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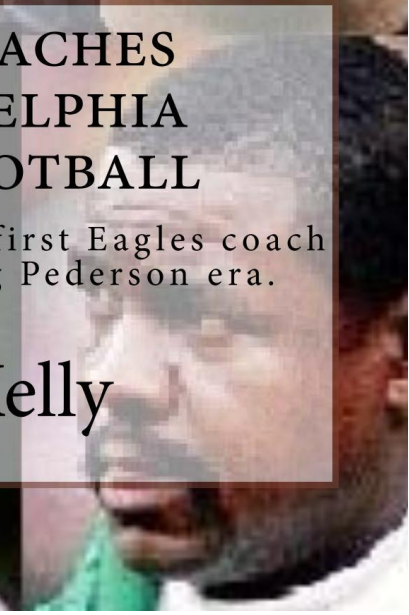
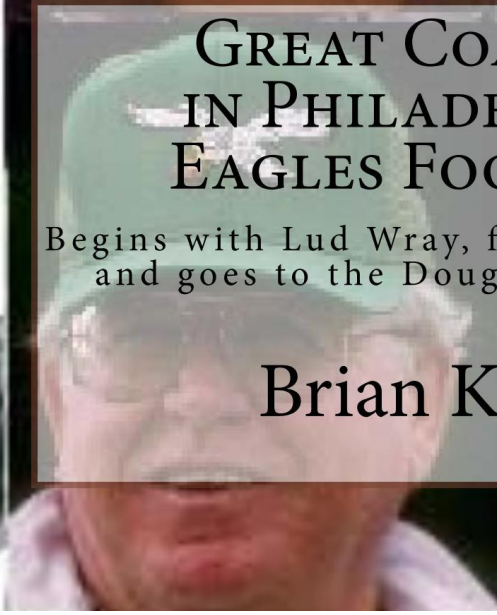
EAGLES



GREAT COACHES IN PHILADELPHIA EAGLES FOOTBALL

Begins with Lud Wray, first Eagles coach
and goes to the Doug Pederson era.

Brian Kelly





#1 Lud Wray



#2 Bert Bell



#3 Greasy Neale



#4 Bo McMillin



#5 Wayne Millner



#6 Jim Trimble



#7 Hugh Devore



#8 Buck Shaw



#9 Nick Skorich



#10 Joe Kuharich



#11 Jerry Williams



#12 Ed Khayat



#13 Mike McCormack



#14 Dick Vermeil



#15 Marion Campbell



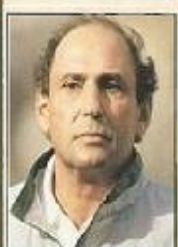
#16 Fred Bruney



#21 Chip Kelly



#17 Buddy Ryan



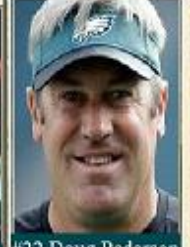
#18 Rick Kotite



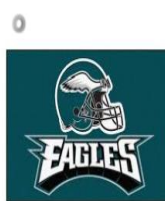
#19 Ray Rhodes



#20 Andy Reid



#22 Doug Pederson



Great Coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football

Begins with Lud Wray, first Eagles coach, and goes to the Doug Pederson era.

This book is written for those of us who love Philadelphia Eagles Football. Those who hate the Eagles will also want this book, so they can try to get a leg up on the facts about coaches missing from the bookshelves of those Eagles fans who do not have this book.

The book first tells the story about the Eagles as a new team in 1933, but there are a lot of other old-time stories told such as the time the Eagles and Pittsburgh swapped teams and when the Steagles, a combined team of Eagles and Steelers competed in the NFL as a single unit.

It seems like pro football has always been here but for those pros, players and coaches, trying to create a league out of nothing, there would have been nothing without their great work. And of course, this great book about the Eagles eventually gets a deep look at the great and soon-to-be-immortal-Eagles' coaches including #2, Dick Vermeil, #3 Andy Reid, #4 Buddy Ryan, #3 Greasy Neale, #6, Buck Shaw, and all the way to the current potential immortal with lots of years left, #1 Doug Pederson, who tops the list of many pundits in just his second year at the helm.

This book captures the great moments in Eagles Football even before the Eagles were the Eagles and when for one season during the war they were the Steagles. This Eagles-first book takes the reader through stories about the Eagles 22 coaches to great stories about the 85 seasons worth of great games (1231 games) with 590 great wins. When reviewing the record of particular coaches, the book often stops in time and talks about a particular great player such as Norm Van Brocklin, Tommy McDonald Wilbur Montgomery, Reggie White, Chuck Bednarik, Brian Dawkins, David Akers, and of course Carson Wentz, and Super Bowl MVP, Nick Foles. These stops will add substantially to your reading enjoyment.

I dare you to pick up this book for, if you are an Eagles fan, you will never put it down again. You cannot ever get enough of Eagles' greatness, but we do provide as many stories together in one spot as we can in this can't miss book.

Brian Kelly



Great Coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football

Author:
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Publisher/ Editor,

Brian W. Kelly
Brian W. Kelly
Brian P. Kelly

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**LETS
GO**

PUBLISH



Philadelphia Eagles Coaches' Records from 1933 to 2018

Total Games 1231

Total Wins 590

Total Losses 615

Total Ties 26 * Prior to Overtime Rules

Stats from 1933 * Through Feb 2018

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Pl</u>	<u>W-L-T</u>
1933	Lud Wray	x	East	4 th	3-5-1
1934	Lud Wray,	x	East	T3 rd	4-7-0
1935	Lud Wray,	x	East	5 th	2-9-0
<u>1933-1935 Lud Wray final record (9-21-1)</u>					
1936	Bert Bell,	x	East	5 th	1-11-0
1937	Bert Bell,	x	East	5 th	2-8-1
1938	Bert Bell,	x	East	4 th	5-6-0
1939	Bert Bell,	x	East	T4 th	1-9-1
1940	Bert Bell,	x	East	5 th	1-10-0
<u>1936-1940 Bert Bell final record (10-44-2)</u>					
1941	Greasy Neale	x	East	4 th	2-8-1
1942	Greasy Neale	x	East	5 th	2-9-0
<i>1943 The Eagles & the Steelers aka The Steagles</i>					
1943	Greasy Neale	x	East	3 rd	5- 4- 1, —
1944	Greasy Neale	x	East	2 nd ,	7-1-2
1945	Greasy Neale	x	East	2 nd	7-3-0
1946	Greasy Neale	x	East	2 nd	6-5-0
1947	Greasy Neale	x	East	1 st	8-4-0
1948	Greasy Neale	x	East	1 st	9-2-1
1949	Greasy Neale	x	East	1 st	11-1-0
1950	Greasy Neale	American	x	T3 rd	6-6-0
<u>1941-1950 Greasy Neale final record (66-44-5)</u>					
1951	Bo McMillin	American	x	5 th	2-0-0
1951	Wayne Millner	American	x	5 th	2-8-0
<u>1951-1951 McMillin / Millner final record (4-8-0)</u>					
1952	Jim Trimble	American	x	T2 nd	7-5-0
1953	Jim Trimble	Eastern	x	2 nd	7-4-1
1954	Jim Trimble	Eastern	x	2 nd	7-4-1
1955	Jim Trimble	Eastern	x	T4 th	4-7-1
<u>1952-1955 Jim Trimble final record (25-20-3)</u>					
1956	Hugh Devore	Eastern,	x	6 th	3-8-1
1957	Hugh Devore	Eastern,	x	5 th	4-8-0
<u>1956-1957 High Devore final record (7-16-1)</u>					
1958	Buck Shaw	Eastern	x	T5 th	2-9-1
1959	Buck Shaw	Eastern	x	T2 nd	7-5-0
1960	Buck Shaw	Eastern	x	1 st	10-2-0
<u>1958-1960 Buck Shaw final record (20-16-1)</u>					
1961	Nick Skorich	Eastern	x	2 nd	10-4-0
1962	Nick Skorich	Eastern	x	7 th	3-10-1
1963	Nick Skorich	Eastern	x	7 th	2-10-2
<u>1961-1963 Nick Skorich final record (15-24-3)</u>					
1964	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	x	T3 rd	6-8-0
1965	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	x	T5 th	5-9-0
1966	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	x	T2 nd	9-5-0
1967	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	Capitl	2 nd	6-7-1
1968	Joe Kuharich,	Eastern	Capitl	4 th	2-12-0

1964-1968 Joe Kuharich final record (28-41-1)

1969	Jerry Willms.	Eastern	Capitol	4th	4-9-1
1970	Jerry Willms	NFC	East	5th	3-10-1
1971	Jerry Willms	NFC	East	3rd	0-3-0

1969- 1971 Jerry Williams final record (7-22-2)

1971	Ed Khayat	NFC	East	3rd	6-4-1
1972	Ed Khayat	NFC	East	5th	2-11-1

1971-1972 Ed Khayat final record (8-15-2)

1973	M. McCormack	NFC	East	3rd	5-8-1
1974	M. McCormack	NFC	East	4th	7-7-0
1975	M. McCormack	NFC	East	5th	4-10-0, —

1973-1975 Mike McCormack final record (16-25-1)

1976	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	4th	4-10-0
1977	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	4th	5-9-0
1978	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	2nd	9-7-0
1979	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0
1980	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	1st	12-4-0
1981	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	2nd	10-6-0
1982	Dick Vermeil,	NFC	East	13th	3-6-0

1976-1982 Dick Vermeil final record (57-51-0)

1983	Marion Campbell	NFC	East	4th	5-10-0
1984	Marion Campbell	NFC	East	5th	6-9-1
1985	Marion Campbell	NFC	East	4th	7-9-0
1985	Fred Bruney	NFC	East	4th	1-0-0 (wk16)

1983-1985 Marion Campbell final record (17-29-1)**1985-1985 Fred Bruney final record (1-0-0)**

1986	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	4th	5-10-0 —
1987	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	4th	7-8-0, —
1988	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	1st	10-6-0
1989	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0,
1990	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	2nd	10-6-0

1986-1990 Buddy Ryan final record (43-38-1)

1991	Rich Kotite	NFC	East	3rd	10-6-0
1992	Rich Kotite	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0
1993	Rich Kotite	NFC	East	3rd	8-8-0
1994	Rich Kotite,	NFC,	East	4th	7-9-0

1991-1994 Rich Kotite final record (37-29-0)

1995	Ray Rhodes	NFC	East,	2nd	10-6-0
1996	Ray Rhodes	NFC	East,	2nd	10- 6- 0,
1997	Ray Rhodes	NFC	East	3rd	6-9-1
1998	Ray Rhodes,	NFC,	East	5th	3-13-0

1995-1998 Ray Rhodes final record (30-36-1)

1999	Andy Reid	NFC	East	5th	5-11-0
2000	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	11- 5- 0,
2001	Andy Reid	NFC	East,	1st	11-5-0
2002	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	12-4-0,
2003	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	12-4-0
2004	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	13-3-0
2005	Andy Reid	NFC	East	4th	6-10-0
2006	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	10-6-0
2007	Andy Reid	NFC	East	4th	8-8-0
2008	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	9-6-1
2009	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0
2010	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	10- 6-0
2011	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	8-8-0,
2012	Andy Reid	NFC	East	4th	4- 12-0

1999-2012 Andy Reid final record (140-102-1)

2013	Chip Kelly	NFC	East	1st	10-6-0
2014	Chip Kelly	NFC	East	2nd	10-6-0
2015	Chip Kelly	NFC	East	2nd	7-9-0

2014-2015 Chip Kelly final record (26-22-0)

2016	Doug Pederson	NFC	East	4th	7-9-0
2017	Doug Pederson	NFC,	East	1st	13-3-0

2016-2017 Doug Pederson interim record through 2017 season (20-12-0)

Eagles totals from 1933 to 2017

Total reg. season wins & losses thru Feb 4, 2018 **(568-594-26)**-

Total playoff wins & losses from 1933-2017 **(22-21)**

Total all games from 1933-2017 including playoffs **(590-615-26)**

Dedication

I dedicate this book

To my wonderful brothers and sisters:

Angel Edward J. Kelly, Jr.

Carol & Amelia Kelly

Nancy "Ann" Flannery & Angel Jim Flannery

Mary A. Daniels & Bill Daniels

Joseph A. Kelly & Diane Kelly

I surely am a lucky person to have

Such a great family

Edward J Kelly and Irene McKeown Kelly

Acknowledgments:

I appreciate all the help that I have received in putting this book together as well as all of the other 158 books from the past.

My acknowledgments were so large at one time that readers complained that they had to go through too many pages to get to page one.

And, so I put my acknowledgment list online, and it continues to grow. Believe it or not, it would cost about a dollar more to print my books with full acknowledgments.

Thank you and God bless you all for your help. Please check out www.letsGOPublish.com to read the latest version of my heartfelt acknowledgments updated for this book.

