

Football Weekly

BY MATTHEW P. HATFIELD

Special SUPER BOWL XXXIX Edition

Sunday, February 6th, 2005 ---



6:30PM (EST)



New England Patriots (14-2; 2-0)

VS.



Philadelphia Eagles (13-3; 2-0)

In this week's Football Weekly I take a look back on what was the 2004-2005 regular season, speculate about what may transpire in the offseason, glance ahead to the NFL Draft in April, and of course, preview the big game in Jacksonville. Plus, I'll offer up my opinion on where Bill Belichick's New England Patriots rank among the all-time great football franchises. All of that and more, so strap in tight.....

My Pick: New England 38 Philadelphia 17 [LOCK: NE -7](#)

Why to Watch: New England's Bill Belichick tries to become the first ever NFL Head Coach to win three Super Bowls in four seasons, while his quarterback - Tom Brady - attempts to join Troy Aikman, Joe Montana and Terry Bradshaw in the exclusive 3+ Super Bowl title club. For Philly, it's make our own history behind Donovan McNabb & T.O.

Past Super Bowl Results:

Game	Date	Winner (Share)	Loser (Share)	Score	Site	Att.
XXXVIII	2/1/2004	New England (\$68,000)	Carolina (\$36,500)	32-29	Houston	71,525
* XXXVII	1/26/2003	Tampa Bay (\$63,000)	Oakland (\$35,000)	48-21	San Diego	67,603
* XXXVI	2/3/2002	New England (\$63,000)	St. Louis (\$34,500)	20-17	New Orleans	72,922
XXXV	1/28/2001	Baltimore (\$58,000)	N.Y. Giants (\$34,500)	34-7	Tampa	71,921
* XXXIV	1/30/2000	St. Louis (\$58,000)	Tennessee (\$33,000)	23-16	Atlanta	72,625
XXXIII	1/31/1999	Denver (\$53,000)	Atlanta (\$32,500)	34-19	Miami	74,803
XXXII	1/25/1998	Denver (\$48,000)	Green Bay (\$29,000)	31-24	San Diego	68,912
XXXI	1/26/1997	Green Bay (\$48,000)	New England (\$29,000)	35-21	New Orleans	72,301
XXX	1/28/1996	Dallas (\$42,000)	Pittsburgh (\$27,000)	27-17	Tempe	76,347
XXIX	1/29/1995	San Francisco (\$42,000)	San Diego (\$26,000)	49-26	Miami	74,107
* XXVIII	1/30/1994	Dallas (\$38,000)	Buffalo (\$23,500)	30-13	Atlanta	72,817
XXVII	1/31/1993	Dallas (\$36,000)	Buffalo (\$18,000)	52-17	Pasadena	98,374
XXVI	1/26/1992	Washington (\$36,000)	Buffalo (\$18,000)	37-24	Minneapolis	63,130
* XXV	1/27/1991	N.Y. Giants (\$36,000)	Buffalo (\$18,000)	20-19	Tampa	73,813
XXIV	1/28/1990	San Francisco (\$36,000)	Denver (\$18,000)	55-10	New Orleans	72,919
XXIII	1/22/1989	San Francisco (\$36,000)	Cincinnati (\$18,000)	20-16	Miami	75,129
XXII	1/31/1988	Washington (\$36,000)	Denver (\$18,000)	42-10	San Diego	73,302
XXI	1/25/1987	N.Y. Giants (\$36,000)	Denver (\$18,000)	39-20	Pasadena	101,063
XX	1/26/1986	Chicago (\$36,000)	New England (\$18,000)	46-10	New Orleans	73,818
XIX	1/20/1985	San Francisco (\$36,000)	Miami (\$18,000)	38-16	Stanford	84,059
XVIII	1/22/1984	L.A. Raiders (\$36,000)	Washington (\$18,000)	38-9	Tampa	72,920
* XVII	1/30/1983	Washington (\$36,000)	Miami (\$18,000)	27-17	Pasadena	103,667
XVI	1/24/1982	San Francisco (\$18,000)	Cincinnati (\$9,000)	26-21	Pontiac	81,270
XV	1/25/1981	Oakland (\$18,000)	Philadelphia (\$9,000)	27-10	New Orleans	76,135
XIV	1/20/1980	Pittsburgh (\$18,000)	Los Angeles (\$9,000)	31-19	Pasadena	103,985
XIII	1/21/1979	Pittsburgh (\$18,000)	Dallas (\$9,000)	35-31	Miami	79,484
XII	1/15/1978	Dallas (\$18,000)	Denver (\$9,000)	27-10	New Orleans	75,583
XI	1/9/1977	Oakland (\$15,000)	Minnesota (\$7,500)	32-14	Pasadena	103,438
X	1/18/1976	Pittsburgh (\$15,000)	Dallas (\$7,500)	21-17	Miami	80,187
IX	1/12/1975	Pittsburgh (\$15,000)	Minnesota (\$7,500)	16-6	New Orleans	80,997
VIII	1/13/1974	Miami (\$15,000)	Minnesota (\$7,500)	24-7	Houston	71,882
VII	1/14/1973	Miami (\$15,000)	Washington (\$7,500)	14-7	Los Angeles	90,182
VI	1/16/1972	Dallas (\$15,000)	Miami (\$7,500)	24-3	New Orleans	81,023
V	1/17/1971	Baltimore (\$15,000)	Dallas (\$7,500)	16-13	Miami	79,204
* IV	1/11/1970	Kansas City (\$15,000)	Minnesota (\$7,500)	23-7	New Orleans	80,562
III	1/12/1969	N.Y. Jets (\$15,000)	Baltimore (\$7,500)	16-7	Miami	75,389
II	1/14/1968	Green Bay (\$15,000)	Oakland (\$7,500)	33-14	Miami	75,546
I	1/15/1967	Green Bay (\$15,000)	Kansas City (\$7,500)	35-10	Los Angeles	61,946

