most valuable score in the NFL, worth six points. A player scores a touchdown if they carry the ball across the goal line into the other team's end zone or catches the ball within the opponent's end zone.

Field Goal: Worth three points, a team scores a field goal when a kicker kicks the ball through the uprights.

End Zone: The scoring areas at each end of the playing field lined by the goal lines, end lines and sidelines are known as the end zones. A player must carry the ball into, or catch the ball in, this area to score a touchdown.

Catch: A catch occurs when a forward pass is completed (by the offense) or intercepted (by the defense).

The Next Level:

Penalty: When either the offense or defense breaks the rules of the game, it is assessed a penalty. The teams and fans know a penalty has been called when an official throws a yellow flag on the field.

Kickoff: A kick that puts the ball in play at the start of each half, at the start of overtime, after a successful field goal or after a touchdown.

Coin Toss: A pregame ritual where the referee flips a coin and the captain of the visiting team calls heads or tails. The coin toss determines who kicks off to start the game, who gets the ball first and which end zone the defense will defend first.

Turnover: When an opposing defense gains possession of the ball from the team on offense, usually by picking up a fumble or intercepting a forward pass.

Handoff: A handoff occurs when a quarterback hands the ball to a teammate, most commonly the running back, who attempts to advance the football downfield toward their opponent's end zone.

Advanced Stuff:

Neutral Zone: The offense and defense line up on opposite sides of the neutral zone and cannot enter it until the ball is snapped for the next play.

Touchback: When a player downs the ball after a kickoff behind their team's own goal line, or the ball is kicked through the back of the end zone, the play is over and the ball is spotted on the 25-yard line.

Lateral: A pass that goes sideways or backwards. Unlike forward passes, a team may lateral as many times as it likes on any play, and laterals can occur anywhere on the field as long as they do not go forward.

Fair Catch: A player in position to receive a punt can signal for a fair catch by raising one arm above their head and waving it from side to side. Once the receiver signals for a fair catch, they cannot advance the ball, and the play is over when they catch the ball. The opponent may not interfere with or tackle them.

Signals: The numbers and code words called by the quarterback in the huddle or at the line of scrimmage ahead of each play. Signals are also called by the defense, usually by a linebacker.

All terms and definitions are via the NFL.

SUPER BOWL 50 CHAMPION

DeMARCUS WARE IS HEADED FOR THE PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME!

By Ben Swanson

DeMarcus Ware, who helped lead Denver to its third Super Bowl victory, is now a Hall of Famer!

A nine-time Pro Bowler, Ware was one of the best defensive players in pro football history. Since the league began tracking sacks, only eight players have recorded more quarterback takedowns than Ware, and he is one of just 12 players to record 20 or more sacks in a single season.

Ware is the second player from the Broncos' Super Bowl 50 team to become a Hall of Famer, joining quarterback Peyton Manning, who was inducted in 2021!

Shortly after he was a first-round pick by the Dallas Cowboys in 2005, Ware put himself on a path to greatness. From 2005 through 2008, he recorded 53.5 sacks. Over his nine seasons in Dallas, Ware became the league's premier pass rusher. In 2008 and 2010, he led the NFL in sacks, and he was picked to be a first-team All-Pro four times, in addition to seven Pro Bowl selections!

Following the 2013 season, Ware became a free agent for the first time in his career. The Broncos, who were coming off a loss in the Super Bowl, wanted to sign Ware to finally win another Super Bowl trophy. That was just what Ware wanted!

"I came to the Denver Broncos with the type of edge that I feel like the team needed," Ware said, "and it got us to the point of winning Super Bowl 50."

In Ware's first year in Denver, the Broncos came up short of the ultimate goal, but with his 10-sack season, the team got a glimpse at just how dominant Ware could still be, especially playing with his teammate and friend Von Miller.

Following that Pro Bowl season, Ware and Denver's defense became unstoppable — a group that at times scored touchdowns as easily as they stopped them. Ware was a big reason why the defense was so amazing!

In the playoffs, Ware was as good as ever. He recovered a fumble that gave Denver the go-ahead score in the AFC Divisional Round, and he tallied seven quarterback hits on Tom Brady in the AFC Championship. Two weeks later, Ware sacked Cam Newton twice in Super Bowl 50 as Denver took down the Panthers.