In this book, I received some extra special help from many fine American patriots including Dennis Grimes, Gerry Rodski, Wily Ky Eyely, Angel Irene McKeown Kelly, Angel Edward Joseph Kelly Sr., Angel Edward Joseph Kelly Jr., Ann Flannery, Angel James Flannery Sr., Mary Daniels, Bill Daniels, Angel Robert Gary Daniels, Angel Sarah Janice Daniels, Angel Punkie Daniels, Joe Kelly, Diane Kelly, Brian P. Kelly, Mike P. Kelly, Katie P. Kelly, Angel Ben Kelly, and Budmund (Buddy) Arthur Kelly.

Thank you all!

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References

I learned how to write creatively in Grade School at St. Boniface. I even enjoyed reading some of my own stuff.

At Meyers High School (HS Diploma) and King's College (BS Data Processing), and Wilkes-University, (MBA Accounting & Finance) I learned how to research, write bibliographies and footnote every non-original thought included in my writings. I learned to hate *ibid*, and *op. cit.*, and I hated assuring that I had all citations were written down in the proper sequence. Having to pay attention to details took my desire to write creatively and diminished it with busy work.

I know it is necessary for the world to stop plagiarism, so authors and publishers can get paid properly, but for an honest writer, it sure is annoying. I wrote many proposals while with IBM and whenever I needed to cite something, I cited it in place, because my readers, IT Managers, and company management, could care less about tracing the vagaries of citations. I always hated to use stilted footnotes, or produce a lengthy, perfectly formatted bibliography. I bet most bibliographies are flawed because even the experts on such drivel do not like the tedium.

I wrote 160 other books before this book and several hundred articles published by many magazines and newspapers and I only cite when an idea is not mine or when I am quoting, and again, I choose to cite in place, and the reader does not have to trace strange numbers through strange footnotes and back to bibliography elements that may not be readily accessible or available.

Yet, I would be kidding you, if in a book about the great coaches in Philadelphia Eagles' Football, I tried to bluff my way, so you would think that I knew everything before I began to research and write anything in this book. I spent as much time researching as writing. I might even call myself an expert of sorts now for all the facts that I have uncovered.

Without any pain on your part, you can read this book from cover to cover to enjoy the stories about the many great coaches in Philadelphia Football.

This book is not intended for historians per se, but it does teach a lot of history. It is for regular people of all levels of intelligence. It is for people that want to have a fun read, who like smiling when Eagles Football is the topic. It is fun reading about each of Philadelphia's 590 wins. This book is for people who love Philadelphia Eagles' Football and perhaps it is also for some Eagles detractors who want to have command of the facts before they defend a point of view.

There are lots and lots of facts in this book. This book is not for sticklers about the mundane aspects of writing that often cause creative writers to lay bricks or paint houses instead of writing. It is for everyday people, like you and I, who enjoy the Eagles because they are the Eagles and who enjoy football because it is football. It is that simple.

When the Eagles play a team and they win or lose, that is a historical fact, but to discover such facts, it does not require fundamental or basic research. The NFL itself as well as the Eagles, copyright their original material but not public facts. They copyright so they can say "no" if somebody else's creativity affects the league or the franchise negatively. Even the NFL does not own publicly well-known facts that are readily available about legacies such as Lud Wray or Bert Bell, Greasy Neale, or even Dick Vermeil, Doug Pederson and the championship seasons.

The championships and the coaches and the great players are well known and well defined, though some may think the facts belong to the NFL. Facts are facts, period. So, what? As the author of this book, I care but it is a sports book. I use a judicious approach to assure that I am not throwing the bull when I intend to be presenting the facts.

Nonetheless, this is not a book about heavy math algorithms, or potential advances to the internal combustion engine, or space travel, or the eight elements necessary to find a cure for cancer. So, I refuse to treat this book 100% seriously. If you find a fault, I will fix it. This is a book about sports and sports legends and stories about sporting events that have been recorded seven million times already someplace else. Though I tried for sure to get it all right and I used the work of others to assure so, I bet I made a mistake or two.

What is my remedy for the *harm*ed if I have made a mistake? I did not write this book to harm anybody. If I did not write this book, would the *harm*ed individuals from the book be unharmed. So, at the very least, I can *unpublish* those parts of the book. If any reader is harmed, let me know, and I will do whatever must be done for all to be OK.

Preface:

All coaches are known for some quote and some are more famous than others. "I'm here to save Jack (Pardee's) job, and I'm here to win the Super Bowl this year. If I do that, everybody wins. Jack stays and somebody wants to hire Buddy Ryan." Quote by Buddy Ryan, a great Philly coach

The late Buddy Ryan (RIP 2016) is one of the more quoted of the Eagle's past coaching masters. It is no wonder why. In his years at the Eagles and elsewhere, Ryan called it as he saw it, and was right most of the time. He was a great coach besides.

Everything that is—can be made better. When the 2017 season began, everybody thought the Eagles were going to do well but not win the Super Bowl. For some reason everybody seemed to believe that was for the New England Patriots. Carson Wentz, however, after just a few games changed a lot of minds. Nick Foles changed a lot of minds also. Once he caught on to all the nuances of the offense, he changed a lot of minds about what kind of a football player he had always been.

Looking back in history as we do in this book, we find a ton of great coaches out of the 22 on the list, yet the Eagles have had a losing record. Why? Well, in many ways, the excellent coaches had winning percentages that were very good but not every year, and the poor and so-so coaches dragged the record downward like a rock. Take a look at the coaches' season one-liner summaries at the beginning of the book and you will see what I mean.

The Eagles were so close to pay-dirt in the past, having had coaches get them into the playoffs—even before the Super Bowl era. They had achieved the ultimate success a few times with NFL championships in 1948, 1949 (Greasy Neale), and 1960 (Buck Shaw). However, once the Super Bowl was the target of the big dance, the Eagles were mostly MIA, though the Birds won their division numerous times. Over the years, the playoffs were not kind in bringing the Philadelphia Eagles to a Super Bowl encounter.

It all changed in the fall of 2017. Looking at this team and may I repeat the word, TEAM. There are some wild pundits who are still out there suggesting the Pederson Eagles could recover from whatever adversity was thrown at them. Throughout the season after there were so many injuries to so many great Eagles players on both sides of the ball—Darren Sproles, Jordan Hicks, Fletcher Cox, etc. and so many more that the theme of this book would have to change just to list them all.

The wild pundits, however were so pro-Eagle this year, I am convinced that after all the recovering the Eagles did to win, that if the whole team got sick for one game, and they put in fresh replacement players, they would believe that Pederson would squeeze a win out of them. That's a positive feeling for sure.

When it seemed everybody was hurt, Carson Wentz, the brightest light on the Eagles for most of this year, suffered a season-ending hit. Some think Wentz was so good for so long that if he were in the game, he could actually light up the entire Lincoln Financial Field with his raw talent in the event of a stadium-wide power outage. Now, that friends, is a bright light. I think you get what I mean. What a pleasure to have seen the Eagles this season after so many dry holes.

The Eagles were at their best. Thank you, Coach Doug Pederson, and a spirited group of great Birds.

After writing about Notre Dame, Penn State, Clemson, Alabama, Florida, Syracuse, and Army, Brian Kelly, your author was moved by the Eagles' great season to take a shot at writing a few books about his favorite pro-tram.

The first book by Brian Kelly, highlights the Great Moments in Philadelphia Eagles Football. It is one of the items that is expected to be available all 52 weeks and in fact all 365 days each year except in LEAP YEAR where the Eagles add an extra day for your book shopping pleasure. Amazon, Kindle, Barnes & Noble and other online sites in the US and overseas carry this book and it will add to your year-round football experience especially in the off-season. Once you get that book and this book and the players book, they are yours forever unless, of course unless you give it away to one of the many Eagles fans, who will be in awe of your new possession.

By the way, this book Great Coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football is the second in a three book series. The first has been out for several months and it is titled, Great Moments in Philadelphia Eagles Football, and the third and last of the series titled, Great Players in Philadelphia Eagles football will be available several weeks after this book is on the shelves of your favorite bookstores.

Reading this book about the great coaches, and in fact, all of the books in the series is like reliving the last game, the last football season, and / or all the seasons before last season without ever having to get on or off a plane. Seeing a game in Lincoln Financial Field is an exhilarating adventure. I know from experience. This book will help you relive the phenomenon over and over. Besides the great read, with this book in

your hand at your private venue, there is no limit on the hours for book-tailgating. Moreover, there is no charge, as long as you have stocked up before the read.

The book examines more than just great coaches. There are some coaches that are not so great in every team's football history and the Philadelphia Eagles offer no excuses for those times. Your author shows the bad with the good to get the proper perspective for those great coaches, and great moments.

Not all Philadelphia coaches for example, are named Ryan, Reid, Vermeil, Neale, Shaw, or Pederson, so not all games are in the W column. However, all teams from 1933 to the present, no matter who the coach is, were Eagles tough, nonetheless. That means they all fought hard for wins for the good of the team and the fans.

Opening with its first story about the Eagles first team with coach Lud Wray, this book goes all the way to Coach Doug Pederson in his second season, which by many standards was a miracle season. We are all looking forward to season #3.

This book is written for those of us who love Eagles football as played in many of the great venues over the years. After discussing the origins of football and then the origins of pro-football, the book first tells the story of the first Philadelphia Eagles Football Game in 1933. It then advances to the games, the victories and losses, and the onward to the great immortal Philadelphia coaches of historical fame—Bert Bell, Lud Wray, Greasy Neale, Buck Shaw, Dick Vermeil, Buddy Ryan and Andy Reid.

Predicting that another future immortal great is already in our midst, the book then takes us up to the last season with Coach Doug Pederson.

This book is all about the great coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football. It touches every aspect of the historical and mythical Eagles Football Teams. It tells exhilarating stories about the 22 coaches and its 85 seasons worth of great games. The book stops every now and then, and it takes the reader on a side excursion in time to learn about a particular event or a great player.

When we examine players, the list always begins with the immortal Dutchman, Norm Van Brocklin, and on and on with Tommy McDonald, Wilbur Montgomery, Reggie White, Chuck Bednarik, Brian Dawkins, David Akers, and of course Carson Wentz, highlighting the list along with Super bowl MVP, Nick Foles. These

stops will add substantially to your reading enjoyment. These Pro Bowlers have made Eagles Football a bright light experience for the program's many years and many fans.

In my role as Editor in Chief of Lets Go Publish! and a die-hard Eagles' fan, as I have been at a number of games with my dad, your author, I predict that you will not be able to put this book down

You are going to love this book because it is the perfect read for anybody who loves the Philadelphia Eagles and Eagles football, and who wants to know more about one of the most revered professional athletic teams in all of football.

Few sports books are a must-read but Brian Kelly's Great Coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football will quickly appear at the top of Americas most enjoyable must-read books about sports. Enjoy!

Who is Brian Kelly?

Brian Kelly aka Brian W. Kelly, is one of the leading authors in America with this, his 153rd published book. Brian continues as an outspoken and eloquent expert on a variety of topics. Moreover, Kelly also has written several hundred articles on other topics of interest to Americans.

Most of his early works involved high technology. Later, Brian wrote a number of patriotic books and most recently he has been writing human interest books such as The Wine Diet and Thank you, IBM. His books are always well received. If I could get the pen out of Dad's hand for just awhile, I might be able to write a few books of my own, but my editing chores at Lets Go Publish always come first.

Brian Kelly's books are highlighted at www.letsGOPublish.com. They are for sale at Amazon, Kindle, and Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com/author/brianwkelly, as well as and other fine booksellers.

The best!

Sincerely,
Brian Kelly, author and
Brian P. Kelly, Editor in Chief
I am Brian Kelly's eldest son

About the Author



Brian Kelly retired as an Assistant Professor in the Business Information Technology (BIT) Program at Marywood University, where he also served as the IBM i and Midrange Systems Technical Advisor to the IT Faculty. Kelly designed, developed, and taught many college and professional courses. He continues as a contributing technical editor to a number of technical industry magazines, including "The Four Hundred" and "Four Hundred Guru," published by IT Jungle.

Kelly is a former IBM Senior Systems Engineer. His specialty was problem solving for customers as well as implementing advanced operating systems and software on his client's machines. Brian is the author of 153 books, including 25 Sports Books, and hundreds of magazine articles. He has been a frequent speaker at technical conferences throughout the United States.

Brian was a candidate for the US Congress from Pennsylvania in 2010 and he ran for Mayor in his home town in 2015. Kelly loves the Eagles and he became a big fan in the 1950's and 1960's watching games with his dad on Sundays on the 21" Admiral B/W TV.

This is Brian's eleventh "Great Coaches" book and his third about a professional NFL team. Writing about the Philadelphia Eagles has been a special treat.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Eagles

The Eagles celebrate 85th year of football



Everybody loves the Eagles!

In 2017, Philadelphia celebrated its 85th year of Eagles' football.

