

Eye on Sports

Super Bowl XLV

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Aaron Rodgers, who had become a superstar this post season, has become a Super Bowl champion and escaped from the shadow of Brett Favre instantaneously. Rodgers, named MVP of the game, threw for 304 touchdowns and three scores in the Packers' 31-25 victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers. The victory was just another step in Rodgers path to the NFL's elite. Rodgers' counterpart on the other side of field, however, was less impressive.

Ben Roethlisberger, who had be known as one of the most clutch playoff performers in NFL history with a 9-2 record, threw 2 first half interceptions (one by safety Nick Collins who returned it for a score). The Packers led 21-10 at halftime after Roethlisberger found Hines Ward in the end zone with 39 seconds left in the 2nd quarter. The Steelers looked poised to make a comeback in the 3rd quarter, when running back Rashard Mendenhall was able to run with ease on the Packers defense. Mendenhall tightened the score with an 8 yard touchdown run in the 3rd quarter.

Pittsburgh's defense forced another punt and the Steelers looked as if they would be able to take the lead with the start of the 4th quarter. The Packers defense and All-Pro linebacker, Clay Mathews, had other plans. Roethlisberger handed the ball off to Mendenhall when Mathews hit the runner, causing the ball to fly into the air. The Packers recovered the football and Rodgers marched the offense down the field, capped off by a touchdown pass from Rodgers to Greg Jennings, his 2nd touchdown reception of the day.

Roethlisberger tightened the score again with a 25 yard touchdown pass to speedster Mike Wallace. The Packers scored a field goal on the following possession then giving Ben Roethlisberger the ball back with just over 2 minutes and down 6 points.

Steeler fans everywhere were given flashbacks of 2009 when Roethlisberger led a comeback drive in the Super Bowl against the Arizona Cardinals, culminating in an acrobatic catch by Santonio Holmes.

This time, however, Roethlisberger came up short, throwing an incomplete pass on 4th and 5 to end the possession.

Grades:

Aaron Rodgers, QB, Green Bay: A - Aaron Rodgers had another great playoff performance, throwing over 300 yards and 3 touchdowns. Rodgers was most productive off of Steeler turnovers, 3 total, that all ended in touchdowns.

Greg Jennings/ Jordy Nelson, WRs, Green Bay: B - The receivers combined for 13 catches, 204 yards, and 3 touchdowns. Nelson was also responsible for keeping many drives alive with 3rd down catches. Even though the stat line looks impressive, Nelson dropped 4 or 5 easily catchable balls.

Clay Mathews, LB, Green Bay: B - The All-Pro was slightly invisible during most of the game, but his 4th quarter forced fumble was probably the biggest play of the game.

Packers Secondary: B+ - The secondary gave up 262 yards and 2 touchdowns, but made up enough plays to give the Packers the win. The two interceptions stand out, but most impressive was the tight coverage on Pittsburgh's final drive with Charles Woodson and Sam Shields out with injuries.

Ben Roethlisberger, QB, Pittsburgh: C - Roethlisberger showed some life in the 2nd half but mostly looked like a Super Bowl rookie and not a two-time champion. Roethlisberger forced bad passes on the final possession that caused a turnover on downs.

Rashard Mendenhall, RB, Pittsburgh: C - Mendenhall looked fantastic for most of the game, but his 4th quarter fumble was the big momentum swinger that could have lost the Steelers the game.

Mike Wallace, WR, Pittsburgh: A - The second year receiver had 9 catches for 89 yards and a touchdown. If Roethlisberger was more on target in the game, Wallace would have been much more productive. Wallace's speed was too much for the Packers' secondary but Big Ben was unable to throw on target on a few occasions.

Troy Polamalu, S, Pittsburgh: F - The NFL's defensive player of the year had a terrible game against the Packers. Possibly still hampered by his injured achilles, Polamalu missed a tackle on running back James Starks and guess wrong on the 2nd touchdown catch by Greg Jennings.

James Harrison/Lamar Woodley, LBs, Pittsburgh: B - The star linebackers on the Steelers each registered a sack and added a few quarterback hits. However, the pair failed to throw Rodgers off rhythm in the 4th quarter and allowed the Packers to score 10 crucial points in the final quarter.