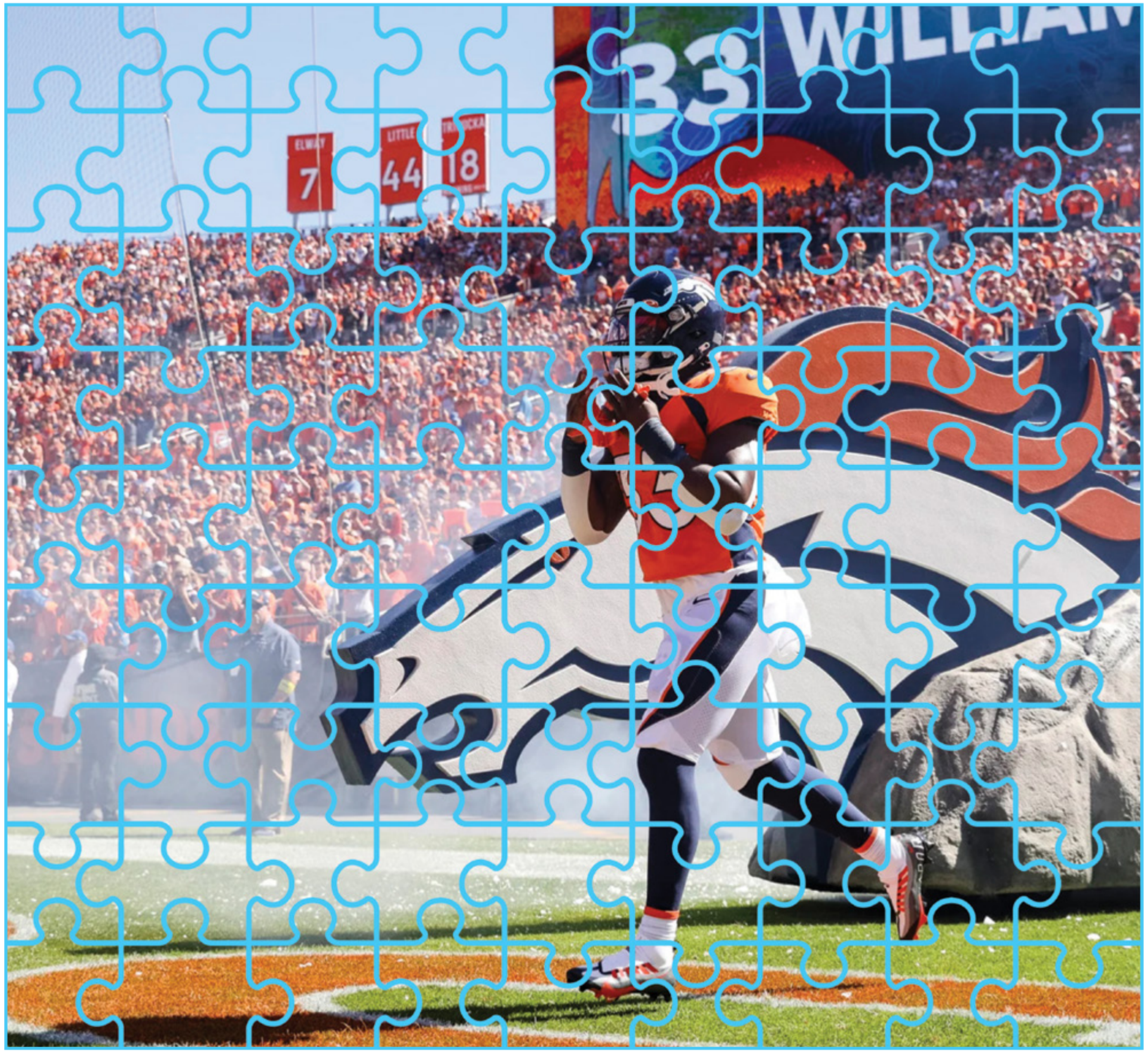
The next season would be his last. Though he was hurt for part of the season, Ware was still able to add four sacks to his career total, bringing him into the top 10 in league history with other pass-rushing legends like Michael Strahan and Lawrence Taylor.

This summer, Ware took his place alongside those greats and many others!

Highlights EXCLUSIVE CONTENT!

HIDDEN PIECES

Can you find the seven jigsaw pieces in this puzzle?



Highlights EXCLUSIVE CONTENT!

GAMEDAY RECIPE

APPLE NACHOS

You Need

Apples + Granola + Caramel Topping + Chocolate Topping + Chocolate Chips

What topping will you add to your apples?