Super Bowl Most Valuable Players:

Most Valuable Players*

Super Bowl I
Super Bowl II
Super Bowl III
Super Bowl IV
Super Bowl V
Super Bowl VI
Super Bowl VII
Super Bowl VIII
Super Bowl IX
Super Bowl X
Super Bowl XI
Super Bowl XII
Super Bowl XIII
Super Bowl XIV
Super Bowl XV
Super Bowl XVI
Super Bowl XVII
Super Bowl XVIII
Super Bowl XIX
Super Bowl XX
Super Bowl XXI
Super Bowl XXII
Super Bowl XXIII
Super Bowl XXIV
Super Bowl XXV
Super Bowl XXVI
Super Bowl XXVII
Super Bowl XXVIII
Super Bowl XXIX
Super Bowl XXX
Super Bowl XXXI
Super Bowl XXXIII
Super Bowl XXXIII
Super Bowl XXXIV
Super Bowl XXXV
Super Bowl XXXVI
Super Bowl XXXVII
Super Bowl XXXVIII

*Award named Pete Rozelle Trophy since XXV.

Position, Player, Team

— QB Bart Starr, Green Bay
— QB Bart Starr, Green Bay
— QB Joe Namath, N.Y. Jets
— QB Len Dawson, Kansas City
— LB Chuck Howley, Dallas
— QB Roger Staubach, Dallas
— S Jake Scott, Miami
— RB Larry Csonka, Miami
— RB Franco Harris, Pittsburgh
— WR Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh
— WR Fred Biletnikoff, Oakland
— DT Randy White and DE Harvey Martin, Dallas
— QB Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh
— QB Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh
— QB Jim Plunkett, Oakland
— QB Joe Montana, San Francisco
— RB John Riggins, Washington
— RB Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders
— QB Joe Montana, San Francisco
— DE Richard Dent, Chicago
— QB Phil Simms, N.Y. Giants
— QB Doug Williams, Washington
— WR Jerry Rice, San Francisco
— QB Joe Montana, San Francisco
— RB Ottis Anderson, N.Y. Giants
— QB Mark Rypien, Washington
— QB Troy Aikman, Dallas
— RB Emmitt Smith, Dallas
— QB Steve Young, San Francisco
— CB Larry Brown, Dallas
— KR Desmond Howard, Green Bay
— RB Terrell Davis, Denver
— QB John Elway, Denver
— QB Kurt Warner, St. Louis
— LB Ray Lewis, Baltimore
— QB Tom Brady, New England
— S Dexter Jackson, Tampa Bay
— QB Tom Brady, New England

Super Bowl Composite Standings:

Team	W	L	Pct.	Pts.	OP
San Francisco 49ers	5	0	1	188	89
Baltimore Ravens	1	0	1	34	7
Chicago Bears	1	0	1	46	10
New York Jets	1	0	1	16	7
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	1	0	1	48	21
Pittsburgh Steelers	4	1	0.8	120	100
Green Bay Packers	3	1	0.75	127	76
New York Giants	2	1	0.667	66	73
Oakland/L.A. Raiders	3	2	0.6	132	114
Dallas Cowboys	5	3	0.625	221	132
Washington Redskins	3	2	0.6	122	103
New England Patriots	2	2	0.333	83	127
Baltimore Colts	1	1	0.5	23	29
Kansas City Chiefs	1	1	0.5	33	42
Miami Dolphins	2	3	0.4	74	103
Denver Broncos	2	4	0.333	115	206
St. Louis/L.A. Rams	1	2	0.333	42	47
Atlanta Falcons	0	1	0	19	34
Carolina Panthers	0	1	0	29	32
Los Angeles Rams	0	1	0	19	31
Philadelphia Eagles	0	1	0	10	27
San Diego Chargers	0	1	0	26	49
Tennessee Titans	0	1	0	16	23
Cincinnati Bengals	0	2	0	37	46
Buffalo Bills	0	4	0	73	139
Minnesota Vikings	0	4	0	34	95