Sunday, February 6 FOX

Pittsburgh Steelers Green Bay Packers

25 FINAL 31

Watch Replay

	1	2	3	4	OT
PIT	0	10	7	8	0
GB	14	7	0	10	0

FAN RATING 85
BIG PLAYS 15
Super Bowl XLV highlights

RECAP BOX SCORE WATCH

Cowboys Stadium

Flyers' depth, penalty kill lead the way

By Nick Corrato - *Lion's Eye Staff Writer* - njc5098@psu.edu

The Flyers, with a record of 35-13-5, lead the Eastern Conference with 75 points. They trail Vancouver by four points for the overall league lead.

Over the last five games the Flyers' penalty kill unit has been flawless, denying all 17 opponent attempts. Darroll Powe's shorthanded tally, in a 3-1 win over Dallas, gave the Flyers more shorthanded goals than the opposition has scored on their own power-plays; It also marked the end of a 35 game goal-less drought for Powe, who had not scored since November 15th.

"You love to see when guys like that get goals because of how hard they work," commented Jeff Carter on Powe's goal, "It is always nice for them to get rewarded for it."

The Flyers' power-play unit has been a stark contrast to the penalty kill, scoring just four times on 16 attempts, over the last five games. Despite the lack of production on the power-play, the Flyers have outplayed their opponents in nearly every statistical category over the same stretch. They have out-shot opponents by an average of 33.6 to 28.6, and outscored opponents 15 to 10.

Winners of eight of their last ten games, the Flyers are in the midst of one of the longest home-stands of the season; however, that may not be a good thing. The Flyers 17-6-3 road record is the best in the league.

"They're just tremendous," said Nashville Predators head coach Barry Trotz, after his team's 3-2 loss to the Flyers, "To me, clearly, they are the deepest team in the Eastern Conference. No question."

With wins over Nashville and Dallas, the Flyers widened the gap over the second place Tampa Bay Lightning. Though the Flyers still hold the top spot in the East, they have continued to struggle against the Lightning, who sit just four points behind them.

After three meetings between the two conference front-runners, the Flyers have yet to skate away victorious. Defensive lapses and odd bounces led to a 4-0 loss in the teams' last match-up. Lightning net minder Dwayne Roloson turned away all 38 Flyer shots; his counterpart, Sergei Bobrovsky, was pulled after a first period which saw the Flyers down 2-0 less than ninety seconds into the game.

The Flyers' special teams have also struggled against the Lightning. Despite

twelve attempts on the man advantage, the Flyers' power play unit has not yet registered a goal.

In Simon Gagne's October return to Philadelphia, the Lightning edged the Flyers, 3-2; a high scoring November battle went in favor of the Lightning, 8-7.

On a positive note, another thing the Flyers have yet to do this season is lose more than three games in a row. The Flyers' stellar season has garnered praise, and some serious expectations from a key former Flyer.

"If they could win the Cup, it would be a great team," said former captain and two time Stanley Cup champion Bob Clarke, "Everybody from my era is hoping that they could win the Cup"

Clarke, a member of the "Broad Street Bullies" teams of the 1970's, was honored during the Flyers' 3-2 win over the Nashville Predators.

In the Atlantic Division, the Pittsburgh Penguins trail the Flyers by just 3 points. Still out of action is Penguins' star center Sidney Crosby, who sustained a concussion during the NHL Winter Classic. The Penguins will be without Evgeni Malkin for the remainder of the season, due to a torn ACL and MCL. The two teams will meet twice more this season; March 24th in Philadelphia, and March 29th in Pittsburgh.

Around the league, two former Flyers have made efforts to once again crack the lineup of an NHL team. Goaltender Ray Emery, whose tenure with the Flyers ended last year, due to hip injuries, recently signed with the Anaheim Ducks.

Peter Forsberg, who captained the Flyers from 2005 to 2007, is attempting another comeback with the Colorado Avalanche. His NHL career was cut short due to a series of foot and ankle injuries.

02/16	Flyers	vs.	Panthers	- 07:30pm (ET)
02/18	Flyers	vs.	Hurricanes	- 08:00pm (ET)
02/20	Flyers	vs.	Rangers	- 12:30pm (ET)
02/22	Coyotes	vs.	Flyers	- 07:00pm (ET)
02/24	Islanders	vs.	Flyers	- 07:00pm (ET)