1. Place.

Adult: Cut apples into thin slices.
Place apple slices on a plate.

2. Drizzle.

Drizzle toppings over the apple slices.

3. Spoon.

Spoon granola over the apple slices.

4. Sprinkle.

Sprinkle your favorite toppings, such as chocolate chips, raisins, or sliced almonds.

Go Broncos!

Get ready to tackle a fun puzzle. In this crossword, every answer is made up of letters from the phrase

GAME-WINNING TOUCHDOWN.

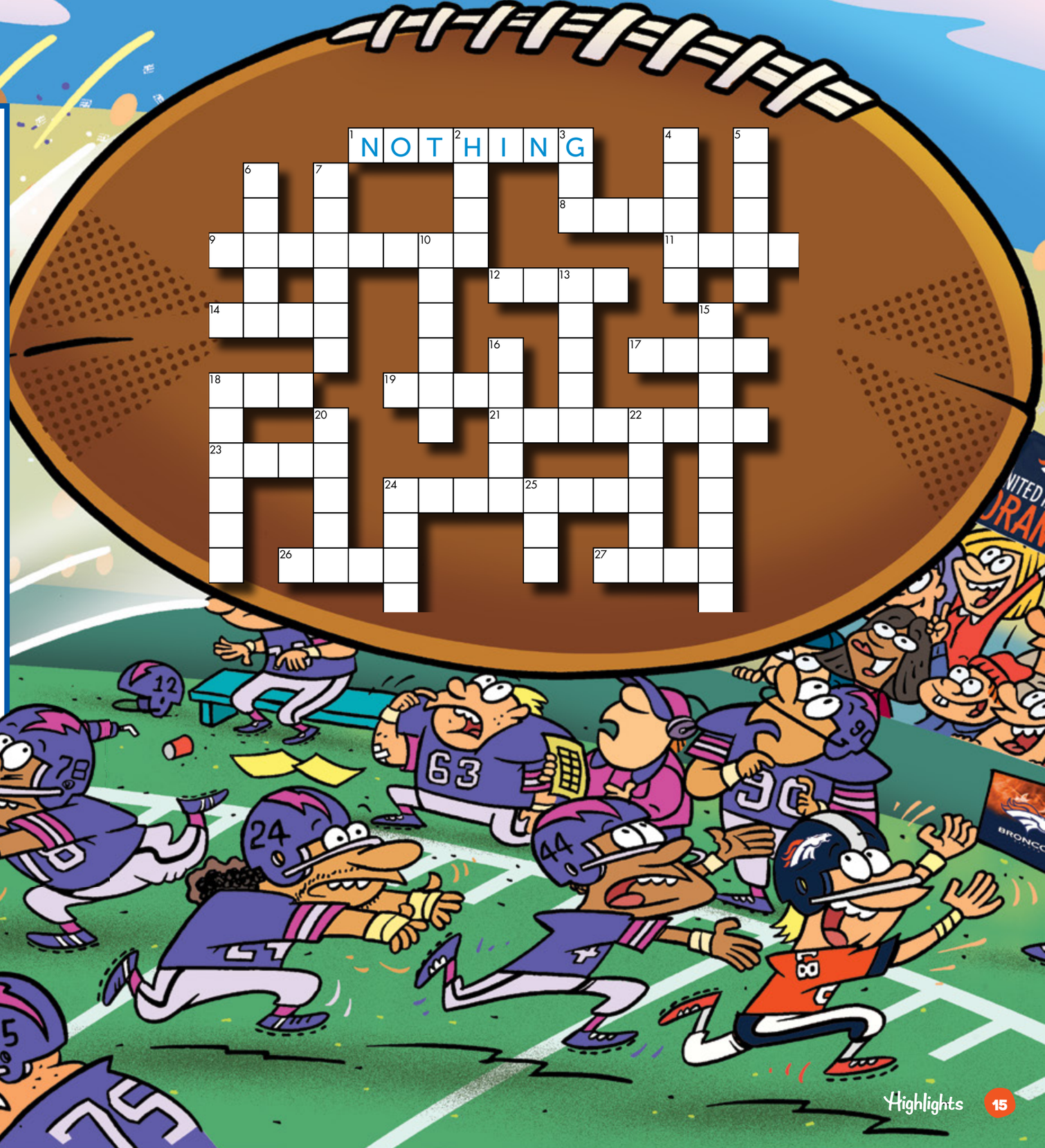
We kicked in the first one for you. Can you score the rest of the answers?

