

Eye On Sports

Are the Eagles Super Bowl Bound?

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It's here; the best time of year has officially started. On Sept. 7, 2008 the Philadelphia Eagles kicked off their '08-'09 season against the St. Louis Rams.

After struggling through a rough 2007 season in which the Eagles were the only team in the NFC East to miss the playoffs, and a preseason that has most of our receiving corps in a hospital ward, the Eagles were facing a season in which they had to redeem themselves to avoid heading further down the road to obscurity. Thus the 2008 season was looming large.

However, to all Philadelphia fans' surprise and happiness, the team has come out of the gate looking like an early season Super Bowl contender. After an opening weekend game in which the Eagles dismantled the St. Louis Rams 38-3, the team looked like it had made a turnaround. But it was in last Monday night's game against the Dallas Cowboys, in Dallas, that the Eagles truly looked like a contender.

The Cowboys, widely considered the cream of the NFC, were outplayed by the Eagles through much of the game, but turned it around in the final quarter for a 41-37 win. The Eagles proved themselves legitimate title contenders during this game. The offense, even without its top two receivers, has put up 75 points in two games.

Rookie DeSean Jackson is looking like Offensive Rookie of the Year, and both he and Safety Quentin Demps have rejuvenated a special teams unit that has been anemic since Brian Mitchell went to New York in 2001.

The key to the offense has



DeSean Jackson (photo courtesy of calfootballfan.com)

been the breakthrough of Jackson, but more significantly, the return of the real Donovan McNabb. Hampered by injuries the previous few seasons, McNabb has returned to full form and is looking much more like the McNabb that guided the team to the Super Bowl in 2004.

It is still early in the season, but there is reason to hope with this team. The way they are playing now, it would not come as a surprise to anyone if they went deep into the playoffs, possibly all the way to a Super Bowl championship.

Last Week's Game:

Dallas 41 Philadelphia 37

This Week's Game: Eagles Vs. Steelers

My Pick: Eagles 31 Steelers 17

JOE PATERNO: THE LEGEND

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In the past 43 years, Joe Paterno through his career of head coaching the Penn State Nittany Lions he has achieved many goals. There have been many career highlights from Paterno's past and present: 375 career wins, 5 undefeated seasons, 2 National Titles, the most bowl wins in all of college sports, and the most interesting uncommon fact is that he has coached 24 father-son combinations (ESPN).

First are the 375 wins that he has accumulated over the 43 years of coaching. His first win was against Maryland in 1966 and the Lions won 15-7 (imakenews.com/psanews/). Then in late 1976, Paterno joined one of the elite clubs of the time, winning his one hundredth game as a head coach. According to The Collegian, the Penn State University Park newspaper, the game was a romping against North Carolina State 41-20. As Paterno became more and more legendary he won his two hundredth game in 1987 and his three hundredth game in 1998 against Bowling Green. According to the New York Times, the final score was a blow-out, 45-19 (#200). In 2001, Paterno passed Paul Bryant for soul possession of the Division One most wins coach. This season, tied and is battling Bobby Bowden for all-time wins coach.

While coaching Penn State, Paterno and the Nittany Lions have racked up five undefeated, untied seasons. The five seasons that his Nittany Lions went 12-0 were two back to back seasons in 1968 and 1969. The final three are 1973, 1986, and 1994 (espn.com).

He has also coached two teams to the National title. Both of the championships were during the 1980 decade. According to many sources, the first of those two was in 1982 and the second one was in the year 1986. He was undefeated in 1986 when the team won the second national title.

The most interesting fact that is non-knowledgeable is that Paterno has coached 24 father-son combinations in his 43 years of head coaching. According to ESPN, the coach has 8 sons of former Nittany Lions football players on the current squad.

