

Professional Sports

Flyers Beat Pittsburgh, Await Next Opponent

Kieran Mason- *Lion's Eye Sports Co-Editor* - kdm5066@psu.edu



(Photo Courtesy of blogs.thescore.com)

The Flyers finished off the Pittsburgh Penguins Sunday afternoon at the Wells Fargo Center by a score of 5-1, taking the series 4-2. After the Flyers had a 3-0 lead in the series, The Penguins quickly fought back, giving the city of Pittsburgh a hope and a prayer that the team could take the Flyers to a Game 7 but the "Comeback Kids" had other plans.

The first period got under way with the drop of the puck and just a few seconds in, Claude Giroux cross-checked Sidney Crosby to the ice, which set the tone early for the orange and black. Just thirty-two seconds into the game, and just seconds after the hit, Claude Giroux sniped the puck past Marc-Andre Fleury for the 1-0 lead. Throughout the first period, the Flyers continued to test Fleury and the Penguins defense, adding a second diving goal by Scott Hartnell.

Going into the second period, the Philadelphia fans were too much for the Penguins, tallying a third goal by Erik Gustafsson giving the Flyers a 3-0 lead which would result in Pittsburgh coach Dan Bylsma calling a timeout, in which he called his entire team into the huddle to try and mount a comeback. Top goal scorer during the regular season, Evgeni Malkin, who was having a tough series, answered after the timeout with a goal of his own on a powerplay, cutting the lead to two. Less than one minute later the Flyers answered right back with a goal from Danny Briere, who has been playing the best he has the entire season during the series and always plays well when it matters most.

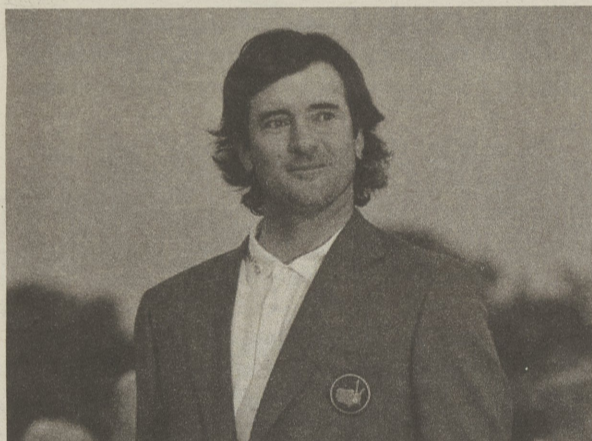
The remainder of the game belonged to the Flyers and they were too much for the Penguins, who were favorites to win it all. The final score was 5-1 after an empty net goal from The Flyers finally proved to critics that they could play a defensive game, especially for goaltender, Ilya Bryzgalov. Allowing just one goal to end the series is just what the doctor ordered for "Bryz" and the rest of the Flyers.

Bryzgalov stopped 30 of 31 shots as opposed to his counterpart Fleury stopping 18 shots on 22 attempts. Team leader Claude Giroux's 14 points during the series ranks second most all-time in Flyers playoff series history.

The Flyers must now wait to find out who they will play in the Eastern Conference Semi-Finals. While they wait, they can rest while they watch the other Eastern Conference teams finish up their series this week. After the tough and well fought series against the Penguins, the short-break is well deserved. When the time comes where they find out who their opponent will be, they must make the cautionary steps to continue this Stanley Cup run with the young team that head coach, Peter Laviolette has assembled.

Bubba Watson Wins First Major at Augusta

By Kieran Mason- *Lion's Eye Sports Co-Editor* - kdm5066@psu.edu



(Photo Courtesy of USAToday)

When CBS sports anchor Jim Nantz coins the phrase, "The Masters, a tradition unlike any other," the saying certainly lived up to the hype this year as 33-year old Bubba Watson was awarded the green jacket for his ac-

complishments on Sunday evening, winning the Masters. The entire weekend was filled with excitement as many of the top golfers in the world were trying to win their first ever Masters at Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Ga.

Rory McIlroy, along with Tiger Woods were the two favorites to win this year's Masters, but after a tough round on Sunday, both golfers just five over par and tied for 40th place. With both McIlroy's and Woods' struggles on the final round, it opened it up to other golfers such as South African Louis Oosthuizen, Peter Hanson, Phil Mickelson, Matt Kuchar, and Lee Westwood. As Hanson went into Sunday with the lead at -10, Oosthuizen managed to get an albatross, or double eagle, on the second hole to fall just one stroke behind the leader Hanson.

