

Eye On Sports



In the End, Phillies Atop the NL East



By Thomas McGlinchey
Lion's Eye Staff Writer
Tam5160@psu.edu

The 2007 season for the Philadelphia Phillies was rocky but fun. Jimmy Rollins was quoted at the beginning of the season in saying, "We are the team to beat in the NL East." But with the start that the Phils had, most people counted them out of the playoffs in October, but the team rallied back and proved them wrong.

At the All-Star break, the Phillies were behind the New York Mets in the NL East and the end of the season looked bleak as the month of September loomed in their future. The Phillies still trailed the Mets in the East, but had a shot at the Wild Card. They had lost two games to the Colorado Rockies in the middle of September, and were seven back of the National League East-leading NY Mets, their next opponents. After sweeping the Mets that weekend, they had pulled within 4 games of the lead. The Mets were in freefall, and the Phillies were getting hot at the right time. The Phils rallied back in mid-September with 5 straight wins. The Mets, on the other hand, had lost a few after that series.

Going into the final week of the season, the Phillies found themselves in striking distance of the Mets to take the title in the East. They had only lost 2 of their last 10 games going into the final week and at the same time, the

Mets were on the verge of making history. If the Mets lost the lead to the "Phightin' Phils", this would be the biggest lead to be lost in the final month of the season since Philadelphia did it in 1964, losing a 6.5 game lead and losing it all by 1 game. The Phillies had to win and would need the Mets to lose for them to have their first playoff berth in 14 years.

The Mets started the final day on a bad note, giving up 7 runs in the 1st inning of their game against the Florida Marlins. In their game against Washington Nationals, the Phillies' Carlos Ruiz scored a double, J-Roll walked, and Shane Victorino was hit by a pitch, Chase Utley popped out to shortstop, and Ryan Howard stepped to the plate and came up big for his team. He singled which brought in Ruiz and Rollins for two runs in the third for the Phillies.

Going into the sixth inning of the game, the fans were still on high because the Mets were having trouble scoring, they were down 7-1 for most of their game. In that sixth inning, the Phillies' Pat Burrell walked, and was relieved by Michael Bourn for his fast running, and then Chris Coste was hit by a pitch from the Nationals pitcher Ayala Abraham Nunez. Tadahito Iguchi came in and relieved Phils starting pitcher Jaime Moyer and sacrificed to score Bourn.

The next Phillies half inning was just the icing on the cake for a great season. In the seventh inning, Ryan Howard who had 2

RBI's from earlier in the game gave himself one, when he blasted a Mike Bacsik pitch, the same guy who gave up the 756th home run to crown Barry Bonds as the All-Time Home Run King, for now. As Howard rounded the bases, he was cheered from all parts of the park; that home run would cap the Phils offense for the day. Brett Myers faced the meat of the Nationals line-up, with Dmitri Young, Austin Kearns, and Wily Mo Pena. The Phillies closer struck out Young for the first out. Then he made Kearns fly out to Bourn for the second out of the ninth. He only had one out to go to clinch the NL East for the Phightin' Phils. With all the fans waving their rally towels in the air and hoping for a fantastic end to an amazing season, Myers struck out Pena to end the game and also end the Mets hope of a berth in the postseason.

This was a historical 14 years in the making. The Phillies had not made the playoffs since 1993 where they also were the NL East Champs, and represented the National League in the World Series, only to be discouraged by a walk off home run by Joe Carter in 1993. Will history repeat itself or will the Phils be able to close the deal this time and become World Series Champs? Finally, the Phillies are giving the city of Philadelphia something to cheer about.

Penn State Delaware County 2007 Ice Hockey Schedule

* Saturday, Oct. 6 vs. Shippensburg @ Ice Line. Start: TBD

* Sunday, Oct. 7 vs. Widener @ Ice Line. Start: TBD

Saturday, Oct. 13 vs. Kutztown @ Ice Line. Start: TBD

* Sunday, Oct. 14 vs. Shippensburg @ Hershey Park Arena. Start: 1:45 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 19 vs. VA Commonwealth @ Ice Line. Start: TBD

Saturday, Oct. 20 vs. St. Vincent @ Ice Line. Start: TBD

* Sunday, Oct. 21 vs. Lehigh @ Ice Line. Start: TBD

Friday, Oct. 26 vs. University of Pittsburgh @ Indiana University of PA. Start: TBD