Roaring September for

Phightin' Phils

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The Philadelphia Phillies are having a tremendous September, in familiar territory fighting for their lives in the National League (NL) East. As of September 18th, the Phillies are a half game up in the division, with a record of 86-67; they still have a shot with 9 games left to play. The team has roared from behind before, and this season is no different. Notwithstanding the performance of Kyle Kendrick, who has had a few rough outings in recent memory, the starting pitching was awesome.

With the New York Mets, surging, the Phightins' had a tough road ahead of them going into the series with none other than the Mets. The first game of the series was on Friday in which the Phillies pulled out a win and closed the gap in the East. The following day's game was postponed until Sunday, due to Hurricane Hanna. In the day game of the doubleheader the Phillies won going away, 6-2. The night cap of the series was a different story. The Phillies lost the second game and fell back to two games in the standings. The following series was against the Florida Marlins, where the Phillies lost two of three.

In their September 11 game, the Phillies started a series with the Milwaukee Brewers, who were in the lead of as many games as the Phillies were playing against them in the Wild Card. The first night saw Jamie Moyer pitch a gem, as Harry Kalas would say. Ryan Howard hit his league leading 43rd home run of the season. The Phillies won the game 6-3. The following night was cancelled on a count of the rain, and would be made up on that Sunday. On Saturday, Jimmy Rollins was one triple short of the cycle (hit to every base (1B, 2B, 3B, and HR), the Phillies shaved the lead in the East to 2 1/2 games, and the lead in the wild card to 2 games, with the doubleheader still to come.

The first game of the doubleheader was a very tough game as the Phils fell behind with Blanton on the hill. In the 6th, with the Phillies down 3-1, Howard hit his 44th home run which tied the game. Blanton stuck it out and pitched 7 strong innings, giving up 5 hits and 3 runs. In the 8th with a runner on first and second, Burrell came up and drove a single to left to give the Phils a 4-3 lead. Victorino came up and hit a 3 run homer, giving the Phillies their 7-3 win.

Fans had their rally towels going crazy as they jumped on the Brewers in the nightcap, with RBI hits from Myers, and Rollins, giving the Phils a 4-0 lead through 2 innings. Burrell slammed his 31st homer, giving the Phillies a 5-0 lead in the 4th inning. Myers gave up one run and 2 base hits in a complete game win to tie the Phillies with the Brewers in the Wild Card.

Going up against the Atlanta Braves has been a difficult task, but the Phillies have prevailed. Game one was no different as the Phils got off to a 3-0 lead with the help of a two run homer by Jayson Werth, but in the bottom of that same 3rd inning of the Braves' Moyer tied it back up. Carlos Ruiz hit a solo blast to give the Phillies a 4-3 lead. Moyer struggled and Durbin couldn't get out of the 6th inning, and the Phightin' Phils found themselves down by a score of 7-4.

An RBI triple in the 7th by Ryan Howard made the score 7-5, and Victorino bumped it to 7-6 with an RBI single of his own. Howard came up with a runner on in the 8th and blasted a 3-2 pitch, sending the Phillies ahead 8-7. With a shaky save, Brad Lidge secured the Phillies win. The next day, J.A. Happ got 4 runs in the first, pitching 6 shut out innings and earning his first win of the year with a Phillies win of 6-1.

The finale saw the Phillies jumping out to a 2-0 lead with an RBI triple by Jayson Werth and a sac fly by Ryan Howard. The Braves rallied back and tied it at 2-2. With the game tied in the 6th, Pat Burrell hit his 32nd homer and gave the Phillies a 4-2 lead. The Phillies held on for their 9th straight win in Atlanta and their 7th straight win overall.

SOCCKER PLAYERS WANTED!

We have an unusual problem this year and we need your help getting it solved. Due to a strange set of circumstances, the ranks of our soccer team have been depleted. We are struggling to keep our numbers up and we are looking for potential players who may not have considered playing this year. If you have a soccer background of any kind this would be your opportunity to come out and play. Remember our team is coed and participation in a varsity sport can result in the awarding of Kinesiology credits.

If you are interested or would like to learn more please contact
Coach Carvalho or Coach Gastner.