SUNDAY SETUP:

Still don't think Tom Brady is the best quarterback in all of football? Brady had a 103 degree temperature and was on iv fluids the night prior to the AFC Championship game in Pittsburgh. All Brady went out did on that Sunday was quarterback New England to their third Super Bowl in four seasons --- last quarterback to do that was a man named Troy Aikman for the Dallas Cowboys. Aikman, who will call the big game on Super Bowl Sunday for FOX alongside Joe Buck and Chris Collinsworth, was a pretty darn good quarterback in his own right and was apart of the last so-called "dynasty." And don't think his teammates have yet to notice what the cool, calm, collective #12 is doing out there on the football field. "He just oozes confidence," says kicker Adam Vinatieri, who finished off game-wining drives by Brady in two of the last three Super Bowls with successful field goal tries.

Oozing confidence or not, Brady does not have to do it alone offensively this title time around. Corey Dillon, New England's prized off-season pickup, has rushed for 73+ yards in every game he has been in this season. For the season, Dillon ran for 1635 yards and 12 rushing touchdowns. More importantly the 31-year-old vet was able to eat up clock with 81 first down runs in 15 regular season contests. It was the ex-Cincinnati Bengal that enabled the Patriots defense to keep Indianapolis to three points this postseason. By giving the Pats stopping unit much needed rest to get the ball out of the explosive Colts' grips, Dillon racked up 144 yards on 23 carries. That terrific Tom guy also had one more touchdown pass and one less interception on 15 fewer pass attempts than NFL MVP Peyton Manning (as New England squashed Indy once again).

Not only does Philadelphia's chances of winning their first Super Bowl in franchise history hinge on whether or not wide receiver Terrell Owens can play, but also how much he realistically can contribute. Whether T.O. can play or not, I personally do not think the Eagles can win this football game, period. Brian Westbrook was the x-factor the last couple of weeks vs. Minnesota and Atlanta. Westbrook has now become the go-to-guy that the Pats genius' will be hunting for all afternoon so that leaves the ex-Green Bay Packers tailback Dorsey Levens as the x-factor in my book. Levens, who helped guide the Brett Favre and Reggie White-led Packers to a title victory over the Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI (31), has seen a solid amount of carries come his way in the red zone.

Mc-First: This season Donovan McNabb became the first quarterback in league history to throw for 30+ touchdowns and less than ten interceptions.

I, the avid sports follower that I am, was listening to the tube the other day and heard Steve Hirdt (guest on the Mike & The Maddog radio program)of the Elias Sports Bureau throw out a surreal statistic. New England has trailed by more than a possession at half-time only once in the past 33 games. It was versus the Steelers earlier this season without Corey Dillon. If Philly has any chance, whatsoever, of winning this game it will have to be a dynamite start for Andy Reid's boys. No turnovers, force turnovers and gain an early lead is the recipe for success vs. the Pats --- getting it to work is another thing!

SUPER BOWL FACT OR FICTION?

Fact or Fiction? Tom Brady is the best quarterback in football today?

Fact. This guy is 48-14 in the regular season, 8-0 in the postseason, 7-0 in overtime and 18-2 in games decided by six points or less. You telling me there's a better QB than him? If so, I haven't seen him, not Peyton Manning, not Donovan McNabb and not even the amazingly talented Mike Vick. Brett Favre is the only guy I could put in the same category as Brady because he is the type of team leader that Brady is week in and week out. Glamorous stats? Wins over stats --- that's Mr. Brady.

Fact or Fiction? Philadelphia will not score a touchdown in this game?

Definitely fiction. I know the Patriots have one of the best defenses in the league and give up yards rather than points. But it's hard to imagine Philadelphia not scoring a TD in this game with or without T.O. McNabb or Westbrook will find the end zone, while David Akers kicks a field goal or two or maybe even three.

Fact or Fiction? New England will score at least 30 points in this game?

I'm going to say fact believe it or not. They did find a way to get in the 40 column vs. Pittsburgh two weeks ago in the AFC Conference Championship game. Belichick, his coordinator, Adam Vinatieri and the defense get most of the attention. However, the Patriots offense is underrated in the sense that they can score some points and control the clock with Mr. Dillon.

Fact or Fiction? Brian Westbrook will amass more total yards than Corey Dillon?

Because it is total yards --- the answer is fact. Westbrook was used as a return man last season and even though he doesn't do it now, may return one kick/punt in this game. He catches more passes out of the backfield and could play the wide receiver position full time if he wanted. Plus, for Philly to win ---- he'll need to carry the ball upwards of 15 times.

Fact or Fiction? Philly will stop New England from becoming a dynasty on Sunday?