Saturday, Oct. 27 vs. Robert Morris @ Indiana University of PA. Start: TBD

Sunday, Oct. 28 vs. Indiana University of PA @ Indiana University of PA. Start: TBD

* Denotes DVCHC games
Denotes Colonial Collegiate Hockey Conference Games

www.clubs.psu.edu/de/delcohockey/
Chris Malarick -
Ice Hockey Club President



Philadelphia Flyers Season Preview



By Bryan Drissel

Lion's Eye Staff Writer
Bmd5061@psu.edu

It would be difficult to fall any farther than the Philadelphia Flyers did last season. After a season of dwelling in the basement of the National Hockey League (NHL) standings and finishing with a total of 56 points, a franchise worst, the Flyers have done everything in their power to reverse their fortunes.

Led by new general manager Paul Holmgren, the Flyers have committed to making last season a fluke. Since Holmgren assumed command of the Flyers' front office, the team has made a series of moves that should improve the team drastically.

The first of these moves was the trade of Peter Forsberg back in February. The Flyers were able to unload an expensive contract as well as a distracting stench of uncertainty that surrounded the team. Forsberg was not able to commit to a contract extension because of a nagging foot injury, so Holmgren traded him to Nashville for forward Scottie Upshall, defensive prospect Ryan Parent, and a first and third round draft pick in the 2007

draft. Since then, Upshall has quickly become a fan favorite, and Parent is viewed at a future cornerstone of the Flyers' defense.

Other moves at last season's trade deadline brought goalie Marty Biron from Buffalo for a second round pick in the 2007 draft, defenseman Braydon Coburn from Atlanta for Alexei Zhitnik and defenseman Lasse Kukkonen from Chicago for Kyle Calder. Biron is now viewed as the number one goalie and Coburn and Kukkonen have assumed prominent roles in the Flyers' defense.

After the miserable season came to an end, the Flyers were able to continue their rebuilding. Prior to the NHL free agency period on July 1, the Flyers traded the first round pick they received from Nashville, in the Forsberg deal

back to Nashville, for impending free agents defenseman Kimmo Timmonen and forward Scott Hartnell. The Flyers were able to quickly negotiate new contracts with them.

Then, as soon as the clock struck midnight on July 1, Holmgren and company kicked into action. The Flyers set their sights on the highly coveted free agent center, Danny Briere. Briere signed an eight year deal worth 52 million dollars on the same day.

To follow the important signing of Briere, the Flyers then made another trade with Edmonton to bring in another

solid defenseman, Jason Smith, and another promising young forward, Joffrey Lupul, for Joni Pitkanen, who was a disappointment during his time with the Flyers, and Geoff Sanderson.

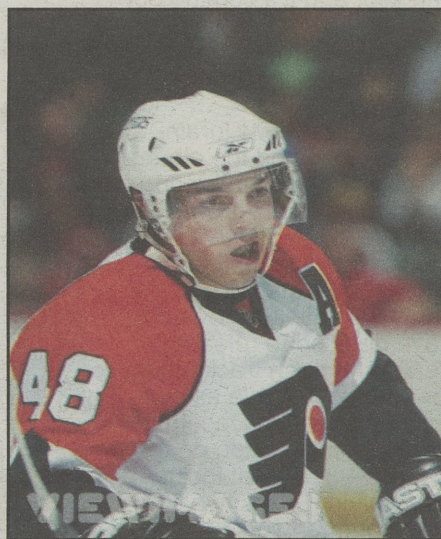
The Flyers also have their share

of young talent looking to make contributions to the team. Some of these include Parent and former Flyers' first round draft picks Steve Downie and Claude Giroux.

Due to all of these acquisitions, there is an optimism once again among Flyers' fans, albeit, a guarded one. "I don't expect them to win the [Stanley] Cup, but I think they will make the playoffs; first or second round maybe," replied sophomore business major Enrico Lubrano when asked about his expectations. "They have improved on defense and Briere should help on a line with Simon Gagne, but the goalie still worries me."

Making the playoffs will not be an easy task. The Atlantic division has the likes of the Pittsburgh Penguins, a team loaded with young talent including Sidney Crosby, who is widely considered the best hockey player in the world at only 20 years of age, and the New York Rangers, another team that restored much of its lineup this off-season.

It remains to be seen exactly how this rebuilding will affect the team, but Flyers' faithful can only hope that they are in for a better season that last year. It should at least be a fun season. LET'S GO FLYERS!



Flyers' free agent acquisition Danny Briere - Photo from google.com