This book about the Eagles' coaches celebrates Philadelphia Eagles Football; its founding; its struggles; its greatness; and football's long-lasting impact on American life. People like me, who love the team from way back when they were in their twentieth year, will love this book. Eagles haters will want their own copy of this book just for additional ammo. Yet, it won't help them! Hah!



In defining the format of the book, we chose to use a timetable that is based on a historical chronology. Within this framework, we outline each season and each coach in Philadelphia Eagles Football History, and there are many great coaches and great moments along the way. No book can claim to be able to capture them all, as it would be a never-ending story, but we sure try. The great coaches naturally include a lot of great people, that over time would make or break the Philadelphia Eagles. I am thankful to say that the Eagles are a real team and a team with a great past and a great future.

Even before we get into Eagles football, we briefly discuss the precursor team to the Eagles, namely, the Frankford Yellow Jackets.

Chuck Bednarik, Reggie White, Norm Van Brocklin, Tommy McDonald, Steve Van Buren, Seth Joyner, Brian Westbrook, and other Philadelphia greats from over the years, have great reverence for the team for which they played the game of football. That reverence is captured in these pages.

Looking at the quick snapshot of coaches and seasons at the beginning of the book, it is clear that Philadelphia has been able to survive a number of coaches who could not survive themselves,

while the Eagles football program has grown both in acceptance and popularity.

Look across the Internet with your web browser and you will be reminded that the Philadelphia Eagles are current world champions, having defeated the New England Patriots in February 2018 to win the coveted Super Bowl Trophy and those huge individual rings. After all those years, Philly got the prize.

I have done my best to portray an accurate depiction of Philadelphia Eagles Football History, displayed in a properly summarized format so that none of us are reading this book forever. There are 200+ pages in this book however, so there is more than enough to accompany you on those cold winter nights after the close of the football season.

There are a ton of great stories for sure. More importantly, none of us should need to search further than this book for the truth about many of the depictions laid out for your reading pleasure in this book. Let's talk about some Eagles football moments and coaches now, before we close out the first chapter of this book highlighting the Great Coaches in Philadelphia Eagles Football.

Brief Overview

Ya just gotta love Philadelphia as a sports city and the Philadelphia Eagles Professional Football Team. I know I do from way back. I have been to a number of the Philadelphia stadiums where the games are played. I have always been a Sunday football watcher, and a proud Philadelphia Eagles Football Fan, though until this year, I too have had my share of frustrations with my team coming so close but staying so far away from the big prize.

The Eagles have been around since their beginning in 1933. A syndicate that was led by the late Bert Bell and Lud Wray were responsible for getting the Eagles flying. They purchased the former Frankford Yellow Jackets franchise for \$2,500. In 1941, a one of a kind team swap took place between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh that

saw the clubs trade their home cities. Alexis Thompson became the new Eagles owner.



Pro football was not a sure thing in the early days. It could have been successful but there were no guarantees. Unlike college football, there were no rich alums who bankrolled the bad years. Teams either made money for the owners or the teams folded.

In the 1930's there were a lot of conflicts in Europe and eventually the US entered what became known as World War II in 1939.

As the US geared up for the possibility of war and especially after war was declared, both college and professional football had a tough time getting the players that were needed as the armed services were grabbing all able-bodied men and assuring their enlistment. On September 16, 1940, the United States instituted the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, which required all men between the ages of 21 and 45 to register for the draft. This was the first peacetime draft in United States' history.

In 1943, it was so difficult getting players for pro teams that the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh franchises combined for this one season. The manpower shortage created by World War II was having an impact as men were needed for the war, and for the major manufacturing that was set up in the US to build the armaments.

This combination team was called both Phil-Pitt and the Steagles. Greasy Neale, great coach of the Eagles and Walt Kiesling of the Steelers were co-coaches and this team. It finished at 5-4-1. In addition to the 1943 season, Walt Kiesling also coached a team

known as Card-Pit, a combo team from 1944 featuring a merged Steelers and Cardinals team.

Greasy Neale coached the Eagles for 10 seasons and he led the Eagles to their first significant successes in the NFL. After 1943, the War department informed the pro football leagues that their manpower needs were filled, and they would not be wholesale enlisting Americans for the war effort from that point on.

Paced by such future Pro Football Hall of Fame members as running back Steve Van Buren, center-linebacker Alex Wojciechowicz, end Pete Pihos, and beginning in 1949, center-linebacker Chuck Bednarik, the Eagles dominated the league with Greasy Neale as the coach for six seasons.

They finished second in the NFL Eastern division in 1944, 1945 and 1946, won the division title in 1947 and then scored successive shutout victories in the 1948 and 1949 championship games. To be sure we know what I am saying, before the Super Bowl and Super Bowl Champions, there were playoffs and there was an NFL Championship team.

The Eagles won their first championship in 1948 with Greasy Neale as coach and then Coach Neale brought them right back in 1949 with another shutout in the championship game to become World Champions of football in both 1948 and 1949. In 1960, with Coach Buck Shaw the Eagles were again world champions. They would have been Super Bowl Champions back then in the NFL, but the Super Bowl had yet to be invented.

As you can see, the Eagles were once the kings of football and after 2018, the Philadelphia Eagles reign again.

Football was always a tough game. The Eagles team began to get depleted because of injuries during the 1949 championship. A rash of injuries ended Philadelphia's era of domination and, by 1958, the Eagles had fallen to last place in their division. That year, however, the organization began a rebuilding program by hiring a fine new coach, Buck Shaw. They also added the Dutchman, Norm Van Brocklin to the squad.

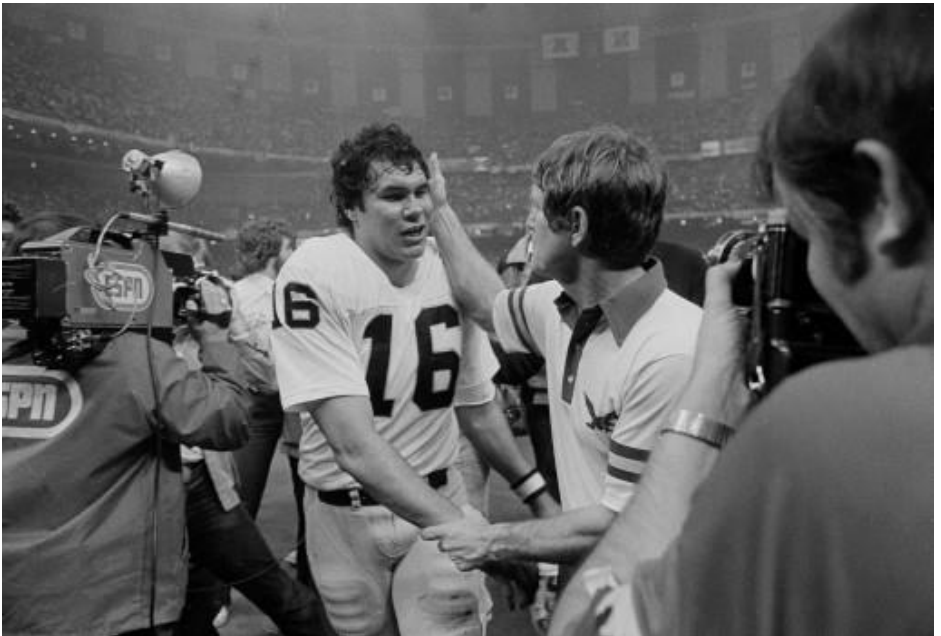
Quarterback Norm Van Brocklin, according to my father back when I began to watch football about 1958 after the family got our first Admiral Black/White TV, was the best quarterback alive. My dad pointed out that he had rivals such as Charley Conerly of the Giants and Johnny Unitas of the Colts but he was the best. The Eagles got the Dutchman from a trade with the Los Angeles Rams. In just three years, in 1960, as noted above, Buck Shaw gave Philadelphia another championship. True to his word, Buck Shaw retired from coaching the Eagles after his three years at the helm.

The great results during this time came from Van Brocklin's expert play and his on-the-field leadership. The Eagles won the Eastern division with a 10-2 record and then defeated the Green Bay Packers 17-13 for the NFL championship. In the game, Chuck Bednarik saved the day for the Eagles with an open field tackle of Green Bay's Jim Taylor on the game's final play.



Philadelphia's Chuck Bednarik, center, with Green Bay's Paul Hornung, left, and Jim Taylor after the Eagles' 17-13 victory over the Packers in the N.F.L. championship game on Dec. 26, 1960, at Franklin Field

The Eagles fell just a half-game short of another NFL Eastern conference championship in 1961 but didn't reach the playoffs again for 18 years until 1978, their third season under another great coach, Dick Vermeil. Vermeil's teams played in four straight post-season playoffs between 1978 and 1981. In 1980, Philadelphia won a then club-record 12 games, edging out Dallas for the Eastern division title. The Vermeil squad then defeated the Cowboys 20-7 for the NFC championship. However, the Eagles lost to the Oakland Raiders 27-10 in Super Bowl XV (fifteen).



Oakland Raiders quarterback Jim Plunkett, left, accepts congratulations from Philadelphia Eagles head coach Dick Vermeil

In 1988 the Eagles won the NFL Eastern division championship. Starting with that season, Philadelphia, which was particularly dominating on defense, won 10 or more games for five straight years up to 1993. In four of those years, the Eagles entered the playoffs as a wild-card team, a feat they repeated in 1995 with Coach Ray Rhodes.

In 1999 Andy Reid was named the team's head coach. He had been an assistant with Mike Holmgren's Green Bay Packers. He instantly transformed the Eagles into one of the dominant teams in the NFL.

Beginning in 2000, Philadelphia won their division six times, appeared in the postseason nine times, and they made a trip to Super Bowl XXXIX (39). Reid served as the team's head coach for 14 seasons, the longest tenure of any coach in franchise history. Close but no cigar. Reid had a tough time with so many chances to bring a Super Bowl to Philadelphia.

In 2013, University of Oregon head coach Chip Kelly took the Eagles head coaching job and it immediately looked like the Eagles were on the right track to the Super Bowl. After Andy Reid's worst year ever, Kelly brought the Eagles back and they won the NFC East Division title in his first season. The team lost in the playoffs.

Kelly did another commendable job in 2014 with another 10-6 record but this time, the Eagles came in second place. As the team was readying for the 2015 season, Kelly gained more control of the team and he got rid of some of the top Eagles talent and had issues with players. The fans began to get jittery about all of the talent Kelly was trading away. The 2015 Eagles dropped to 7-9 and had no shot at the playoffs.

The Eagles fired Chip Kelly and hired Doug Pederson, who was serving as offensive coordinator of the Kansas City Chiefs from 2013–2015. Pederson was well respected. He spent most of his playing career as a member of the Green Bay Packers, serving as a backup quarterback to Brett Favre and holder on placekicks. The Packers won Super Bowl XXXI over the New England Patriots.

Pederson was also a backup to Dan Marino as a member of the Miami Dolphins, and in 1999, he was the starting quarterback for the Eagles and then the Cleveland Browns.

In his first season as the Eagles' head coach, Pederson's team looked very good and then began to lose with rookie Carson Wentz at the QB slot. The 2016 team finished the season at 7-9.

In 2017, with Wentz again at QB the Eagles got off to a great start and finished 13-3. Wentz was injured at the end of the season and was replaced by Nick Foles. Wentz tore his ACL late in the third quarter in game fourteen v the Rams on a first-and-goal scramble. I can remember the looks on members of my family as we were

celebrating a Christmas Cookie Bake with the kids while the game was proceeding. You may recall that Wentz ran out of the pocket after realizing nobody was open on the play, and he sprinted to his right toward the end zone.

When Wentz got near the goal line, he was sandwiched between linebacker Mark Barron and defensive end Morgan Fox. He tore his left ACL on that play.

Although Wentz reached the end zone by all accounts, the Eagles did not get the TD. It was called back because of a holding penalty. Wentz told nobody about his pain and he did not complain. He remained in the game for the rest of the series, handing the ball off to running back Corey Clement twice, missing a pass to wide receiver Alshon Jeffery and then connecting with Jeffery for a touchdown on fourth down sewing up the victory. Wentz is one tough cookie and on this special cookie night. For the Kelly, Daniels, and Ginochetti families, the cookie dough was sweet for sure, with a proper amount of anise to help assure that close win.

Wentz was so good all year that when Foles stepped in, everyone automatically counted the Eagles out. I had seen him in action as an Eagle four years earlier so I knew he could play. Overall, the Eagles adjusted well, and Nick Foles was the perfect student and he mastered the Eagles game as well needed.

Nick Foles in his last stint with the Eagles was also an almost perfect master. The irony is that Foles was traded away by the Eagles just three years ago for his replacement. He was benched twice and then unwanted by the Rams. He was then a backup for a year with the Chiefs. In a twist of fate, Nick Foles returns to the Eagles team that he had taken to the playoffs four years prior and he becomes the Super Bowl MVP.