Have to go with fiction since nothing stands out to me as to why Philadelphia will be able to stay in the game come fourth quarter and pull it off (with/without Owens). I think the one things that keeps me coming to me is how dominant the AFC was vs. the NFC. This is why, in my opinion, a team like Atlanta, which has absolutely

nothing to lose, would fare better vs. a powerhouse like the Pats. Pittsburgh and Indy get you more ready for the Super Bowl than a Minnesota team dependent on Randy Moss and a Falcons team that goes as high as Mike Vick can take them.

“Taking the Super Bowl to more cities represents a couple of things. No. 1, the recognition that the game is a tremendous asset to the community and the impact of the game goes way beyond football and can be a positive for the entire tourism and travel economy of many, many different cities. And secondly, it reflects the fact that so many cities have invested public monies, either in total or in part to build new stadiums, and, in those circumstances, our ownership has felt it’s important to support those investments with the Super Bowl game.”
—*NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue*



Patriots quarterback Tom Brady is gunning for his 3rd Super Bowl MVP award in four years. The only other person to be named Most Valuable Player of the Super Bowl three times was Brady’s boyhood idol --- Joe Montana.

DYNASTY:

Dynasty or not? It's debatable, as is virtually everything in sports. However, there comes a time where you can isolate fact from opinion. But before we can do that, let's define what exactly a dynasty is.

Dynasty - a succession of rulers from the same family or line. An alternate definition you say you want? Fine. Dynasty - a family or group that maintains power for several generations (pretty much what the other definition said).

The New England Patriots have deified all sports logic in this age in time where free agency can spin playoff teams into division cellar dwellers the very next season. An example would be the Tennessee Titans this season, or you can use the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Oakland Raiders, neither of which has returned to even the .500 mark after dueling it out in the 2003 World Championship. Fact: the Dallas Cowboys are the only team to have won three championships in four years during the Super Bowl era. Potential fact: New England can become only the second team to do so with a victory over the Philadelphia Eagles on Sunday. Another fact: the Denver Broncos are the last team to win back-to-back titles, something Bill Belichick and crew can also accomplish with a win over the Iggles.

The way I look at it, which others may view it differently, you got to win three titles in a decade span. Another words, the teams that are in my classification of dynasties are: 1960's Green Bay Packers, 1970's Pittsburgh Steelers, San Francisco 49ers of the 1980's and Jerry Jones' Dallas Cowboys during the 1990's. Wasn't alive before the 60's and I cannot tell you or not whether those teams were dynasties before Vince Lombardi and the Packers. Lombardi, who died at the age of 57 in 1970, coached Green Bay to five title wins, including the first two Super Bowls over Kansas City and Oakland. Known as Man of the Decade during the 60's, Lombardi is not remembered for his final coaching stint --- 1969 with the Redskins, where he helped them to their first winning campaign in about 14 seasons.

All of these teams had Hall-of-Fame level quarterbacks in Bart Starr, Terry Bradshaw, Joe Montana and Troy Aikman. Patriots quarterback Tom Brady isn't the flashiest guy as far as statistics go, but wins ball games and excels enormously in the clutch, something all four of those Hall-of-Famers did, too. All had great weapons around them as well as Bradshaw was surrounded by two of the finest wide receivers to play the game --- John Stallworth (8723 career receiving yards) and Lynn Swann. "Mr. Immaculate Reception," (a.k.a. Franco Harris) even saved the day for Pittsburgh against Dallas. For the Cowboys and Niners it was a star studded cast on both sides of the ball, particularly on offense. Excluding Aikman, Dallas had Emmitt Smith, arguably the best running back, running the ball, Michael Irvin and Alvin Harper making catches, Darryl Johnston making punishing blocks at fullback and Jay Novacek manning the tight end position well. Larry Allen, Nate Newton, Mark Stepnoski and Eric Williams were among the biggest and toughest offensive linemen in the league then.

San Francisco had a wonderful guy up front blocking in Harris Barton and tight end Brent Jones could block equally as well as he catches. Roger Craig wasn't one of the

upper echelon backs to ever put on a uniform, though did what was needed to be done. Like "America's Team," had Emmitt, the Niners had Jerry Rice --- the greatest receiver in the modern day of football. To make the comparison to what Franco Harris did for the Steelers it was Dwight Clark for 49ers. His amazing catch in the back of the end zone will forever always be in the hearts of Niners fans.

So are there great teams that did not turn out to be dynasties? Absolutely --- in recent times I look at the Denver Broncos who won back-to-back titles once Terrell Davis gave John Elway that threat in the backfield. The St. Louis Rams under Kurt Warner at QB and Green Bay behind gunslinger Brett Favre both made two Super Bowl appearances and each went 1-1. John Madden, that guy now linked with the video game, began winning excellence for the Raiders in Oakland, later moved to Los Angeles and now back in Oakland. Don Shula's Miami Dolphins that had a perfect season is the no-brainer choice for the best team in a single season. What some might be surprised to know is that the Dolphins Super Bowl record is 2-3 and that Miami team with Bob Griese, Larry Csonka, etc. did not continue the excellence quite as long with stiff competition (Steelers and Raiders).