As Hanson continued to get bogey after bogey, Oosthuizen was soon in the lead and now Bubba Watson was not far behind. The two, who were paired with each other on Sunday, would continue to go back and forth

trying to counter each other's shot until finally they were tied after 18 holes. The two were then set for a sudden death playoff in which they played the par 4, 18th hole in which they both made par. Next they were on to play the 10th hole, a par 4, in which Watson would end up defeating Oosthuizen with a par on the final playoff hole.

As the American Watson finished his final putt, he immediately gave his caddy Denny Hamlin a huge hug and immediately began breaking into tears of joy after the tremendous accomplishment that he had just finished. Soon he was met by his mother and the 10th green at Augusta was filled with tears of joy, as well as thousands of spectators and cameras witnessing Watson win his first major championship. Being that Watson is an alum of the University of Georgia, it was especially bittersweet for the golfer. Next year he will be on hand when he awards next year's winner the green jacket, but until then he will soak up the memories with his wife and newborn son, who were both unable to be at Augusta when he won.

Phillies Fall To Last Place in NL East

By Kieran Mason- *Lion's Eye Sports Co-Editor* - kdm5066@psu.edu

After a rough weekend in San Diego over the weekend, the games do not get any easier for the Phillies as they make their way to Arizona. The Phillies bats have been very quiet in this young season and that's due in large part to the injuries to Ryan Howard and Chase Utley and the lack of depth in the infield has really shown at the early stages of the season.

As the Phillies continue to lose to teams in which they normally beat, it could be a long season for the club. After a very disappointing few losses to start the season to the always dreadful Pittsburgh Pirates, the Phillies then arrived home for their home opener and was handed a loss to the new-look Miami Marlins.

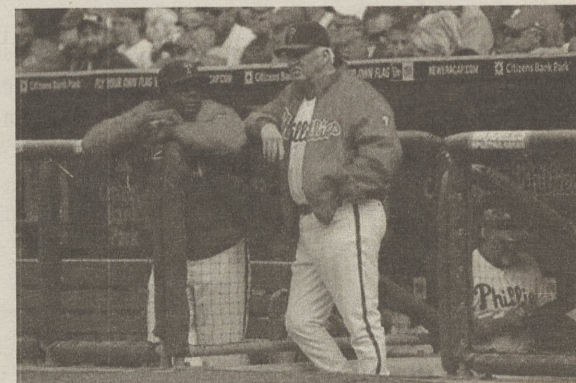
Just as if anything else could go wrong for the Phillies, Hunter Pence woke up Monday morning with pain in his left arm after attempting to make a diving catch in Sunday's loss to the Padres in which they lost 6-1. Although it does not look as though he will miss much time, Pence is one of the spark plugs for this Phillies team in 2012, especially with the injuries to Howard and Utley.

Although it seems as though I am very skeptical of this team so far this season, I do believe that the Phillies will turn it around, it's just a matter of when it will happen. They have the guys that can hit the ball around

and play small ball, they just have not been able to do that night in and night out. Once some of their young players such as Freddy Galvis and John Mayberry Jr. start getting comfortable, the runs will come for the Phillies.

In my opinion, the biggest disappointment this season has been Jim Thome. After fans found out that Howard was going to be out indefinitely for most of 2012, Thome seemed like a good pickup for the team. So far this season, he has been to the plate 16 times and has gotten a hit just twice, batting a staggering .125. Hopefully for the Phillies, his age is not the problem, but instead it's his mechanics... only time will tell

Very few positives have come from the Phillies so far this season. As the starting pitchers to continue to be arguably the best rotation in the MLB, the lack of offense that the Phillies have shown thus far, could turn out to be a long season for the team who has had much success the past few years. Until Howard the Utley return the lineup, the starting pitchers will have headaches with the lack of run support, unless the offense does something soon. Losing a series to the Pirates and now losing the first game to Marlins leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of Phillies fans. It will be interesting to see if Charlie Manuel does anything to alter the lineup in the weeks to come to provide a spark that the team desperately needs.



Phillies skipper Charlie Manuel has a conversation with injured Ryan Howard during the home opener April 9. The Phillies lost to the Marlins 6-2.

(Photo Courtesy of palmbeachpost.com)