Foles has earned a lot of time for reflecting as he basks in what all objective pundits would call a masterful performance in Super Bowl LII. As he recalled his 2013 glory days from his last work with Philadelphia in the playoffs, he comes up with another great showing. On a particular Sunday four years prior, he threw four touchdown passes with no interceptions in an Eagles game that was

closer-than-it-should-have-been—the 34-29 win over the Giants at MetLife Stadium. This season, he got his first start in 14 months and his first in an Eagles jersey in more than three years, Foles made Carson Wentz's season-ending injury a little lot easier to take.

When interviewed about Nick Foles, Eagles quarterbacks coach John DE Filippo said: "...the backup quarterback in the NFL gets zero reps with the starters. Zero." This is how much experience Foles got with the Eagles starters before Carson Wentz's season-ending injury. He thus had very little time to prepare to take over the offense.

With how little football he'd played in the past two years, and how he'd completely fallen out of the NFL's collective consciousness until Wentz's injury, Foles's emergence in the playoffs as an efficient quarterback was a small, modern football miracle. It was a triumph of both coaching and playing.

Still Foles was not Wentz, but he got his act together quickly. In the NFC championship game against the Minnesota Vikings, Foles became the fourth quarterback this millennium to throw for 300 yards, three touchdowns, and no interceptions in a conference title game. He shares pretty good company now with Tom Brady, Peyton Manning, and Matt Ryan.

Against Minnesota, the league's best defense by yards per game, he completed a remarkable 78.8 percent of his throws, after completing 76.7 percent the week before against Atlanta. He was throwing shorter passes than Wentz, but he was an efficiency machine in the playoffs—thanks to a mixture of a great offensive game plan, gifted skill-position players, a sturdy offensive line, and Foles himself making the throws he was asked to make.

One of the brilliant, if obvious, maneuvers the coaching staff made once Wentz went down was to ask Foles to throw the ball quickly and not as far down the field. Foles averaged 2 fewer air yards per pass than Wentz—a huge disparity in the modern NFL—as 40 percent of Wentz's passes went beyond 10 yards, and only 25 percent of Foles's do. In these playoffs, Foles threw his average pass in 2.42 seconds—less time than any other player in the playoffs.

Foles led the Birds to a victory in Super Bowl LII (also against the Patriots). This marked the first Super Bowl title in Eagles franchise history. Pederson then became just the fourth person, after Mike Ditka, Tom Flores, and Tony Dungy to win a Super Bowl as both a player and head coach. What a great season! What a great team! The best Eagles Ever! Already many pundits have altered their best Eagles' coaches lists and have Pederson ranked #1 over Dick Vermeil. We'll see when 2018 rolls around. Do you remember this pass? Yes, that's Foles on the receiving end



It helps to know how Foles got the ball. The Eagles drew this play up in January and had not used it until the Super Bowl. The play had several parts: A shift to move Foles away from center Jason Kelce, a direct snap to running back Corey Clement, a handoff to tight end Trey Burton and subsequent pass back to the quarterback, who was running a route toward the back right corner of the end zone. You see the results above.

Chapter 2-A Eagles Launch First Football Team



Eagles Early Team

The Philadelphia Eagles launched their first football team in 1933. Most fans understand the Eagles most recent history which includes three shots at the big prize --- the Super Bowl. The Birds lost their first two tries and then in Super Bowl LII on February 4, 2018, the Eagles beat the NE Patriots in a great game 41-33 at U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis, MN.

Philadelphia's debut in the championship game came against the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl XV (15). The Eagles, led by quarterback Ron Jaworski and a defense that had allowed the fewest points (222) in the NFL, were defeated 27-10.

The Eagles returned to the Super Bowl with Andy Reid after 24 years to face off against the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXIX (34) in 2004. Prior to that appearance, Philadelphia had lost three consecutive NFC championship games—to the Rams, Buccaneers and Panthers. Finally, they broke out for their second appearance in franchise history.

Neither Andy Reid's misfortunes, nor their franchise misfortune changed, however, as they lost to the Patriots 24-21 to fall to an 0-2 record in Super Bowl outings. Finally, after a long wait and with their 22nd head coach Doug Pederson, a real Philadelphia Eagle, the Eagles found the third time to be the charm. They lost in their first two appearances, but they won big-time in 2018.

The beginning era of the Eagles history, 1933 to 1939, was most influenced by its owner, and then also coach, Bert Bell. After Bell had sold the team, to Alexis Thompson in 1940, the second era of the Eagles history was largely directed by their new coach and future Hall of Famer, Greasy Neale.

Let's get back to the beginning.

Before the Eagles were the name of the team, there was a team in Philadelphia. Bert Bell is responsible for making the Eagles into the Eagles. From 1930, until 1932, Bell was a backfield coach for the Temple Owls College Football Team. In 1932, George Preston Marshal tried to coax Bell into buying the rights to an NFL franchise, but Bell was not happy with the NFL and in fact, disparaged the league and he ridiculed the idea of becoming an owner. However, when Pop Warner took over as the head coach of Temple for the 1933 season, the famous coach chose to hire his own assistants and Bell was let go in the process. All of a sudden, the NFL did not look so bad.

It was in early 1933 that Bell's opinion on the NFL had changed, and he became very interested in becoming an owner of a team based in Philadelphia. Because NFL games were played on Sunday, before Bell anteed up the money for a PA team, he was advised by the NFL that Pennsylvania Blue Laws would have to be adjusted in order for PA to host an NFL franchise.

This should have been an easy task as the blue laws were already antiquated. The first of the blue laws in Pennsylvania, for example, was enacted in 1682, back when it was a colony of the British Empire. The general prohibition was against working or having fun on Sundays. The ban carried over when Pennsylvania became a

state in 1787. Sunday restrictions have tempered state activities for over 330 years. There are other blue laws for example:

Keeping restaurants with liquor licenses closed until 7 a.m. on Sundays, even when people are gathering to watch concrete stadiums blow up, is one of the strange laws on the books in Pennsylvania. Some call these laws ghosts of the past but they still haunt the PA criminal code. Fishing for example is legal on Sundays but hunting is not. Buying a new or used car from an auto dealer on Sundays is against the law. However, you can test drive or window shop at those weekend car expos, but you can't legally buy or even negotiate a purchase.

To be sure that he could operate the team, Bert Bell became what can be called a “force majeure” in lobbying to get the laws adjusted as required by the NFL. Bert Bell was not going to be denied. He borrowed money from Frances Upton, and he partnered with Lud Wray, and he eventually gained the rights to a franchise in Philadelphia, which he named the Philadelphia Eagles.

Before the Eagles, however, there were the Yellow Jackets. Though operating out of Philadelphia, they were not the Philadelphia Yellow jackets. They were the Frankford Yellow Jackets. Yes, they were a very early professional American football team, formed as part of the part of the National Football League. They existed from 1924 to 1931, though the team’s origin dates back to as early as 1899, when American football was a blend of rugby and soccer. They were associated with the Frankford Athletic Association.

The Yellow Jackets won the NFL championship in 1926. The team played its home games from 1923 on in the Frankford Stadium, which was also known as Yellow Jacket Field. It was located in Frankford, a section in the northeastern part of Philadelphia, that is noted for the subway-elevated transit line that ends there.

Let’s look at how the Yellow Jackets became or did not become the Philadelphia Eagles and then we can fight over the first “Eagles” game being in 1922 or in 1933.

Frankford Athletic Association

The Yellow Jackets thus were the predecessor team to the Philadelphia Eagles. They originally played under the auspices of The Frankford Athletic Association, which was organized in May 1899 in the parlor of the Suburban Club. A dollar was not a dollar back then but even with inflation, at \$10 a share, the cost of purchasing a share in the association was quite affordable. Additionally, there were contributing memberships, ranging from \$1 to \$2.50. These contributing memberships were made available to the general public.

The Association was thus a community-based non-profit organization of local residents and businesses. In keeping with its charter, which stated that "all profits shall be donated to charity", all of the team's excess income was donated to local charitable institutions. The beneficiaries of this generosity included Frankford Hospital, the Frankford Day Nursery, the local Boy Scouts, and the local American Legion Post 211. The officers of the Association never received a salary or compensation for their work on behalf of the team.

The association had a nice clubhouse that was originally located at the current site of Frankford High School. The field at this site, known as Wistar Field, became the first official sports home for the Yellow Jackets. Several years later, when the construction of the current high school was proposed, the team moved to Brown Field. With baseball at the time, being the national past-time, and football just coming into being, the Association initially organized a baseball team. They later formed soccer and American football clubs. The Association's football team played several games in 1899 and gained victories over the Pioneer Athletic Association, Jefferson Medical College, the Philadelphia Athletic Club, and a team from Atlantic City.

The impact of PA College Football

College football had begun in 1867 and it took some time for all the rules of the modern football game to evolve to where it is today.

Even today, the rules continue to change. One of the toughest teams back in the late 1800's was the Penn Quakers, so it is quite understandable that Philadelphia would have so many athletic associations and non-college groups that engaged in the sport of football. It was tough for college football programs to find teams to play and so they often played large high schools and/or nearby athletic clubs. Philadelphia and for the most part all of Pennsylvania adopted football early in its infancy.

Penn offered a model for excellence and had another great season in 1899 when the Frankford Athletic Association was created. Its record was 8-3-2 that year with George Washington Woodruff as the head coach in his eighth season. For an example of how dominant Penn was, consider that in 1899 they shut out Franklin and Marshall to open the season W (48-0) and they closed the season with a shutout of Penn State W (47-0). Over the years from the late 1880s to the 1920's, Penn claimed seven national championships, with championship selectors declaring them a champion for six of their seven titles. The Quakers claimed the 1907 season as a championship in their own view, although Yale was declared champion that year by most selectors.

The original Frankford Athletic Association apparently disbanded prior to the 1909 football season. Several of the original players from the 1899 football team kept the team together, and they became known as Loyola Athletic Club. In keeping with Yellow Jackets tradition, they carried the "Frankford" name again in 1912, to become again, the Frankford Athletic Association.

In the early 1920s, the Frankford Athletic Association's Yellow Jackets gained the reputation as being one of the best independent football teams in the nation. In 1922, Frankford absorbed the Philadelphia City Champion team known as the Union Quakers of Philadelphia. In that year Frankford captured the unofficial championship of Philadelphia. During the 1922 and 1923 seasons the Yellow Jackets compiled a 6-2-1 record against teams from the National Football League. This led to the Association being granted an NFL franchise in 1924.

Yellow Jackets 1924 season

Punk Berryman was the coach of the Yellow Jackets in their inaugural NFL season in 1924 as they began their preparations for the season to come. The team included Harry Dayhoff, Russ Stein, Joe Spagna, Whitey Thomas, Al Bedner, and Bob Jamison. The players were iron men as football teams often played 15 to 20 games a season. Often, they would schedule two games on the same weekend, typically one at home on Saturday and, because of Pennsylvania's blue laws, an away game on Sunday. In their very first game as a member of the NFL, the Yellow Jackets defeated the Rochester Jeffersons W (21–0). Frankford finished the season with an overall record of 17–3–1, with an 11–2–1 record in league play. They finished third in league standings only behind the Cleveland Bulldogs and Chicago Bears; under modern standings tabulation procedures, Frankford would have finished in first place.

Yellow Jackets 1925 season

In its second year running the Yellow Jackets, 1925, the Frankford Athletic Association gained the services of Guy Chamberlin, who served as a player-coach for NFL championship teams such as the 1922 and 1923 Canton Bulldogs and the 1924 Cleveland Bulldogs. After a 9–0–1 start, Frankford lost several key players, including Chamberlin, to injuries. Football was a tougher game back then and the protective equipment was very lacking. After a 49–0 defeat to the Pottsville Maroons, Frankford's captain Bull Behman was suspended indefinitely from the team for indifferent play. He was accused of not giving his best during the prior few weeks because of some dissension with other players. The suspension actually helped to improve the team, which posted a 13–7 record in league play.

1925 NFL Championship controversy

There was an NFL controversy in 1925. The Yellow Jackets were part of the Championship controversy. A dispute arose over a game that the nearby Pottsville Maroons had played against the Notre Dame All-Stars in Philadelphia; the Yellow Jackets claimed that

their nearby rivals had infringed on their territorial rights by playing the game against a non-league opponent in Philadelphia. The league agreed and suspended the Maroons, allowing the Chicago Cardinals to win the 1925 title. However, the NFL reinstated the Maroons the following year after fears that the team would join Red Grange's new American Football League, which posed a threat to the NFL.

1926 Championship season

The Yellow Jackets played a preseason game in 1926 against the Atlantic City Roses, which Frankford won big, 45–0. Their NFL fired up just six days later. The first game was a lackluster 6–6 tie at home against the Akron Pros. The first weekend in October saw the club rebound and post two solid victories over the Hartford Blues. Then, they played a two-game series against the Buffalo Rangers. During the Saturday game, the Yellow Jackets defeated the Rangers 30–0 in Frankford.