Then you get to Bill Belichick and his staff --- headed by future Notre Dame Head Coach Charlie Weis and the next possible sideline strategist for the Cleveland Browns, Romeo Crennel. Belichick simply outsmarts the other guys and when he had the task of stopping Peyton Manning and the Colts offense he did not waver. Belichick had the mentality of we won 14 games and all their talking about is this Peyton person, whose never beaten my team. No need for emotion, Belichick learned from the best in Bill Parcells when he was under him with the Giants. What Belichick does I like the best is adapt his style of play to who he is playing. Does not have the stubborn Mike Martz approach of we're going to do what we always do to win. Some tinkering, adjustments, use everyone on the roster wherever possible and getting his players to buy into the we've still got more work to do concept are the things the new Bill on the block does best. To a certain degree, it reminds me of Red Auerbach, who wanted to keep winning, not satisfied with what's already been achieved.

Common threads are there for New England: a cool customer at the quarterback position in the pressure moments, a front office that wants to win charged by encouragement from Scott Pioli and Bob Kraft, a playmaking defense and now a run game. Win and you're in..... the Hatfield Sports Dynasty Club that is!

Bottom Line: In my opinion, the Patriots will become a dynasty if and only if they win on Sunday. They are not one yet because I think you have to win three in a decade. Plus, one of those wins has to be by a sizable/comfortable margin. The Patriots have won two, both on Adam Vinatieri game-winning field goals, from playing in front and preserving a lead. This unit has not had to comeback nor have they been in control the way I would consider as the game is over before it's over.

Inside the Super Bowl:



If I wanted to I could break down the Super Bowl for hours and make up about three or four pages. For some unknown reason, sorry Patriots and Eagles fans, this game does not attract me. Oh, yes, I'll watch of course. Baltimore toppling the Giants; Tampa running all over Oakland; San Francisco's drubbing of the Chargers; and last but not least the Chicago Bears 36-point win over the Patriots 19 years ago are games that come to mind. Games that come to mind that this one could turn out to be like. Since 2000 these are probably the two best football franchises, but if all everyone can talk about is T.O., can it truly be an all-time classic waiting to kickoff?

Anyhow, my breakdown will look at the concrete matchups and concrete keys for each team to win. We'll also try to mix in some let's look back at the season material.

Philadelphia Offense vs. New England Defense: Terrell Owens gave the Eagles the one dimension that was missing from their offense the past three seasons --- a deep touchdown receiving threat. Owens had more TD grabs before the halfway point than the entire team WR core did in 2003-04. With Washington only playing football on defense (since their offense decided to take a vacation), Dallas' defense going from one of the best to worst and Tom Coughlin basically throwing in the towel with a 5-4 record, Philly had this division done early. Along with the Steelers and Patriots, Andy Reid's Eagles were among the three teams head and shoulders above everyone else. Owens' injury did not stop them come playoff time as some others stepped like Freddie Mitchell, who does more talking/playing around than he does playing football, Greg Lewis and Chad Lewis.



(AP) --- **New England Head Coach Bill Belichick never presses the panic button (at least openly in front of us all).**

Fact of the matter is that this team relies on how well Donovan McNabb plays and thrives on aggressive defense. It is most dangerous when someone can produce the big play like Villanova product Brian Westbrook has done in T.O.'s absence. Earlier in the week to the media, Westbrook said, "I think they have a very active defense. They are very physical, and very big. So for us, we have to go out and try to control the ball and

dictate to them everything that's going to go on in the game." You betcha bottom dollar you better control the clock! Philly can have a big scoring strike or two, but eventually the Patriots defense will have them in 3rd & longs. They (being New England) will get the ball and play their own style of ball control with Corey Dillon now handling the pigskin 20+ times and Tom Brady using the short passing game to move the chains.

So just like in the Falcons games it will be absolutely necessary, absolutely mandatory that they go out and convert positive plays on first down. Offensive coordinator Brad Childress cannot come out with a vanilla gameplan like Indianapolis did against the Patriots, otherwise this one will be over by intermission. I think it's highly important the Eagles take out and apply some of the tricks in their own fun stuff bag. Double reverses, wide receiver passes, bootlegs with McNabb and maybe even a couple of misdirection runs that aren't too long to develop to catch the safe guarded Patriots off guard. Sure, go ahead and go for the jugular early, but you have to have a backup plan if it that doesn't work. Coach Reid cannot throw, throw and throw more/constantly. New England's linebackers are fantastic, quick to the ball and safety Rodney Harrison is one of those safeties looking to mug Mitchell in the slot.

