

Eye on Sports

Philadelphia Eagles Update

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McNabb came back to town, Vick was down with an injury, and Kolb tried to save the game. With that all said, the Eagles were in for a rough outing against Washington Redskins.

Late in the first quarter Mike Vick was running towards the endzone, attempting to score a touchdown, and found himself sandwiched between two Redskins. Struggling to get over to the sidelines, Vick was taken out by Andy Reid to be examined. With Vick out with injury, Kevin Kolb was suddenly back behind center trying to lead his team to victory. When Kolb came in, the Eagles were already at a 14 point deficit.

However, prior to the injury to Vick, the Eagles did not seem prepared for their matchup against the Redskins from the moment they stepped on the field. Their offensive line was playing terribly, the defense was slacking, and the team's star players were ducking out of passes or not holding on to the football.

DeSean Jackson did not have his best game and was having a difficult time getting open between the Washington's secondary. He was also dropping out of passes attempting to go to him and not playing like the player we've seen so far in his Eagles career.

When the team finally broke through the stingy Redskins defense to make it 17-12, they decided to try for the two point conversion to shorten the gap to three points, but failed to convert. Without their starting cornerback, Asante Samuel, who suffered a concussion earlier and was taken out of the game, the Eagles defense was left to play with another stand-in, Joselio Hanson.

Vick and Samuel's injury was one of many injuries the Eagles suffered that Sunday—Mike Bell was

taken out due to a knee injury, LeSean McCoy was replaced earlier in the game by Bell, but returned once Bell was taken out. Riley Cooper, the Eagles newest wide receiver, was also taken out due to a concussion.

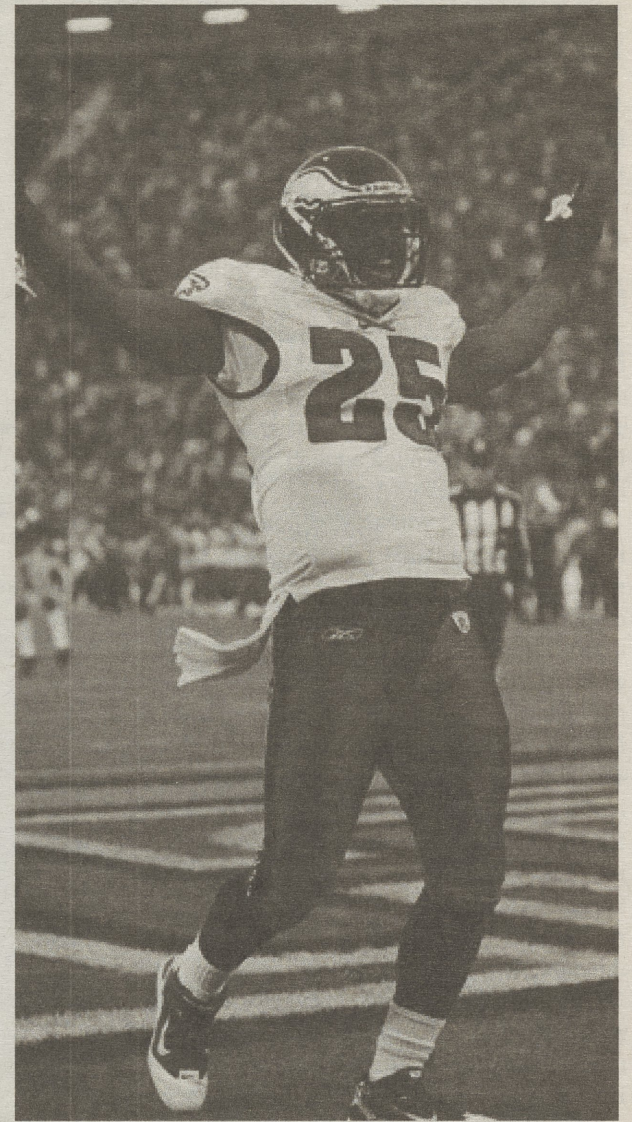
The most upsetting moment was the last seconds of the game. Kolb, throwing a Hail Mary pass, tried to get the ball into the end zone for a touchdown. Jason Avant was amidst a few Redskins and actually had the ball in his hands, but couldn't hang onto it for what would have been the winning score. The Eagles lost last the game with a final score of 17-12 and lost multiple key players to their team.

Heading into last Sunday's prime time matchup against the San Francisco 49ers, the Eagles were without Mike Vick and Asante Samuel. Kevin Kolb was given the start and he and LeSean McCoy were impressive throughout the game.

Trailing by a touchdown in the first quarter, the offense pieced together a 75 yard drive and tied the game when Kevin Kolb broke out of the pocket, avoided being sacked, and threw to Brent Celek for the touchdown. Kolb was an impressive 21-31 with 253 yards and a touchdown.

Following a David Akers field goal, LeSean McCoy made the score 17-7 when he broke into the end zone on a 29 yard rush. McCoy finished the game with 92 yards on the ground.

Quintin Mikell took advantage of an Alex Smith fumbled and returned it for a touchdown. From there, the Eagles killed the clock and hung onto the 27-24 lead for the win.