Across

1 Zilch, nada, zip
8 It could be full or crescent-shaped.
9 12:00 a.m.
11 Where a pet bird might live
12 Opposite of bad
14 Mexican fast food
17 Twelve hours after 9 Across
18 What a dog does with its tail
19 A nickel or a dime
21 Opposite of guilty
23 One-twelfth of a foot
24 It might be snow-capped.
26 Not nice
27 A cat noise

Down

2 An owl's call
3 Jewel
4 Move to music
5 It helps a door open and shut.
6 Beijing is its capital.
7 Curtains might hang around this.
10 Popular baseball park food
13 Atlantic or Pacific
15 5... 4... 3... 2... 1...
16 A veggie that makes you cry
18 How heavy you are
20 The color of snow
22 A narrow boat with paddles
24 Long horse hair
25 "_____, you're it!"



2-in-1 Football Game Board

Games for 2 Players

1. Cut out two large football shapes, one from blue **poster board** and one from brown. On the brown shape, add white **paper** strips for the laces (and game spaces). Mark "Start" and "End," as shown.
2. For the spinner, create a helmet out of **cardstock**. Divide it into four sections: "Move 1 space forward," "Time out," "Move 2 spaces forward," and "Move 1 space back." Glue it to the board. Punch a hole in the center of the helmet and attach a cardstock arrow using a **metal fastener**.
3. Glue the blue football to the back of the brown one, hiding the ends of the fastener. Add "We're #1" using **markers** or paper. (Make "#" large enough for tic-tac-toe.)
4. For game pieces, cut five helmets and five footballs out of cardstock. Add details with a marker.

TO PLAY: On the blue side, play tic-tac-toe. On the brown side, players place one piece on "Start" and take turns spinning. The player to reach "End" first wins.

Play these games on Broncos Sundays!

What's a referee's favorite drink? Penal-tea

TIC TAC ROW

Each junior cheerleader has something in common with the other two junior cheerleaders in the same row - across, down, and diagonally. Can you figure it out? For example, in the top row across, all three junior cheerleaders have a hat.

ANSWERS BELOW

Left Column: All have a pompom. **Middle Column:** All have sneakers. **Right Column:** All have wings.
Top Row: All have a hat. **Middle Row:** All have a megaphone. **Bottom Row:** All have a ball.
Diagonal (Top Left to Bottom Right): All have a tail. **Diagonal (Top Right to Bottom Left):** All have a red shirt.

ANSWERS

HIDDEN PIECES PUZZLE - PAGES 10—11

How is an astronaut like a football player?
They both want to make touchdowns.

What kind of bees are bad at football?
Fumblebees

What dog can play football?
A golden receiver

GO BRONCOS! CROSSWORD PUZZLE - PAGES 14—15

DENVER BRONCOS Jr. Cheerleaders

Who Are We?

J-D-B-C!

Do you love to dance? To cheer? To dance and cheer for the Denver Broncos?

Are you 6-12 years old?
Do you live in or near the Denver Metro Area?

Come cheer with us!

Grab an adult and head to denverbroncos.com/jdbc to get more information on how to become a Junior Denver Broncos Cheerleader!

Questions? Contact us at jdbc@broncos.nfl.net

5 QUESTIONS with GABRIEL CHRISTUS

Broncos Team Photographer

1 How did you get your start in photography?

I got interested in photography in high school and went on to major in art photography and photojournalism in college. I spent time working in newspapers before working full time with the Denver Broncos.

2 How have you tried to get better at photography?

Throughout my journey as a photographer, I have attended photo workshops and spent countless hours talking with other photographers that I look up to about techniques and different ways to get a photo. I also follow the work of other professional photographers to get ideas of new ways to shoot and make a photo.

3 What's your favorite photo you've taken?

One of my favorite Broncos photos was a photo of a man and his son during a Broncos drive against the Dallas Cowboys in 2009 when I was an intern for the former team photographer. That photo won me an honorable mention in the Pro Football Hall of Fame Photo Contest.

4 Why do you love your job?

I love my job because I get the opportunity to photograph my hometown team and have fun doing it. My job allows me to be creative while working with some of the best athletes and coworkers in the business.