The Patriots know they don't have to rush D. McNabb and if they do, do it wide. McNabb's legs are vital in this game and he must get about 50 yards scrambling for them to win. Of everything I have mentioned, the one thing that I have failed to mention is the Eagles offensive line. In my mind those five are stronger than the five up front blocking on offense for Mr. Brady. Since the Pats like to run a 3-4 defense, Philadelphia will need to see what they can do on the inside to chop up the defense physically. Artis Hicks and Jermaine Mayberry have manned the guard positions nicely when mammoth Arkansas rookie Shaun Andrews went down. Very seldom do you hear that a center's agility will be one of the keys, but Hank Fraley will need to be agile getting to the outside and laying a block on one of those ends/outside linebackers. Jon Runyan and Tra Thomas are Pro Bowl caliber offensive tackles that have the big bodies to protect McNabb from vicious shots. Again, they'll get their chances on the outside, yet it will mean nothing if the Eagles don't test Keith Traylor and company on the inside. Richard Seymour is making his return to the lineup and has help in Tedy Bruschi, Mike Vrabel, Willie McGinest and Ted Johnson provided he struggles.

Now we get to the unfairly scrutinized Patriots secondary. Why? Okay, so they had to sign Hank Poteat, a former Steeler, off the streets, big deal. Asante Samuel and Randall Gay have worked hard replacing Ty Law and Ty Poole. Eugene Wilson continues to steadily improve and is capable of having a Dexter Jackson (Super Bowl XXXVII) type game. We'll see the Pats use a deep zone safety net in case Owens and Eagles' receivers somehow beat the man-to-man cover 2 and occasional press coverage. My thing with Owens is can he plant, can he cut, can he jump up to get a ball and can he avoid re-injuring himself? I do not believe in saying someone cannot do something, although I find it hard to believe he will be an outright difference when Marvin Harrison had five insignificant catches three weeks ago opposite New England. Best guy to test the speed of the Patriots defensive backs is Greg Lewis, not Todd Pinkston or Freddie Mitchell. Wouldn't be surprised if someone new was the hero this time for the Patriots

whether it be Vince Wilfork, Roman Phifer, Don Davis or someone else soon to be an unsung hero.

Top Coaches Postseason Record:

Bill Belichick	9-1
Vince Lombardi	9-1
Joe Gibbs	16-5
Tom Flores	8-3

New England Offense vs. Philadelphia Defense: Tom Brady is one win short of tying Bart Starr for the most consecutive postseason wins. Philadelphia is a perfect 20-0 when Brian Westbrook gets nine or more carries, while the Patriots are 17-1 with Corey Dillon in the lineup. Both defenses have allowed 16.2PPG throughout the course of the season. Remember, New England had possession of the pigskin for about 40 minutes in the last Super Bowl. What does all this information, some of it useful and some of it not, mean come game time? Probably not a whole lot. I will say this: the Patriots depth is why the defense is so good and their depth on offense could be overlooked by many NFL aficionados. Deion Branch has quickly evolved into a bona-fide go-to-guy in the passing game since opening day when the Pats beat the Colts and to now. David Givens out of Notre Dame came up big vs. the Panthers in this exact setting last year. David Patten made plays in the Super Bowl vs. the Rams and is the veteran guy of the bunch. Bethel Johnson brings return like skills to the receiver position. Behind Dillon will be Kevin Faulk, who is a major reason why the Patriots were able to give Vinatieri a chance to shock St. Louis in the 2002 heavyweight bout. Faulk makes as many first down plays on delay runs and pitch plays as he does on screens and dump off throws. Fullback Patrick Pass had the pleasure of getting the bulk of the carries in a Thanksgiving Day game long before this squad became a dominant force in the AFC. Tight ends Daniel Graham and Christian Fauria will be asked to disrupt any Eagle blitzes in addition to making the key catch in the red zone or on 2nd & 6.

Of all those players the one guy I think can do some major damage is Troy Brown. Brown, a nickel DB for the Patriots, has had a much more limited role at receiver. Just the time if you ask me for Weis and Belichick to use on some surprise formations. Brown can take a reverse, throw a reverse pass and even be a sound blocker on the perimeter. When the Patriots do decide to throw the ball, and it could be upward of 30 times depending on the tempo of the contest, look for perimeter passes. Neither QB wants to deliver throws in the teeth of the opposition's defense because of the smart veterans that can make them pay. Philly's best move other than getting T.O. was the one bringing back Jeremiah Trotter. Against Atlanta it was Trotter creating havoc and getting a good jump off the snap, It helped their run defense to bring him in and Hugh Douglas' return to the Eagles was substantially helpful.

