

Eye on Sports

Lion's Eye Special:

Writers Review the Top Five Games for Philadelphia over the Past Decade

David Hoffer's Top Five Games

5. *Flyers vs. Capitals Game 7 of Eastern Conference Playoffs, 2008*: Just one year removed from the worst season in team history (wow, did that season suck) the Flyers clawed their way into playoffs and met the division leading Capitals led by Alexander Ovechkin. After blowing a 3-1 series lead, the Flyers found themselves on the road in D.C. for game 7 and heading into overtime with the game tied at 2. Thanks to Joffrey Lupul's power play goal just 6 minutes into OT the Flyers stunned the heavily favored Caps.

4. *Sixers vs. Lakers NBA Finals Game 1, 2001*: The good ol' AI days, the way we all should remember him (can we lobotomize 2009?). Draining a 3 and stepping over the pesky Tyrone Lue in overtime at the Staples Center. Yes, we all remember the outcome of the series but thanks to AI and the memorable jump shot from Eric Snow, the Sixers handed the Lakers their only postseason loss with a 107-101 OT win.

3. *Flyers vs. Lightning Game 6 of Eastern Conference Finals, 2004*: Packing a lineup with the names of LeClair, Recchi, Roenick, Primeau and Gagne, the division winning Flyers met the conference leading Tampa Bay Lightning in the Eastern Conference Finals. Trailing the series 3-2 and game six 4-3, the captain Keith Primeau continued his remarkable post season by tying the game with just 1:49 left. Simon Gagne's tally with 1:42 left in the first overtime blew the roof off of an already insane Wachovia Center and forced game 7.

2. *Eagles vs. Falcons NFC Championship Game, 2004*: Just when you thought the Eagles were doomed to forever keep rolling their boulder up the hill just to see it run them over like Sisyphus, they finally did it. After going 0 for 3 in the 3 previous seasons NFC championship games, the Eagles defeated Mike Vick and the Atlanta Falcons 27-10 on a chilly January night at the Linc. Seeing Donovan McNabb finally raise the NFC trophy, one could only think of Rocky yelling "Yo, Adirán. I DID IT!"

1. *Phillies vs. Rays World Series Game 5, 2008*: It was the best game of the decade by far and we got to enjoy the ride of the game for 3 days. Leading the series 3-1, the Phillies entered game 5 with the untouchable Cole Hamels on the mound and a city dying for its first championship since 1983. Scoring 2 runs in the first inning thanks to an RBI single from Shane Victorino, the Phillies seemed to be on their way before Mother Nature intervened. The game was restarted 2 nights later and thanks to a go ahead RBI single by Pedro Feliz, the Phillies became 2008 World Champions!

Steven Scoleri's Top Five Games

5. *Eagles vs. Falcons NFC Championship Game, 2005*: The Eagles were able to snap their three game NFC title skid by beating the Falcons 27-10, which led to playing the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXIX.

4. *Sixers vs. Lakers NBA Finals Game 1, 2001*: The Sixers were huge underdogs against the Lakers but they were able to pull out their only victory in game one. Allen Iverson had 48 points as the Sixers were able to beat the Lakers 107-101 in O.T.

3. *Eagles vs. Packers NFC Divisional Round, 2004*: 4th and 26 is one of the best plays of Donovan McNabb's career. With the game on the line Donovan delivers a perfectly thrown ball to Freddie Mitchell to keep the drive alive. The Eagles would go on to win the game against the Green Bay Packers.

2. *Phillies vs. Dodgers NCLS Game 4, 2009*: Jimmy Rollins comes up big with the game winning hit in the 9th inning to give the Phillies the victory over L.A. This gave them the 3-1 series lead. This was a huge momentum swing in the series.

1. *Phillies vs. Rays World Series Game 5, 2008*: Philadelphia beats Tampa Bay to bring home a championship that the city of Philadelphia has been craving for 25 years. It was surreal to many fans but the "Fighting Phils" were able to get it done.

Justin Park's Top Five Games

5. *Eagles vs. Cowboys, Dec. 25, 2006*: No, it wasn't a playoff game, but it's probably my favorite Eagles game ever. Living on a prayer and led by QB Jeff Garcia, the Eagles had to pay their division rivals on Christmas day. They were heavily out favored, but somehow managed to defeat the Cowboys which led to clinching the NFC East the following week. Couldn't ask for a better Christmas!

4. *Phillies vs. Dodgers NCLS Game 4, 2009*: This was the ultimate comeback. In the all important game four, the Phillies managed to come from behind in the bottom of the ninth to take a commanding 3-1 series lead of the Los Angeles Dodgers. Jimmy Rollins hit the walk off double, driving in runners Carlos Ruiz and Eric Bruntlett. All three of the players reached base with two outs. When there's an out, the Phillies always have a chance.

3. *Flyers vs. Capitals Game 7 of Eastern Conference Playoffs, 2008*: You just don't get more intense than this. Overtime in game seven brings forth the ultimate do or go home scenario. After being up 3 games to 1 in the series, the Capitals clawed their way back and forced a game seven in Washington. Luckily for the Philadelphia Flyers, they were the one's moving onto the next round as Joffrey Lupul taps in the rebound off of Caps' goalie Cristobal Huet for the game winner. The excitement was incredible.

2. *Flyers vs. Lightning Game 6 of Eastern Conference Finals, 2004*: Just when you thought this team didn't have any more fight left in them, they came back to surprise everyone one last time. Captain Keith Primeau and Simon Gagne combined for four goals and two assists in the game. Primeau scored the game tying goal with just 1:49 left on the clock in regulation, and Gagne scored the game winner at 18:18 of OT. The Flyers forced a game seven and were looking like a team ready to win the Stanley Cup.