5 What advice do you have for kids who want to take photos?

My advice to kids is to follow the work of the photographers who are making the photos that you love and try to figure out how they get those photos. Take lots of pictures and always look for ways to get better. Most importantly, be kind to the people around you. People will want to work with you or help you out if you are easy to work with and fun to be around.

JUNIOR REPORTER

Children's Hospital Colorado

LEYTON

One of the greatest days of my life started when I entered the Broncos' training facility and saw the Lombardi trophies and the Lamar Hunt trophies. I have been a Broncos fan for my whole entire life. I was only 3 years old the last time the Broncos won the Super Bowl, but I have watched replays of that game many times, so it's still fresh in my mind and I can't wait for them to win another Super Bowl!

My parents and I got to go on a tour of the entire training facility, starting with a hallway that has pictures of every team over the years.

... On our way to the weight room, we were walking by the practice field, and I saw Russell Wilson right away. He even waved at me – of course, my mom thinks he was waving to her! There were so many cool cars in the parking lot, but they pointed out which one was Jerry Jeudy's and it was awesome!

Once we were in the weight room, we got to see some of the players who were working on rehab. ... From there, we went over to the indoor practice field and got to walk on the turf. I did a short sprint and showed off my best Jerry Jeudy touchdown celebration.

All of the things we had done up to this point were so amazing, but the fun had just begun. We got to go back outside and watch the team practice for a little while. It was fun to see how they go over different plays and work to perfect them. After the practice was over, the players all started running by. I got several waves from players. ... Then, to my amazement, Russell Wilson, Pat Surtain II and Jerry Jeudy all came over to talk to me! They each signed a football for me, and Russell wrote a nice message to me on the ball that said "Leyton, Why Not You!" Then, they took off their gloves, signed them and gave them to me. Russell also signed his wristband and gave it to me. I could not believe what was going on! These guys are like superheroes, and they were standing right there talking to me.

Russell and Jerry had to leave, but Pat stayed to let me interview him. I knew I was going to get to interview someone, but I was so excited that I got to interview him! I was also a little nervous, but I had all of my questions written down, so that helped. Pat told me that he would like to go to Dubai one day and also meet Barack Obama. In his free time, he likes to listen to music and relax. We talked about what he does to get ready for a game and whether he likes Marvel or DC better (it's Marvel, of course). Pat was so friendly, and I was really excited that he spent some time with me for the interview.

We finished the day by watching the rest of the interview that Russell was doing with the news people. He's such a great guy and I'm so excited that we have him for our quarterback! As he was walking in, he gave me a hug – my mom got one too – and he threw me his towel. I will never forget how fun this day was and how much it meant to have these amazing professional football players spend some time with me. Thank you to everyone who made this day possible! I can't wait to watch these guys again next year, and I think next year is the year we will win another Super Bowl!

Kick off Broncos season with touchdown fun for the whole family!

We've put together a few fun activities that'll get the whole family excited about gamedays.

Q **Who scored the first touchdown in Broncos' history?**

A On Sept. 9, 1960, Al Carmichael scored the team's first touchdown in the first-ever Broncos game and the first-ever American Football League game.

Q **Has Miles always been the Denver Broncos' official mascot?**

A No! Before Miles, there was Huddles. In fact, when former Denver Mayor Michael Hancock was just a teenager, he actually performed as Huddles.

Q **How many people can fit in Empower Field at Mile High?**

A 76,125. Empower Field at Mile High has the fifth highest capacity of all National Football League stadiums. That's a lot of fans!

Why is it always warmer after a football game?

All the fans have left.

What do you call a boat full of polite football players?

A good sportsman ship.

Why aren't centipedes allowed to play football?

It takes too long to put on their cleats.

It was a(n) _____ (adjective) game. The quarterback called a(n) _____ (adjective) play and threw for _____ (number) yards, so that the wide receiver had to _____ (verb) until he almost _____ (verb - past tense) off the field! When the linebacker tackled the _____ (noun), everyone thought it was _____ (adjective). But then the running back _____ (verb - past tense) the _____ (noun) and the team rallied. The Broncos ended up winning in overtime, _____ (number) to _____ (number).

Children's Hospital Colorado
Here, it's different.

Cooperating for kids

Children's Hospital Colorado and the Broncos care about kids. We partner to help kids all over Colorado and beyond. What else are friends for?

CAPTION CONTEST

Email your caption to broncosbunch@broncos.nfl.net by September 30, 2023 and you could win a new Broncos jersey.