We're going to find out real early on whether or not d-coordinator Jim Johnson will do what the Patriots' coaches have done throughout their run: adjust his style to the opponent your playing. Johnson loves to blitz, often times blitzing over excessively. He's been able to do it this year mainly because Sheldon Brown and Lito Sheppard have

done awesome jobs taking the spot of vets Troy Vincent (Buffalo) and Bobby Taylor (Seattle). Taylor and Vincent were staples of the Eagles defense and perennial Pro Bowlers year in and year out. You just don't get rid of those type of players unless you know the guys taking their spots will be just as good. Surprisingly, they have proved me and all the other doubters wrong. Brian Dawkins has been and still is one of the best safeties in the game. Dawkins is a passionate, hard hitting player just like the other top notch safety for the foe is --- Rodney Harrison. If there's a weakness to the Patriots' team on offense it is in my mind the offensive line. There lies the spot the Eagles must attack to get in Brady's face.



Eagles defensive end Jevon “The Freak” Kearse has the task of sacking quarterbacks around the NFL. Kearse, a member of the Tennessee Titans team that lost to the St. Louis Rams in Super Bowl 34, hopes his second trip turns out concluding with a win. In order for that to happen, Kearse must get after Brady even more so than he did then Rams QB Kurt Warner.

Consecutive 14 Win Seasons:

New England Patriots	2003-04
San Francisco 49ers	1989-90
Chicago Bears	1985-86

Final Super Bowl Outlook: I tell ya' Donovan McNabb has shown me more this season than in any other year. When Terrell Owens went down I thought McNabb would struggle more as a passer but he didn't. He flourished in the spotlight without having T.O. to throw the ball to and everyone watching him closely. Notwithstanding, I think the Patriots scheming is off the charts. Nobody has come along and figured them out. And you tell me a team that lost three NFC Conference Championship games in a row (with Owens playing with an injury that could be career threatening) will beat Belichick, Brady and the rest of the cast? I don't think so. McNabb's had an outstanding season, but I see him struggling like Kerry Collins did vs. the Ravens vaunted defense four Super Bowls ago.

OTHER EXPERTS' PICKS:

Len Pasquarelli	New England 27-17	MVP: Rodney Harrison
Merril Hoge	New England 33-19	MVP: Corey Dillon
Mark Schlereth	New England 31-23	MVP: Tom Brady
Randy Mueller	New England 27-24	MVP: Corey Dillon
John Clayton	New England 27-17	MVP: Corey Dillon
Joe Theismann	New England 24-14	MVP: Tom Brady
Mike Golic	New England 27-21	
Mike Greenberg	Philadelphia 24-21	
Gil Brandt	New England	
Greg Garber	New England 33-21	MVP: Tom Brady
Larry Beil	New England 24-16	MVP: Tom Brady
Cris Carter	New England 22-19 (OT)	MVP: Adam Vinatieri
Sean Salisbury	New England	MVP: Tom Brady
Christopher Russo	New England 24-13	
Charles Barkley	Philadelphia	MVP: Donovan McNabb
Sterling Sharpe	Philadelphia	
Jerome Bettis	New England	
Darren Woodson	Philadelphia	

NFL Off-Season Preview:

The level of difficulty to project who will go where at this present time is real hard. So to make things easier I am going to mention what teams need what and who could fit where.

One of the off-season **LOCKS** I see is Chris Hovan, defensive tackle for Minnesota, re-uniting with Dennis Green in Arizona. If you recall, Green coached Hovan when he was with the Vikings prior to breaking games down on ESPN. Speaking of former ESPN analysts now coaches --- Marty Schottenheimer of the Chargers has to feel his team is just a couple pieces away from completing the puzzle. Antonio Gates was phenomenal at the tight end position and everyone is wondering will they ship Drew Brees out, keep him and deal Philip Rivers or retain both for another season. Marty and the front office have the tough assignment of figuring that out. Keenan McCardell might not be back in a Chargers uniform next season so they could be one of the teams after Plaxico Burress of the Steelers, who I no way see coming back to Pittsburgh.

Another team interested in Burress as well as some other players is Dick Vermeil's Chiefs. From all indications I've gathered, Kansas City seems willing to spend do\$\$ars to improve their defense, particularly the 32nd ranked pass defense, and maybe add another wideout. Burress, Ty Law (New England), Kendrell Bell (Steelers), Fred Smoot (Redskins) are just a few of the names on their early wish list.

Smoot, a corner for the Redskins, was not as exposed as some thought he would be without Champ Bailey (Broncos) and now with Shawn Springs on the opposite side. Though, I don't see Smoot or Rod Gardner, who could be headed for Houston, coming back to the Redskins in any way, shape or form. Washington has to be thinking about

dealing LaVar Arrington to a team in need of defensive help. Any takers? Not sure yet, but I can tell you some teams that have to address defense: St. Louis, Green Bay, New Orleans, Seattle, KC, Oakland and Indianapolis. Another Skins trade to Denver? Not a chance. Denver does lack a pass rushing specimen off the edge in the mold of an Arrington.