The Yellow Jackets then headed to Buffalo for the Sunday game; however, the Rangers canceled due to "wet grounds". The Yellow Jackets prepared for another two-game set, this time against the New York Giants, resulting in a pair of 6–0 Frankford victories. The Canton Bulldogs, a tough team in those days, were next on the schedule; Frankford won the first game 10–0, while the second game was canceled due to rain.

During the final weekend of October, the Yellow Jackets had a league-leading 6–0–1 record. However, they had an upcoming two-game set with their toughest opponent yet, the Providence Steam Roller. The Yellow Jackets managed to split the series.

The team's November schedule included only single-game weekends, and a Thanksgiving Day game. This turned out to be an advantage for the Yellow Jackets. The team garnered victories over the Chicago Cardinals, Duluth Eskimos, and the Dayton Triangles. This string of victories left Frankford in great shape in the standings as the team headed into its Thanksgiving Day game with the Green Bay Packers.

Two Jackets of Frankford's Stinging Backfield



MORAN (Hap)

HOUSTON STOCKTON
(Hust)
Ganzaga Univer. '22-'23-'24.
Sensation on the coast; Good
line plunger and one of the
greatest forward passers in
the country.
Yellow Jackets '25.
Weight, 190; Height, 5-11;
Age, 24.
Position—Back.

DAYLE MORAN (Hap)
Boone, Iowa, High School.
Played in backfield 3 years,
and 1 year, captain 2 years.
Was All-State halfback one
year. Beat one team 88-0
scoring 82 points.
'22 at Carnegie Tech, Half-
back.
'24 and '25 at Grinnell College
Halfback and Fullback.
'24 In game with Coe College
returned first kick 97 yds.
for only score of game.
'25 Playing against Minne-
sota returned initial kickoff
85 yds. for only score of his
team. All-State back.
While with Carnegie Tech
scored only touchdown
against Yale. Good kicker.
Weight, 190; Height, 6-1½.
Age, 25.
Position—Back.



HOUSTON STOCKTON

Stockton and Moran of the Yellow Jackets 1926

For the next five seasons the Frankford-Green Bay Thanksgiving Day game would become an annual tradition. Frankford went on to win the 1926 game 20-14, due mainly to a touchdown pass from Hust Stockton to "Two-Bits" Homan. The Yellow Jackets then posted a 7-6 victory over the Detroit Panthers two days later. After a win over the Chicago Bears, the Yellow Jackets played a second two-game series against the Providence Steamroller. Frankford won the first game 24-0, but the second was cancelled because of heavy snow. Frankford then had to play their final game of the season against the Pottsville Maroons, who were still upset after their NFL championship title had been stripped from them after complaints from Frankford.

The game resulted in a scoreless tie. However, a 14-1-2 final record left the Yellow Jackets alone on top of the NFL standings. Since a Championship Game would not exist in the NFL until 1933, the team with the best regular season record was named the NFL Champion. This gave the Yellow Jackets undisputed claim to the league crown.

The Yellow Jackets' 14 wins during the 1926 championship season set an NFL record for regular season victories that stood until 1984, when it was broken by the 15–1–0 San Francisco 49ers.

One day after capturing the title, however, Theodore "Thee" Holden and Guy Chamberlin stepped down as president and coach of the Frankford Athletic Association. It is amazingly similar to what happens today in pro sports with coaches and players here one day and gone the next.

Yellow Jackets 1927–1929 seasons

The Association named James Adams as president in 1927. He hired Charley Moran as the team's new coach. However, Moran's son Tom briefly served as the team's interim coach that year after Charley took a leave of absence to officiate in the 1927 World Series between the New York Yankees and the Pittsburgh Pirates. The Yellow Jackets continuity suffered as a result of these changes and their record was a poor 2–5–1 after eight league games.

Ed Weir took over as the new Yellow Jackets player-coach. Weir had fellow players Russ Daugherty, Charlie Rogers, and Swede Youngstrom serve as his assistant coaches. Under Weir's leadership the team finished with a 6–9–3 record in 1927. The following year, 1928 was a lot better with an 11–3–2 league record, behind only the Providence Steam Roller. In 1929, Bull Behman became coach of the Yellow Jackets. The team did well again with a 9–4–5 record and achieved third place in league standings.

Yellow Jackets 1930 Season

Teams with minimal finances suffered the most in 1930 due to the financial hardships brought on by the Great Depression in 1930. The Yellow Jackets suffered during this time and it would be their undoing. Shep Royle, president of the Franklin Athletic Association, arranged for coaches Bull Behman and Wally Diehl to attend a coaching clinic in Chicago run by Glenn "Pop" Warner and Dick

Hanley, in the hopes that it would improve their coaching techniques and develop a way to better utilize their players.

At the same time, however, the Association's management decided to retain only a few veteran players, replacing most of the squad with rookies direct from college. It was tough to afford the veterans, Unfortunately, college rookies were not as hardened as the veteran pros and the results showed it immediately. The lack of talent resulted in a string of ten consecutive losses, the worst losing streak in Yellow Jackets' history. To end the streak, Frankford found the money somehow and purchased eleven players from the Minneapolis Red Jackets, and George Gibson took over the team's coaching duties from Behman.

The Legion Post also tried to rally to the Yellow Jackets, pledging its support. However, the effects of the economic depression and poor performance on the field combined to reduce the team's fan base. The season finally ended with a 6–13–1 overall record and a 4–13–1 record in league play

Yellow Jackets 1931 final season

Before the beginning of the 1931 season, another hardship hit the team. A fire struck Frankford Stadium and severely damaged the yellow Jackets' home site. This forced the club to find a suitable location for its home games. However, most facilities suitable for professional football were already booked. The Yellow Jackets had to overcome this scheduling problem by playing at three different locations around the city of Philadelphia: Philadelphia Municipal Stadium, and the Baker Bowl. Philadelphia Municipal Stadium and Shibe Park were located outside of walking distance to the Frankford area. This made attendance very difficult for local fans. The team had hoped to draw broader support from Philadelphia at large. It wasn't to be.

Herb Joesting took over as head coach in 1931. However, the team was in terrible shape. Some members of the press began referring to the team as the Philadelphia Yellow Jackets, in an attempt to increase fan support, which failed to materialize. By October, NFL President Joe Carr, after witnessing the poor attendance at

Frankford's home loss to the Portsmouth Spartans, approved a plan for the Yellow Jackets to finish the season as a traveling team. Carr hoped that this move would allow the team to curb spending and rebound financially. It was tough going.

On October 26, 1931, the Yellow Jackets defeated the Chicago Bears, 13–12, at Wrigley Field. This game marked the last time a Philadelphia-based NFL team would win an away game over the Bears until October 17, 1999, when the Eagles defeated the Bears 20–16 at Soldier Field. The 1928 Yellow Jackets win over the Packers marked the last time in 51 years a Philadelphia NFL team won a road victory over the Packers; the Eagles' 1979 win at Green Bay finally ended that streak.

The Frankford Athletic Association was a great group, but the team needed more than their good will to survive. The Association not only fielded the Yellow Jackets football team, but also the Yellow Jackets' Band and the Frankford Legion Post 211 Drum & Bugle Corps. The Association also sponsored bus and train trips for fans to travel along to games in such places as Pottsville and New York City, where even the host teams' sportswriters took notice of their enthusiasm. The club occasionally sponsored half-time exhibitions by the Frankford Midgets, as well as a women's football team.

During their time in the NFL, Frankford's Ignacio Molinet became the league's first Latino player.

Today the Philadelphia Fire Department's Engine 14, stationed in Frankford, has adopted the Yellow Jackets moniker on its fire trucks. The Frankford Athletic Association was a great contributor to the success and the sustenance of football in Philadelphia. In 2018, the r legacy they left behind won the Super Bowl. What a tribute to the care and feeding of all those Yellow Jackets and all those Eagles for all those years

Philadelphia Eagles

The 1931 victory over the Bears would be the last game the Yellow Jackets would play. The Yellow Jackets suspended operations the

following day. Unable to find a buyer, the Frankford Athletic Association returned the franchise to the league.

The NFL spent over a year searching for a new team to operate in Philadelphia. On July 9, 1933, the NFL granted an expansion franchise to Bert Bell and Lud Wray and awarded them the assets of the failed Yellow Jackets organization. As noted, Bell and Wray named their team the Philadelphia Eagles, after the symbol of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. This has led to assumptions that the Yellow Jackets changed their name to the Eagles and returned to the league after sitting out the 1932 season. However, that is not the case.

Bell and Wray did not buy the Yellow Jackets team, but rather the NFL rights to the Philadelphia area that formerly had belonged to the Frankford Athletic Association. Due to the period of dormancy, the Eagles do not claim the Yellow Jackets' history as their own, and the NFL considers the Eagles a 1933 expansion team for record-keeping purposes. Additionally, Bell and Wray assembled an almost entirely new team; only one player from the 1931 Yellow Jackets ended up with the 1933 Eagles.

Those of us who do not tune into the nuances of the business of football, believe in the obvious. The Philadelphia Eagles are the reincarnation of the Frankford Yellow Jackets Without the Yellow Jackets great play for many years, marking time until the Eagles became the Eagles, who knows whether there would be an Eagles team or a Steagles team in 2018. Philadelphia ought to step in and make this right. The Yellow Jackets became the Eagles regardless of the business aspects of how that happened. Amen! Go Eagles

Despite claiming little residue of the old Yellow Jackets, for the first few years of the Eagles' existence, however, they did wear powder blue and yellow uniforms similar to those worn by the Yellow Jackets; these are also the colors of Philadelphia's flag. Additionally, under those uniforms was a lot of old Yellow Jacket gear. Replicas were even worn later as 1934 throwbacks in a game played against the Detroit Lions on September 23, 2007 as part of the team's 75th anniversary season. Go Eagles

as

Lud Wray was the coach of the Philadelphia Eagles in their first season in the NFL, 1936. Lud was a nickname as his full name was James R. Ludlow "Lud" Wray (February 7, 1894 – July 24, 1967). Wray did it all. He was a professional American football player, coach, and co-founder, with college teammate Bert Bell, of the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League. He was also the first coach of the Boston Braves (now Washington Redskins) and of the Eagles. He also served as head coach at his alma mater, the University of Pennsylvania, which as noted previously was the premiere Pennsylvania football team in the early days of football.

Soon the Eagles would play their first game

The 1933 Philadelphia Eagles season was the franchise's first season in the National Football League (NFL). The team record was 3–5–1. They failed to qualify for the playoffs under head coach Lud Wray.

Pennsylvania eased some of the Blue laws to allow Sunday sporting events. When this was done, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh became available for NFL franchises as they could play home games on Sundays. The Frankford Yellow Jackets had played their games on Saturday mostly when at home.

Before the 1933 season as we have discussed, Bert Bell and Lud Wray were granted an expansion franchise in the NFL for the rights to Philadelphia. The Yellow Jackets had been inactive for two years, so their rights were pulled by the NFL. The Eagles received their name from the Blue Eagle, which was used by American companies to symbolize their compliance with the National Industrial Recovery Act, a program within Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. The NFL Eagles' original colors were a light blue and yellow—like the Yellow Jackets.

Moving on towards the first game of the first season, the Eagles held their first training camp in Atlantic City, New Jersey. They scheduled their home games to be played at the Baker Bowl in Philadelphia, which was also the home of the Philadelphia Phillies of Major League Baseball. The Eagles played at the Baker Bowl for three seasons before moving to the newer Philadelphia Municipal Stadium in the south Philadelphia area.

It was not a happy day for the Eagles on October 15, 1933, when Lud Wray's squad finally got to play their first NFL game. The game was played at the Polo Grounds in New York City against the New York Giants. The Giants played like the Eagles defense was not on the field. Before 18,000 spectators, the Giants won by a blowout over the Eagles in the first of many games that would be contested between these two rivals.

It would be nice to have a better tale to tell about this first-ever meeting occurring on Oct. 15, 1933 but what is, is, and New York was in a winning way. It was just eight days after baseball's New York Giants, with Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth on duty, defeated the Washington Senators to win the World Series, at the Polo Grounds, and football's Giants kept the winning momentum going at the field of champions, by destroying the Eagles, 56-0, in Philadelphia's NFL debut game.

The Giants went 11-3 in 1933 but lost to the Chicago Bears in the NFL Championship Game, thwarting the chance for three New York champions, as the Rangers won the Stanley Cup in the spring of '33. The first time the Eagles beat the Giants came on Oct. 28, 1934, in their fourth try, defeating New York at the Polo Grounds, 17-0.

Chapter 2-B The Inaugural Season 1933

Coach #1 Lud Wray

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Record</u>	<u>Pl</u>	<u>Conf/Div</u>
1933	Lud Wray	3-5-1	4 th	East



1933 Philadelphia Eagles Team Picture

Intro to Eagles 1933 Football

After the two-year hiatus in which the Yellow Jackets gave up their franchise, and the players disbursed, Bert Bell and Lud Wray brought a professional Philadelphia Football team to life again. They were offered and accepted a new expansion franchise and so technically, they are not descendants of the Frankford Yellow Jackets

When the State of Pennsylvania eased some of its Blue laws, and began to permit Sunday Sporting Events, both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh joined the NFL as the Eagles and the Steelers respectively. Both played football at the pro level in 1933 as their inaugural NFL seasons. When they operated, The Frankford Yellow Jackets had played their home games on Saturday mostly when they were the home team. Sundays were verboten.

