

# coverstory

BY GEORGE DICKIE



Joe Buck (left) and Troy Aikman call the action for Super Bowl LIV, airing Sunday on Fox.

## Buck and Aikman in the catbird's seat for Super Bowl LIV

It's their biggest broadcast of the year, one that will put more ears and eyeballs on them than perhaps with any other TV show this year.

Joe Buck and Troy Aikman, who have done five Super Bowls together, try to treat it like another day at the office but they know that butterflies are inevitable.

"I think anybody who would tell you that doing a game for 115 million people doesn't get their nerves bouncing around a little bit is lying to you," Buck says. "And as much as I say you don't try and think about how many people are out there watching and in essence picking you apart, you do think about it. It's just impossible not to, but that's good. I think it forces you to really concentrate."

Sunday, Feb. 2, the two men will be on the call when the Kansas City Chiefs and San Francisco 49ers meet with a Vince Lombardi Trophy on the line in Super Bowl LIV, which Fox will air live from Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Fla. Jennifer Lopez and Shakira will perform on the halftime show with the singer of the National Anthem still to be determined at this writing.

Hard Rock Stadium – home to the Miami Dolphins and Miami Hurricanes football teams – has hosted five previous NFL title games and is a venue with which Buck and Aikman are well familiar. From a broadcaster's standpoint both men say the stadium, which was renovated in 2015, is good, with ample

facilities near their booth and good sightlines to every part of the field.

"You don't have to watch the entire game off the monitor," Buck explains. "You can actually watch the live action and see enough where the angles are good where you can determine where a guy goes out of bounds. You know, some of these places are low ... so the far sideline in each corner is really hard to see like where a guy goes out of bounds or if he was able to dip into the end zone. And you almost have to wait, otherwise you're just guessing and it would be the worst thing in the world to guess wrong in the Super Bowl."

Some stadiums are not so good. For instance, the booth at TIAA Bank Field in Jacksonville, Fla., which hosted Super Bowl XXXIX in 2005, was high up and made life difficult for Buck, Aikman and their boothmate that year Cris Collinsworth. In fact, Aikman remembers that Collinsworth was so unsettled by his compromised vantage point that he took a somewhat extreme measure to ensure that he could accurately relay the action.

"He didn't feel like he could see the field, didn't feel like he could see numbers and all that kind of stuff," Aikman recalls with a laugh. "So he went and got an eye exam Saturday night and went to Lens Crafters and had glasses for the game on Sunday. He had never worn glasses in a broadcast and he was wearing glasses in the booth for the Super Bowl."

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