Any quarterbacks on the move? There could be in the likes of Kurt Warner (Giants), Drew Bledsoe (Bills), Cleveland's Jeff Garcia and possibly Jon Kitna (Cincinnati) and Seahawks backup Trent Dilfer. Anticipate Seattle to re-sign Matt Hasselbeck to be the quarterback for the future. Nevertheless, the Seahawks are not ready to claim the NFC West title for the second consecutive season, especially if Shaun Alexander chooses to go elsewhere.

Arizona, Miami and Oakland are three teams desperately in need of help at tailback. LaMont Jordan (Jets) is someone I project to seriously give the Raiders consideration, while the Cardinals and Dolphins could opt to take a rookie running back in the draft. Last year in my **BOLD PREDICTIONS** column I labeled Randy Moss to do what Terrell Owens did this past off-season --- bolt from one team to a franchise more ready to contend for a championship. I still think Moss will be gone and could be the splash acquisition for someone like Baltimore in the off-season. Chicago's another team in need of a receiver and if they don't want to get a rookie then Muhsin Muhammad of Carolina is their best option.

2005 NFL DRAFT:

My off-season for football will be consumed with a lot of film analysis. Watching players at the NFL Scouting Combine, factoring in what Akron QB Charlie Frye and others did at the Senior Bowl, reading up on what many did in individual workouts and so on. But what I factor in the most when studying and covering the draft is how the college players did in college. I mean isn't that more important you think than whether or not Jim Bob ran a 4.3 compared to Fred Anderson's 4.4 40-time? In my book it is and due to all my concentration on the Super Bowl this week I've decided to wait another week for my next mock draft.

Emmitt Smith's decision to announce his retirement (as a Dallas Cowboy) on Thursday shakes up the draft more than just a little bit. Smith, who ran for just under 1,000 yards at the ripe age of 35, leaves a gapping hole at running back for the Arizona Cardinals. Unless they want to enter the LaMont Jordan/Travis Henry sweepstakes, going after a running back will be paramount for them.

As for now, here's another look at the first Hatfield Sports edition of the 2005 NFL Mock Draft:

1	Aaron	Rodgers	San Francisco 49ers	QB	California
2	Cedric	Benson	Miami Dolphins	RB	Texas
3	Alex	Smith	Cleveland Browns	QB	Utah
4	Braylon	Edwards	Chicago Bears	WR	Michigan
5	Carnell	Williams	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	RB	Auburn
6	Alex	Barron	Tennessee Titans	OT	Florida State
7	Ronnie	Brown	Oakland Raiders	RB	Auburn
8	Derrick	Johnson	Arizona Cardinals	OLB	Texas
9	Mike	Williams	Washington Redskins	WR	USC
10	Heath	Miller	Detroit Lions	TE	Virginia
11	Antrel	Rolle	Dallas Cowboys	CB	Miami (FL)
12	Troy	Williamson	San Diego Chargers	WR	South Carolina
13	Dan	Cody	Houston Texans	DE	Oklahoma
14	Jammal	Brown	Carolina Panthers	OT	Oklahoma
15	Adam	Jones	Kansas City Chiefs	CB	West Virginia
16	Thomas	Davis	New Orleans Saints	S/LB	Georgia
17	Shaun	Cody	Cincinnati Bengals	DL	USC
18	Carlos	Rogers	Minnesota Vikings	CB	Auburn
19	Erasmus	James	St. Louis Rams	DE	Wisconsin
20	Shawne	Merriman	Dallas Cowboys	DE/OLB	Maryland
21	David	Pollack	Jacksonville Jaguars	DE	Georgia
22	Mark	Clayton	Baltimore Ravens	WR	Oklahoma
23	Travis	Johnson	Seattle Seahawks	DT	Florida State
24	Matt	Roth	Green Bay Packers	DE	Iowa
25	Justin	Tuck	Denver Broncos	DE	Notre Dame
26	Brandon	Browner	New York Jets	CB	Oregon State
27	Elton	Brown	Atlanta Falcons	OG	Virginia
28	Justin	Miller	San Diego Chargers	CB	Clemson
29	Bryant	McFadden	Indianapolis Colts	CB	Florida State
30	Marlin	Jackson	Pittsburgh Steelers	CB	Michigan
31	Marcus	Spears	Philadelphia Eagles	DE	LSU
32	Corey	Webster	New England Patriots	CB	LSU

MY RECORD AS OF 1/20/05 @ 5 AM ET
SU: 497-217 (70%) ATS: 371-320-15 (54%)

LOCKS: 163-113-6 (59%) Col. Bowls: 11-5
UPSET SPECIALS: 38-31 (55%)
Note: Record includes College & Pro Football

LOCKS & UPSETS: 201-144-6 (58.3%)
PICKS OF THE WEEK: 30-11 (73.2%)

High School Football: 155-44 (78%)
More HSF on More Football/Sports Page

OUR MOTTO:
WE TELL IT LIKE IT IS (even if we're wrong)!