The 1933 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Lud Wray in his first season of three as head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles. This Eagles team finished with a losing season of 3-5-1. Coach Wray had the job of molding this team into being worthy of playing in the NFL. He put in three seasons and still this job was not complete. But, clearly it was just a matter of time as the Eagles over time became one of the best franchises in the NFL and today are Super Bowl Champions, making them the best in football.

The season began with a disappointing blowout at the hands of the New York Giants on October 15, 1933 in an away game at the Polo Grounds before 18,000. Because the Eagles were new, they were given a pass for the first four weeks of the season without it affecting their overall record. Thus, from September through October 8, the official record shows the Eagles with four byes during this period.

On October 18, 1933, in an unusual Wednesday game played at home before 1750 fans at the Baker Bowl, the Eagles bought back some of the scoring difference from the prior Sunday's game but lost nonetheless to the Portsmouth Spartans L (0-25). This brought the season record to 0-2-0. On Sunday, October 29, the Eagles traveled to Green Bay Wisconsin for a game played at City Stadium. The Eagles scored their first points as a team in this 9-35 loss to the Green Bay Packers before 3,007 fans. Their record was then 0-3-0.

On Nov 5, the Eagles grabbed their first win W (6-0) of the season in a game played at Redland Field in Cincinnati against Reds, bringing their season record to 1-3-0. On Nov 12, the Eagles tied the Chicago Bears at home at Baker Bowl T (3-3) before 17,850. With that crowd, the team made enough that day to be paid.

Pittsburgh had not changed its name yet and so on Nov 19 at home in the Baker Bowl, before 6,000 fans, Philadelphia defeated the brand-new Pittsburgh Pirates W (25-6) bringing their record to 2-3-1. Next up was Cincinnati at home before 10,000 fans. The Eagles won again against the Reds W (20-3). Their record was now 3-3-1. It looked like it might be a positive season, but the Eagles finished off with two losses.

The first was on Dec 3 against Green Bay at home L (0-10) before 9,500. The last game of the season, a loss, was at home against the NY Giants. The Eagles showed a vast improvement losing in this contest by just six points L (14-20) at home.

Chapter 3 Coaches Lud Wray & Bert Bell

Coach #1 Lud Wray
Coach #2 Bert Bell

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Pl</u>	<u>W-L-T</u>
1933	Lud Wray	x	East	4th	3-5-1
1934	Lud Wray,	x	East	T3 rd	4-7-0
1935	Lud Wray,	x	East	5th	2-9-0
1936	Bert Bell,	x	East	5th	1-11-0
1937	Bert Bell,	x	East	5th	2-8-1
1938	Bert Bell,	x	East	4th	5-6-0
1939	Bert Bell,	x	East	T4 th	1-9-1
1940	Bert Bell,	x	East	5th	1-10-0



James R. Ludlow "Lud" Wray 1st Eagles Coach

Coach Wray was a professional football player, coach, and co-founder, with college teammate Bert Bell, of the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League. He was also the first coach of the Boston Braves (now Washington Redskins). He also served as head coach at his alma mater, Penn



Lud Wray as a player

Prior to college, the coach attended Chestnut Hill Academy in Philadelphia, where he lettered in baseball and football. He played his college football at the University of Pennsylvania as the Quakers' center from 1914 to 1916. During World War I, Wray served in the United States Marine Corps. He returned for his senior season in 1919. In addition to football, Wray also played catcher on the Penn baseball team.

From 1923 to 1929, Wray served as an assistant football coach at Penn. In 1930 he succeeded Lou Young as head coach of the Quakers. There was some team friction after the first season and Wray was fired.

In 1932, Wray was named head coach of the Boston Braves, a National Football League expansion team. The Braves went 4–4–2

in their initial season. He left the team after one season to be the Eagle's coach and was replaced by Lone Star Dietz.

Lud Wray was good friends with former teammate and fellow assistant coach at Penn, Bert Bell, who later would be the Eagle's second coach. Bell convinced Wray to become coach of the expansion Philadelphia Eagles. He coached for three years at Philadelphia.

By third year, the franchise was suffering significant financial losses and was offered for sale at a public auction. Bell was the only bidder and became the team's sole owner. On April 28, Wray chose not to accept a 66% pay cut and left the team.

In 1938, Wray became an assistant coach at Manhattan College. He remained with the school until his resignation in November 1940.

In 1941, Wray served as an assistant to Anthony H. Scanlan at Saint Joseph's University. When Scanlan became head coach at Holy Cross, Wray went with him. In 1943, Scanlan was involved in WWII which limited him to only being able to coach on game day. Wray led the team the rest of the week. Wray and Scanlan eventually had a falling out and Wray was replaced by Ox DaGrosa for 1944.

Wray married Juanita Sauveur in December 26, 1933. He died on July 25, 1967 in Philadelphia. At the time of his death, Wray resided in Oreland, Pennsylvania. He was survived by his wife.

1934 Lud Wray, Coach #1

The 1934 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Lud Wray in his second season of three as head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles. This Eagles team finished with a losing season of 4-7-1. Though there was a slight improvement in the record, the 1934 team failed to improve on their previous record of 3-5-1, losing seven games. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the second consecutive season.

On Sept 16 at Green Bay, the Eagles were beaten by the Packers-L (6-18) before 5,000. Then, on Sept 26, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles picked up their first win W (17-0). On Oct 7 at home, Pittsburgh squeaked out a victory over the Eagles L (7-9). This was followed on Oct 14 with a shutout loss at home to the Detroit Lions L 0-10) before 9860 fans.

On Oct 21 at Boston, the Eagles lost another game by one TD L (0-6) against the Redskins-before 10,344. On Oct 28, at New York, the Giants-beat the Eagles in a shutout L (0-17). In another home game on Nov 6, the Eagles blew-out the Cincinnati Reds at home, W (64-0). Then, on Veterans day, Nov 11, at home the Eagles were barely beaten by the Brooklyn Dodgers L (7-10).

The following Sunday on Nov 18, in another home game, the Eagles lost to the Boston Redskins-L (7-14) before 8,500. On Nov 25, at Brooklyn, the Eagles shut-out the Dodgers W (13-0). Then, in the season finale, on Dec 2, at home, the Eagles beat the New York Giants for the first time ever in a close shutout, W 6-0 before 12,471 fans.

1935 Lud Wray, Coach #1

The 1935 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Lud Wray in his third season of three as head coach. Like the prior year, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 2-7-1, Winning only two games. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the third second consecutive season. A home game against the Boston Redskins scheduled for November 17 was canceled due to snow and rain.

On Sept 13 at home, the Eagles were beaten by the Pittsburgh Pirates L (7-17). Then, on Sept 13, at Detroit the Eagles were shut out L (0-35) before 12,000. On Oct 9 at Pittsburgh, the Birds pulled off a victory over the Pirates before 6,271 W (17-6). This was followed on Oct 13 with a shutout loss at Chicago to the Bears L 0-39 before 9860 fans.

n Oct 21 1 at Boston, the Eagles lost another game by one TD L (0-6) against the Redskins-before 10,344. On Oct 28, at New York, the Giants-beat the Eagles in a shutout L (0-17). In another home game on Nov 6, the Eagles blew-out the Cincinnati Reds at home, W (64-0). Then, on Veterans day, Nov 11, at home the Eagles were barely beaten by the Brooklyn Dodgers L (7-10).

On October 27, at, Brooklyn, the Eagles fell to the Dodgers-L (6-17). On Nov 3, at Boston, the Eagles defeated the Redskins-W 7-6-before 10,000. At home on Nov 5, the Dodgers beat the Phillies at Brooklyn L (0-3) Then, on Nov 10, at Chicago. The Eagles lost to the Cardinals L 3-12) before 6,000.

On Nov 17, the game scheduled with the Boston Redskins at home - was cancelled due to snow and rain. On Nov 24. At New York, the Giants shut out the Eagles in a tight game L (0-10). At home against the Giants the following week at home, the Giants picked up another victory against Philadelphia, L (14-21). Wrapping up the 1935 season, the Eagles lost at home to the Green Bay Packers L (6-13) before 4,000 fans. The crowds continued to be sparse.

1936 Bert Bell, Coach #2

The 1936 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Bert Bell in his first season of five as head coach. Like the prior year, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 1-11, winning just one game and being shut-out in six of their twelve games. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the fourth consecutive season.

The Eagles moved their training camp, after the first 2 years in Atlantic City, New Jersey and 1935 in Philadelphia at the Chestnut Hill Academy, to Temple University in Philadelphia. The Eagles would bring 7 former Temple Owls football players on the team. Additionally, the club would move all home games to the larger Philadelphia Municipal Stadium from the Baker Bowl. Hoping to rescue all pro teams from lack of players and talent, Bert Bell

convinced the NFL to hold a college players' draft to stock league with talent.



Bert Bell 2nd Eagles Coach

The first NFL Draft was held in 1936 in Philadelphia and The Eagles had the first pick. The Eagles picked nine players from six different schools. Jay Berwanger a Halfback from the University of Chicago was selected #1. He had won the Downtown Athletic Award in 1935. This was a big deal, which was later renamed the Heisman Trophy.

Berwanger decided at first not to play in the NFL. Later in the year, the Eagles traded him to the Chicago Bears and he still refused to play NFL football. George Halas offered him \$13,500 but he held out for \$15,000 and never played professional football. He could have used a good agent. Know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em.

For the 1936 season, the Eagles had 12 rookies and 8 players with 2 years' experience, or less on their roster. Eleven of the 26 members on the team went to college within 15 miles of Philadelphia.

On Sept 13 at home in the season opener at Municipal Stadium, the Eagles defeated the New York Giants W (10-7) before 20,000 fans. At its peak Municipal Stadium, AKA JFK Stadium could host up to

102,000 fans. The Eagles pulled out of this stadium for Shibe Park / Connie Mack Stadium in 1941.

On Sept 20, at home, the Eagles lost to the Boston Redskins L (3-26) before 20,000. Then, on Sept 27, they lost to the Chicago Bears at home in a shutout L (0-17 before 25,000. On Oct 4, at Brooklyn, the Eagles were shut out by the Dodgers L (0-18)

On Oct 11 at home, the Eagles were shut out by the Detroit Lions L (0-23) before 15,000. After traveling to Pittsburgh on Oct 14, the Eagles were shutout by the Pirates L (0-17) before 10,042. On Oct 18, at Boston, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (7-17) before 4,000 fans. . In another away game on Oct 25 at New York, the Eagles lost to the Giants L (17-21) before 15,000.

On Nov 5, at home, the Eagles were beaten by the Pittsburgh Pirates L (0-6). On Nov 8, at Chicago, the Eagles were shut out by the Cardinals L (0-13) before 1500. Then, on Nov 22, the Chicago Bears beat the Eagles L (7-28) At home on Nov 29, the Brooklyn Dodgers defeated the Eagles L (7-13)

1937 Bert Bell, Coach #2

The 1937 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Bert Bell in his second season of five as head coach. Like the prior year, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 2-8-1, winning just two games and tying one. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the fifth consecutive season.

The 1937 NFL Draft took place December 12, 1936. It would be for 10 rounds and the teams picked a total of 100 players.

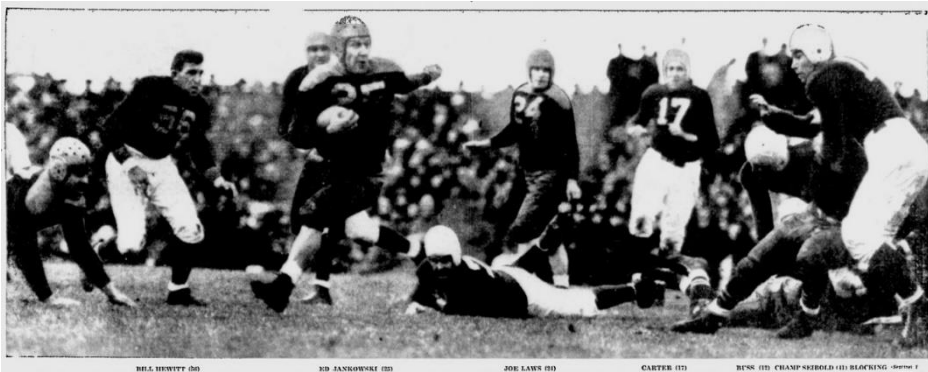
The Eagles would have the 1st pick in the draft. They used this pick to choose the runner-up for the Heisman Trophy, Sam Francis, a back out of Nebraska. He never played a game for the Eagles but he did play for the Chicago Bears

In the season opener on Sept 5, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles were defeated by the Pirates-L (14-27) before 8,588. After a short bus ride

to Brooklyn, the Dodgers defeated the Eagles L (7-13) before 5,221. At home on September 21, the Cleveland Rams got the best of the Eagles L 3-21) before 3,107. Then, on Sept 26, at home the Eagles and the Chicago Cardinals tied T (6-6) before 3,912

On Oct 3 at home, the New York Giants beat the Eagles L (7-16) before 4,878. The Eagles then traveled to Washington DC and beat the Redskins W 7-0) before 7,320. On Oct 17, at New York, the Giants shut out the Eagles -L (0-21) before 20,089. On Oct 24 at home, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (7-10) before 6,580.