1. *Phillies vs. Rays World Series Game 5, 2008*: "Swing and a miss! Struck him out! And the Philadelphia Phillies are 2008 World Champions of baseball!" How could this not be the number one game? It had it all, even things that no one suspected such as a two day break between the top of the sixth inning and its bottom half. Brad Lidge com-

pleting his perfect season for the World Series win will always be a highlighted moment in my life.

Karlo Radolovic's Top Five Games

5. *Eagles vs. Falcons NFC Championship Game, 2005*: This was the first time since 1980 that the Eagles made it to the Super Bowl. They put together an amazing game beating Vick and his Falcons 27-10.

4. *Phillies vs. Dodgers NCLS Game 4, 2009*: Beating the Dodgers for a second straight time to get the Phillies to back to back World Series. Last season was very emotional, for Harry Kalas passed away and the Phils got back to the big series despite many odds.

3. *Eagles vs. Packers NFC Divisional Round, 2004*: Who could forget one of the most impressive plays ever completed? 4th down and the Eagles had 26 yards to get a first down, and odds were against them, but somehow they pulled it off and went on to beat the Packers.

2. *Sixers vs. Lakers NBA Finals Game 1, 2001*: This was the game that showed everyone that maybe the Sixers had a chance to beat the Lakers in the Championship. The Lakers won 15 straight playoff games, and the Sixers took game 1 from them in L.A.

1. *Phillies vs. Rays World Series Game 5, 2008*: This game was amazing. Seeing the Phillies win a World Series in over 20 years and winning it in only 5 games was very impressive and definitely my number 1 game.

Sean O'Connor's Top Five Games

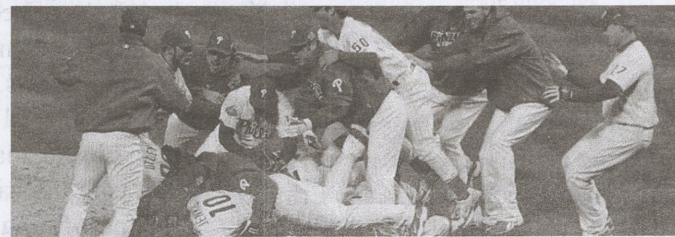
5. *Eagles vs. Packers NFC Divisional Round, 2004*: With time winding down Donovan McNabb hit Freddie Mitchell with the only important reception of his career. Mitchell catches a 28 yard pass down the middle in the Divisional playoff game against the Packers and salvages the Eagles season. The Birds would go on to win in overtime (20-17) and cement their place as one of the rising teams in the NFC. Although they lost the NFC Championship game to the Carolina Panthers, the simple fact that they came through in the clutch was a huge step for the team. The only reason it's not higher on this list is due to the fact that it only advanced the Eagles to another NFC Championship.

4. *Eagles vs. Falcons NFC Championship Game, 2005*: The Eagles advanced to their first Super Bowl when they beat the Atlanta Falcons 27-10. In itself the game was not "great" but it was significant in Philadelphia history because the Birds had finally overcome that huge step from NFC Championship to Super Bowl. Obviously the Super Bowl would be higher on this list but the Eagles lost 24-21 to the Patriots. Still, this game showed that the team was finally growing up and seizing control of their position as one of the top teams in the NFL.

3. *Phillies vs. Yankees World Series Game 1 2009*: This game is significant because of two players, Cliff Lee and Chase Utley. The pair were simply dominant when facing the biggest kid in the yard, the New York Yankees. Lee, while never having pitched in even a postseason game before 2009, was magnificent. He allowed only six hits over nine innings and only one unearned run, in the ninth with the Phillies already up 6-0. Utley was fantastic as well, crushing two home runs to put the Phillies ahead comfortably. The night belonged to Lee, however. To get a sense of how good he was, consider this. No pitcher in Major League HISTORY has struck out 10, walked none, and allowed no earned runs in a World Series start. Enough Said.

2. *Sixers vs. Lakers NBA Finals Game 1, 2001*: In Allen Iverson's illustrious career, he only made the NBA Finals one time. In that Finals series the Sixers were destroyed four games to one. Why then, is it on this list? Because Allen Iverson became the Answer in Game One. With 48 points he obliterated the Lakers and led the heavy underdog 76ers to a 107-101 overtime win. He was the only reason the Sixers stayed in the game and he brought them back time after time. They even led by 15 at one point. However when it really counted, A.I. stepped up, with seven OT points as they held off a late Lakers charge. It was the most dominating postseason performance of his career and the highlight of the Finals. This was the peak of Iverson's career, and he would never again reach such lofty heights as an individual or with a team.

1. *Phillies vs. Rays World Series Game 5, 2008*: In a controversial two-part game that was delayed due to rain, the Philadelphia Phillies secured the city's first major sports championship in 25 years on a trademark Brad Lidge slider. The Phils beat the Tampa Bay Rays 4-3 and were able to dogpile on the mound after an extended wait. The game was postponed due to rain on Wednesday in the middle of the sixth inning and continued on Friday after the Philadelphia rain showers finally stopped. It remains the only World Series game in history to not be played through to completion or declared a tie. It is odd how the game was delayed right after the Rays caught up even though a steady rain had been pouring for over an hour. Either way it was cause for celebration and revelry in Philadelphia and is number one on this list because it brought home the only championship of not only this decade, but the last two.



Phillies 2008 World Series Game 5 was obviously the favorite among the writers
(Photo Courtesy of theindependenthotel.com)