LeSean McCoy celebrates in the end zone following his 29 yard rushing touchdown.
(Photo courtesy of sports.yahoo.com)

The Philadelphia Flyers Look to Build From Last Season's Success

By Justin Park - Lion's Eye Editor in Chief - jrp5321@psu.edu

The season may be new for the orange and black, but the goal remains the same: bring the Stanley Cup back to Philadelphia. For the players and fans alike, last spring's postseason success is bittersweet. Sure, it was a great and unexpected playoff run but the outcome was all too familiar.

The Flyers have made it to the playoffs 14 of the past 15 seasons and understand that the fans and organization are expecting more. The team must develop a Phillies' like mentality and maintain their postseason success and build off of it. With any luck, the pain of seeing the Chicago Blackhawks skate around on their home ice makes them hungrier than ever. This season is Stanley Cup or bust for the Philadelphia Flyers.

A notable late offseason acquisition, veteran Bill Guerin was brought in on a tryout based contract in September and was expected to make the team to add depth to the team's right wing position. The forty year-old Guerin had a very quiet and disappointing preseason and seemed to have lost a step in his game. Although he did not impress much in the NHL's preseason, Guerin was still "a lock" to make the team; however, in a surprising move, the Flyers opted not to sign Guerin to even a one year deal. General Manager Paul Holmgren did not feel that Bill Guerin did not make the team more competitive and decided to promote from within.

Although it may be a completely new season, there are some lingering injuries from last season impacting key players.

Penalty killer and fan favorite Ian Laperriere is still experiencing concussion symptoms from blocking a shot with his head last April against the New Jersey Devils. Laperriere lied to the team (and himself) last spring and played through those injuries in the Eastern Conference and Stanley Cup finals. This concussion injury, like any concussion injury in the NHL, could mean that "Lappy's" season and career could possibly be over.

Freshly inked goaltender Michael Leighton is

also starting the season on the IR. He experienced a back injury in last year's playoff run and did not fully recover over the offseason. Leighton signed a two year deal with the Flyers over the summer that would keep him around as the starting goaltender but this injury could potentially be serious and career threatening.

With Leighton's injury, a window of opportunity opened for the goalies within the Flyers system. While backup Boucher had an impressive preseason and will remain on the roster, his starting position suddenly became uncertain.

Sergei Bobrovsky, the twenty-two year old Russian goaltender from the KHL, is taking full advantage of the opportunity and is fighting for the starting role on the Flyers team. Bobrovsky was signed on May 6, 2010 as a free agent by the Flyers. Although the KHL is an extremely challenging and competitive league, "Bob" was expected to start the year off playing for the Flyers affiliate team, The Phantoms, in the AHL to get adjusted to the North American style of hockey. However, with Leighton's injury and a very impressive training camp and preseason, Bobrovsky found himself in net on opening night against the Pittsburgh Penguins.

At this point, the Flyers have played three games and are currently 2-0-1.

Bobrovsky and the Flyers defeated the rivaled Penguins in Pittsburgh on October 7 by a score of 3-2. Danny Briere, Blair Betts scored for the Flyers and Claude Giroux took advantage of a poor pass between two Penguins while on the penalty kill to score short-handed for the game winner.

Brian Boucher was in net against the St. Louis Blues two days later. The Flyers were very sloppy in the game and took numerous penalties, limiting their offensive capabilities. Trailing for much of the game, Danny Briere scored to force overtime. However, shot from Briere off of the crossbar turned into an odd man rush for

the Blues and they capitalized on the opportunity to hand the Flyers their first loss of the season, 2-1.

October 11 was the Flyers home opener in which they raised the Eastern Conference Championship banner into the rafters. Against the Colorado Avalanche, the Flyers jumped out to a two to nothing lead in the first period. Claude Giroux tallied his second shorthanded goal of the young season and Jeff Carter scored on a breakaway. Bobrovsky looked solid throughout the game until early in the third when he let a puck squeeze by between his arms to tie the game for Colorado. However, Jeff Carter scored again late in the third period and Darroll Powe sealed the game with an empty net goal. The Flyers won 4-2.

Through the first three games of the season, four players on the Flyers have really stood out from the rest.

- Sean O'Donnell has really impressed so far. He has great defensive patience on the ice and a great reach to break up opposing rushes. O'Donnell is calm, cool, and collected on the ice and rarely seems to get rattled. He is a purebred stay-at-home defenseman and will be able to take some of the defensive load off of Chris Pronger and Kimmo Timonen as the season progresses.

- Claude Giroux is looking like he is going to have a breakout season. His vision on the ice is second to no one and he is really starting to figure out how to utilize his skills on the NHL level. With his great play and the loss of Simon Gagne, Giroux is able to pick up more time on the penalty kill and power play.

- James van Riemsdyk also seems to be on the verge of a breakout season. He is getting more opportunities to fire his wicked wrist shot and will surely start scoring. JVR has become more physical over the offseason and it seems to be paying off. He is stronger on the puck and also along the boards.

- Danny Briere seems to pick up right where he left off during the playoffs. Back to playing center, Briere is continuing to score goals and be an offensive threat.