9-October 31, 1937-at Pittsburgh, the Eagles were beaten by the Pirates-L (7-16) before 2,772. Then on Nov 7, at Brooklyn, the Eagles beat the Dodgers W (14-10) before 8,373. Closing out the season on Nov 14, at Green Bay, the Packers-beat the Eagles L (7-37) before 13,340 fans



Packers v Philadelphia

1938 Bert Bell, Coach #2

The 1938 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Bert Bell in his third season of five as head coach. Like the prior year, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 5-6-0, winning five games – three more than 1937. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the sixth consecutive season.

The 1938 NFL Draft was held on December 12, 1937. It consisted of 12 rounds. The Eagles got the second pick in each round, as the

expansion Cleveland Rams got the first pick. With their first pick they chose Corbett Davis, a back from Indiana University. Bert Bell's idea of a draft seemed to be working quite well and would eventually be one of the rationale's used in the future to make him the Commissioner of NFL Football.

The Eagles 5–6–0 record was not good enough to make it to the 1938 NFL Championship Game. The game was played on December 11, 1938, at the Polo Grounds in New York City. The game attendance was 48,120, a record crowd for a title game.

The game paired the champions of the Eastern Division, New York Giants (8–2–1) against the Western Division Champion Green Bay Packers (8–3–0). The Giants won the game, 23–17.

The Eagles had two pro-Bowl Selections in 1938—Joe Carter, a fifth-year player from Austin college and Bill Hewitt, a 6th year veteran from Michigan.

Games of 1938



<< Eagles v Giants at NY

On Sept 11 in the home and season opener, the Eagles were beaten by the Washington Redskins-L (23-26) before 20,000. On Sept 16, after traveling to Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the Pirates W 27–7 before . At home on Sept 25, the Eagles defeated the New York Giants-W 14–10-before 20,000. Then, on Oct 2 at home, the Chicago Bears beat the Eagles L (6-28).

On Oct 16 at New York, the Eagles were defeated by the Giants-L (7-17) before 33,187. On Oct 23, at Washington, the Redskins-beat

the Eagles L (14-20) before 3,000. Then at home against the Chicago Cardinals, the Eagles got the win W 0-7) before 15,000. On Nov 6 at home, the Brooklyn Dodgers beat the Eagles L (7-10) before 12,000. This time on Nov 13, the game was at Brooklyn and the Eagles lost again L (14-32) before 13,052

On Nov 20, at home on Nov 20, the Eagles beat the Pittsburgh Pirates-W (14-7) before 6,500. The following week on Dec 4, the Eagles traveled to Detroit and beat the Lions W (21-7) before 19,000

1939 Bert Bell, Coach #2

The 1939 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Bert Bell in his fourth season of five as head coach. Like the prior year, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 1-9-1, winning just one game—four less than 1938. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the seventh consecutive season. This season would be the last for the Eagles using Municipal Stadium (to be JFK). In the next several years, games would be played in Shibe Park.

The 1939 NFL Draft had 22 rounds and was held on December 9, 1938. The Eagles drafted in the 4th spot in the 20 rounds they had picks. They chose a total 20 players, of which 9 made the team for the 1939 season.

In the season and home opener at Shibe Park, on Sept 17, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (0-7) before 33,258. At home again on Sept 24, the Eagles were beaten by the New York Giants L (3-13) before 30,600 In the third home game in a row, the Eagles and the Brooklyn Dodgers tied T (0-0) on Oct 1, before 1,880. After traveling to New York, the Eagles were beaten by the Giants, L (10-27) before 34,471. At Brooklyn, the Eagles suffered their fourth non-win against the Dodgers on Oct 22, L (14-23) before 13,057

On Nov 5, at Washington, the Eagles lost in a nail-biter to the Redskins-L (6-7) before 20,444. Then, on -Nov 12, at home the Eagles were beaten by the Green Bay Packers-L (16-23) before

23,000. On Nov 19, at Chicago, the Eagles lost to the Bears L (14-27) before 21,398. Then, on Nov 23, 1939, the Eagles got their first win of the season at home against the Pittsburgh Pirates-W (17-14)-20,000

On Nov 26, at Pittsburgh, the Pirates beat the Eagles L (12-24) before 8,788. In the final regular game of the 1939 season, in a game played on Dec 3, at Cleveland, the Rams defeated the Eagles L 13-35) before 9,189

1940 Bert Bell, Coach #2

The 1940 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Bert Bell in his fifth season of five as head coach. Like the prior year, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 1-10-0, winning just one game. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the eighth consecutive season. This would be the Eagles first season at Shibe Park.

After 4 years playing at the larger Philadelphia Municipal Stadium, the Eagles moved to Shibe Park for the 1940 season. Eagles training camp was held at West Chester State Teachers College, West Chester, Pennsylvania. West Chester has always been a great sports institution.

The 1940 NFL Draft was held on December 9, 1939. This year again it was to have 22 rounds, with each team getting 20 picks. The weaker teams only picked in the 2nd and 4th rounds and were passed over in rounds 21 and 22.

The Eagles and Pittsburgh Pirates, before being called Steelers, both finished with 1-9-1, .100 records, but the 1939 Chicago Cardinals ended up at 1-10, .091 and thus, they got the first pick in the draft. The Eagles and Pirates would alternate picking 2nd or 3rd in each round.

Bert Bell was really struggling as a coach. As the owner, he sure saved a lot of money by not paying a coach, but after this season,

even he would rethink whether the savings were worth the poor record. The Eagles 298 rushing yards in 1940 were the fewest in the history of the NFL. The team gained only 0.94 yards per carry.

As we look at the extremely poor records in the first eight seasons, with several seasons of just one win, there were a preponderance of losses during this period. As Eagle Fans examine the overall record, it might provide some solace to know that to overcome the 19-65-3 record after Bert Bell would require an awful lot of excellent seasons.

The Eagles so far over 85 years, have had a ton of excellent seasons, mixed in with a few not so good and a few so-so, bringing the team record from 1933, including playoffs up to 2018 as (590-615-26). If the 19-65-3 cumulative record at the time in 1940 had just twenty-six more wins, then, by removing the 26 losses from that column would take today's record to (590-589-3), giving the Eagles a winning record through 2017 and entering 2018. Would that not be nice? 19-53-3 was not a good record, but the team was just forming.

So, if you think the many losses Lud Wray and Bert Bell collectively contributed to the Eagles record from 1933 through 1940, have nothing to do with today's record, think again. If we could wipe those seasons out by subtracting just 26 of those losses, the 2018 Eagles would be starting its fall 2018 season with an overall winning record instead of an overall losing record. So, as a fan first and a pundit second, I would vote for exchanging the Lud Wray and Bert Bell records for the Yellow Jackets record and give the Eagle's the glory as deserved. Just saying!

It is clear that from 1933 through 1940, the Eagles were happy to have a franchise, but they did not really know how to make it successful until 1941. We'll see soon

Games of 1940

In the season opener on Sept 15 at Green Bay, the Eagles did not get the job done and lost to the Packers L (20-27) before 11, 657. On Sept 22, at Cleveland, the Rams-beat the Eagles L (13-21) before 15,941. Then, on Sept 28, at home, the New York Giants-beat the Eagles by a score L (14-20) before 26,431. On Oct 4, my wedding

anniversary date, at Brooklyn, the Dodgers beat the Eagles L 17-30) before 24,008

On Oct 13, in a game played in New York, the Giants beat the Eagles L (7-17) before 30,317. On Oct 20, at home the Eagles bit the dust at the hand of the Washington Redskins-L (17-34) before 25,062. On Oct 26, at home, the Eagles were beaten by the Brooklyn Dodgers-L (7-21) before 6,500. Then, on Nov 10, 1940-at Pittsburgh, now with a name change to the Steelers, the Eagles lost to the newly christened Steelers in a very close match L (3-7) before 9,556.

On Nov 17, at home, the Detroit Lions-shut out the Eagles L (0-21) before 6,327. Then, on Nov 28, at home, in the season rematch against the Pittsburgh Steelers, the Eagles got it together and won the game W (7-0) before 4,200. All seasons, good and bad must come to an end. On Dec 1, the Eagle's pain ended but only after being defeated by the Redskins at Washington (6-13) before 25,838.

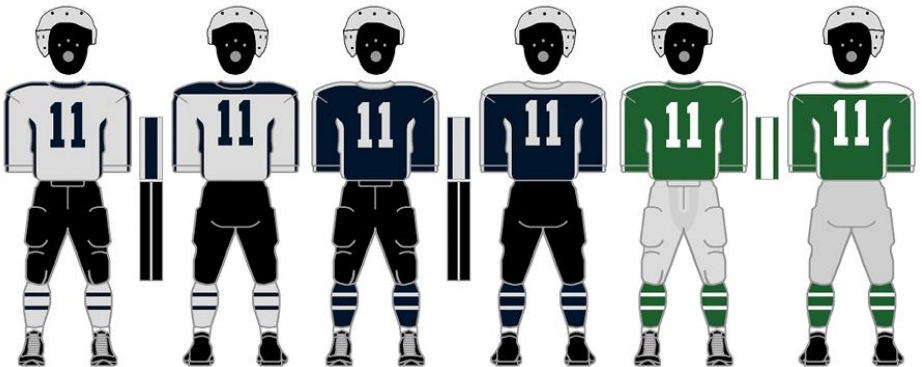
Bert Bell was very likeable but after such poor seasons, even his friends were hoping he would figure out how the Eagles could win a few games.

Chapter 4 Coach Greasy Neale 1941 to 1950

Coach # 3 Greasy Neale

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Pl</u>	<u>Record</u>
1941	Greasy Neale	x	East	4th	2-8-1
1942	Greasy Neale	x	East	5th	2-9-0
<i>1943 The Eagles & the Steelers aka The Steagles</i>					
1943	Greasy Neale	x	East	3rd,	5, 4, 1, —
1944	Greasy Neale	x	East	2nd,	7-1-2
1945	Greasy Neale	x	East	2nd	7-3-0
1946	Greasy Neale	x	East	2nd	6-5-0
1947	Greasy Neale	x	East	1 st	8-4-0
				• Won Eastern Divisional Playoff (at Steelers) 21-0	
				• Lost NFL Championship (at Cardinals) 21-28	
1948	Greasy Neale	x	East	1st	9-2-1
				• Won NFL Championship (1) (Cardinals) 7-0	
1949	Greasy Neale	x	East	1st	11-1-0
1950	Greasy Neale	American	x	T3rd	6-6-0
<u>1941-1950 Greasy Neale final record (66-44-5)</u>					

There was not one losing season from 1943 to 1950



Philadelphia Eagles

1941: 2-8-1

4th in Eastern Division

Great Eagles Coaches—Greasy Neale

How about that for a moniker. If you were looking for a replacement coach for any sport, to replace a coach with a very poor record, would you even stop to consider a coach named Greasy Neale. Well, look at some of the other nicknames in the early days of football and you might change your mind. Greasy Neale was one of the best. Without him, who knows if the Eagles would have survived as the Eagles.



Alfred Earle
"Greasy" Neale,
born November 5,
1891 and died
November 2, 1973,
was an American
athlete of the finest
caliber. He played
football American
style, and he played
baseball, and he was
an outstanding
coach.

He was born in
Parkersburg, West
Virginia. Although it
would make sense
that writers would
eventually assume
that Neale got his
nickname, "Greasy",
from being so
elusive on the
football field as a
player, he actually
got it as a kid when
he engaged in a
name-calling joust
with a friend. He

was also a great baseball player.

He played in the Major Leagues as an outfielder with the Cincinnati Reds between 1916 and 1924 and he put some time in with the Philadelphia Phillies for part of the 1921 season. Pro football had yet to be accepted 100% when Neale was looking to play professional sports. He was good in whatever sport he chose.

Greasy Neale was the starting right fielder for the 1919 Cincinnati Reds. He batted .357 in the 1919 World Series and he led the Reds with ten hits in their eight-game series win over what today are known as the “Scandalous White Sox.”

Because I think you will like this picture, here it is. Please remember, Neale was on the Reds.



The Chicago White Sox lost to the Cincinnati Reds during the 1919 World Series and eight players were later accused of fixing the series. The 1921 Black Sox trial acquitted the eight ball players, but they were banned for life from playing professional baseball. The eight acquitted players are White Sox pitcher Eddie Cicotte, first baseman Arnold 'Chick' Gandil, shortstop Charles 'Swede' Risberg, center fielder Oscar 'Happy' Felsch, pitcher Claude 'Lefty' Williams, star outfielder 'Shoeless' Joe Jackson, third baseman George 'Buck' Weaver and utility infielder Fred McMullin. Buck Weaver did not go in on the fix, but he knew of the plan and was therefore banned due to this knowledge.

Neale spent all but 22 games of his baseball career with the Cincinnati Reds. He had a career batting average of .259 and finished in the top ten in stolen bases in the National League four times. When football season came around, often he would leave baseball and fulfill his football duties (albeit playing about 90% of a

baseball season most years, with the exception of 1919 when he played the entire season, including the 1919 World Series).

Neale is one of the all-sports immortals of which there are few. He played professional football in the Ohio League (professional) with the Canton Bulldogs in 1917, the Dayton Triangles in 1918, and the Massillon Tigers in 1919. He starred as an end on Jim Thorpe's pre-World War I Bulldogs as well as the Dayton Triangles in 1918 and Massillon Tigers in 1919. He coached the Triangles in 1918. He could not get enough of sports. I bet he could play basketball as well as height did not matter as much as dexterity in the early days of the sport.

Neale began his coaching career while still a professional player. He served as the head football coach at Muskingum College (1915), West Virginia Wesleyan College (1916–1917), Marietta College (1919–1920), Washington & Jefferson College (1921–1922), the University of Virginia (1923–1928), and West Virginia University (1931–1933), compiling a career college football coaching record of 82–54–11. He coached basketball for two seasons at Marietta (1919–1921) as well, amassing a record of 26–11.

He also served as an assistant football coach for the Yale Bulldogs football program for seven seasons (1934–1940). At Washington & Jefferson, he led his 1921 squad to the Rose Bowl, where the Presidents played the California Golden Bears to a scoreless tie. At Virginia, Neale was also the head baseball coach from 1923 to 1929, tallying a mark of 80–73–2.

Neale later coached the independent professional Ironton Tanks with his legendary style, flair and winning ways. He and Tanks quarterback Glenn Presnell claimed victories against the NFL's second place New York Giants and third place Chicago Bears in 1930. The team folded in 1931.

Neale moved to the National Football League (NFL), serving as head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles from 1941 to 1950. Although it took Neale a while to pull together the needed talent to build a winning team, once he had the right ingredients, they stayed among the league's best for nearly a decade. From 1944 through 1949, Neale's Eagles finished second three times and in first place three

times. The Eagles won the NFL Championship in 1948 and again in 1949, and were the only team to win back-to-back titles by shutting out their opponents, beating the Chicago Cardinals 7–0 in the snow ridden 1948 NFL Championship Game and the Los Angeles Rams 14–0 in the 1949 NFL Championship Game in a driving rain storm. It was the last championship for the Eagles until 1960.

His offense was led by the passing of quarterback Tommy Thompson, the pass catching of future Hall of Fame end Pete Pihos, and the running of another Hall of Famer, Steve Van Buren. He tallied a mark of 66–44–5 including playoff games in his ten seasons with the Eagles. Neale was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1967 and the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1969. Both inductions recognized his coaching career.

Greasy Neale died in Florida at the age of 81 and is buried at Parkersburg Memorial Gardens in West Virginia. He is one of the best athletes ever.

1941 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1941 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their ninth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football.



The Eagles were led by Greasy Neale in his first season of ten as head coach. Like Bert Bell's last year, though his team won just one game, this Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 2-8-1, winning just two games. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the ninth consecutive season. This would be the Eagles second season at Shibe Park.

A once of a kind happening occurred in late 1940. The Pittsburgh Steelers owner Art Rooney bought half

interest in the Eagles and sold the Pirates to Alexis Thompson. Before the start of the 1941 season Rooney and Thompson swap city and NFL rights for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Pirates players from 1940 and before became members of the Philadelphia Eagles and the Philadelphia Eagles players became members of the renamed Pittsburgh Steelers.

Training camp this year was not in a schoolyard around the corner. Instead, Coach Greasy Neal moved the Eagles hold training camp to the High School Bowl, in Two Rivers, Wisconsin about. It was about 50 miles (80 km) southeast of Green Bay, Wisconsin and 90 miles north of Milwaukee on Lake Michigan.

The 1941 NFL Draft was held on December 10, 1940. Having such a poor record 1-10, the Eagles got the 1st pick in the 22 rounds of the draft. Because the players in the trade were drafted before the Eagles and Steelers franchise swap of cities, these players ended up playing for the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1941. The Pittsburgh draft picks would come to Philadelphia. The Chicago Bears wound up with the number one pick in the draft. They choose Tom Harmon, the 1940 Heisman Trophy winner, a halfback from the University of Michigan

On Sept 13 in the home and season opener in Shibe Park, the Eagles were shut out by the New York Giants, L (0-24) before 25,478. On Sept 21, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the former Eagles, now operating as the Pittsburgh Steelers W 10-7, before 12,893. Then, on Sept 27, at home, the Brooklyn Dodgers defeated the Eagles L (13-24) before 16,341. At New York on Oct 12, the Giants beat the Eagles L (0-16)

On October 19 at Washington, the Eagles lost to the Redskins L (17-21) before 19,071. On Oct 26 at home, the Eagles defeated the Chicago Cardinals W (21-14) before 12,683. On Nov 2 at Brooklyn, the Dodgers beat the Eagles L (6-15) before 15,899 fans. Then, on Nov 9, at home, the Eagles and the Steelers tied T (7-7) before 15,601.

On Nov 16, at Detroit, the Eagles lost to the Lions L (17-21) before 16,306. At home on Nov 30, the Chicago Bears whooped the Eagles

L 14-49) before 32,608. Then, in the final game of the season at Washington, the Eagles lost to the Redskins L (14-20) before i 27,102 to complete the 1941 season.

1942 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1942 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their tenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his second season of ten as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a losing season record of 2-9, winning just two games. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the tenth consecutive season.



Greasy Neale talks with three star-players, HB, Steve Van Buren, Tackle Al Wistert and quarterback Tommy Thompson

This book continues adding information of the Draft in the beginning information to the Eagles' seasons as having a great draft was key back then for the Eagles to get out of its funk with ten losing

seasons and no winning seasons. In later chapters, we will not discuss the draft in such detail

This year's draft (1942) was held on December 22, 1941. The draft was 22 rounds long and each team got 20 picks. A total of 200 players were selected. The Eagles got to select 3rd in each of the 1st 20 rounds. The top 5 teams record wise in 1941 did not get picks in rounds 2 and 4, as the lowest 5 teams did not pick in rounds 21 and 22.

With the first pick in the draft the Pittsburgh Steelers selected Bill Dudley, a Halfback from Virginia. He was the first Virginia player to earn All-America honors and was awarded the Maxwell Award for best college football player of the year for 1941. He was also named the best college player of the year by the Washington D.C. Touchdown Club. The Eagles first pick in the draft was the third player, Pete Kmetovic, a Halfback from Stanford University. He would not play Pro football until 1946 for the Eagles.

In the Season opener on Sept 13 at Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (24-14) before 13,349. On Sept 20, at Cleveland, the Eagles lost to the Rams L (14-24) before 6,434. On Sept 27, at home, the Brooklyn Dodgers beat the Eagles L (14-35) before 5,286. On Oct 4, at home, the Eagles lost to the Washington Redskins L (10-14) before 15,500.

On October 11, at New York, the Giants beat the Eagles L (17-35) before 28,264. Then, on October 18, the Eagles lost to Pittsburgh L (0-14) in a shutout before 12,500. At Chicago, on Oct 25, the Bears beat the Eagles L (14-45) before 15,372. On Nov 1 at Washington, the Eagles lost to the Redskins in a close match L (27-30) before 32,658

Then, on Nov 8 at home, the NY Giants shut out the Eagles L (0-14) before 13,600. On Nov 15, at home, the Eagles beat the Brooklyn Dodgers W (14-7) before 3,858. In the season finale at home, on Nov 29, Green Bay shut out the Eagles in a close match L (0-7) before 13,700.

1943 Greasy Neale, Coach Steagles

1943 Walt Kiesling, Coach Steagles

Because there were not enough players to field either Pittsburgh's or Philadelphia's NFL teams, due to the manpower needed for the war effort in 1943, for one-year only, the two teams combined so that they could have a season. Greasy Neale and Walt Kiesling shared the coaching duties for this makeshift team.

This team was referred to as the Steagles for Steelers-Eagles, and they finished 5-4-1. The combination team did not qualify for the playoffs. The league's official record book refers to the team as "Phil-Pitt Combine," but the unofficial "Steagles", despite never being registered by the NFL, has become the enduring moniker.



There were always those out there who dreamed about a unified Pittsburgh-Philadelphia team. The word on the street is that this idea was prevalent when teams were struggling, and the Eagles could not find a win anywhere. It therefore predated World War II by several years.

The Pennsylvania Keystoners were a team idea that was brought forth in 1939. It was put together as a team idea as well as a money-making scheme for the owners. The intention was for the owners of the "Pirates" and Eagles buying into one of the two teams, then spinning the other off to an ownership group in Boston, Massachusetts. League officials rejected the plan, though it resulted in a convoluted ownership "two-step" that eventually gave Eagles owner Bert Bell a share of the Steelers franchise.

We all know that America entered World War II on December 7, 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Most of the young men who were of pro-football age were the same aged young men being called on to fight for their country. There were 600 NFL players who joined the armed forces for the war effort.

Government officials understood that the country could not sit idle without entertainment while the young men were off to war. They felt that that a country at war still needed entertainment and sports were a much-needed diversion. Therefore, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an inspirational message focused on the importance of Major League Baseball to Americans' morale.

He made no mention of football, during that address, as baseball far surpassed football in popularity at that time. However, at its 1943 annual spring meeting, the NFL decided to follow baseball's lead and continue play. Other football leagues, such as the 1940–41 American Football League, Dixie League and the American Association, decided to suspend operations instead, leaving the NFL and its West Coast counterpart, the Pacific Coast Professional Football League, as the only leagues playing professional football at the time.

Without being labeled cowards and without a label of being unpatriotic, the young men who remained in the States to play football were deferred by the government from the draft. The Steagles players were either unfit for military service for physical reasons or age, or active servicemen who had obtained leave to play. Three types of deferments defined 1943 NFL players.

The first group called 3-As were those supporting a family. The draft board would not make these a priority. The government defined a 3-

A as a father whose child/children was born or conceived prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. The cutoff date for birth was September 15, 1942, precisely nine months and one week after Pearl Harbor.

The second group consisted of those men who worked in the war industry, producing and preparing ammunition, weapons and materials. The third group (4-F'S) were those deemed physically unfit due to ailments such as ulcers, flat feet and even partial blindness. Most NFL football players wanted to join the war. In the early 1940s it was considered a patriotic duty to serve and fight for the country. For the men who played professional football, being classified as a 4-F could be considered an embarrassment. There was a feeling that if a man could play football then he could fight in the war.



Bill Hewitt, Steagles, The Eagles' First Star Player

One Steagle and future Hall of Famer, Bill Hewitt, quit in the middle of the season. He could not take the ridicule and subsequent guilt feelings anymore. Hewitt was good enough to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1971. However, the players were not making the decisions on who could or could not fight. Men with flat feet (fallen arches) were not drafted. Despite flat feet, they could lead normal lives and even play football, but the Army deemed that flat feet was not conducive to marching long distances.

Similar reasons existed for other 4-F deferments. But numerous NFL players in 1943 had medical problems that kept them out of the military. Tony Bova, the Steagles' leading receiver with 17 receptions, was blind in one eye and partially blind in the other. Steagles guard Ed Michaels was nearly deaf and center Ray Graves was deaf in one ear. One starting defensive end was blind in one eye and nearly legally blind in the other. The Steagles tailback John Butler made his first start one day after being ruled 4-F by his draft board for poor eyesight and bad knees.



1943 Steagles starting line-up-- **Back row** (left to right): unknown, back (#11); Ben Kish, back (#44); Ernie Steele, halfback (#37) **Middle row**: Roy Zimmerman, quarterback (#7) **Front row** (left to right): Larry Cabrelli, end (#84); Bucko Kilroy, tackle (#76); Ed Michaels, guard (#60); Ray Graves, center (#52); Elbie Schultz, guard (#71); Vic Sears, tackle (#79); Bob Masters, end (#31)

At the 1943 NFL Spring Meeting, it was noted that even with the deferments, NFL rosters were tough to fill. There was some fallout. For example, The Cleveland Rams suspended operations in 1943 and the Pittsburgh Steelers had only six men left under contract while the Philadelphia Eagles had only sixteen. The 1943 NFL Draft did not help much. Most players drafted by the NFL went off to the war instead of joining NFL teams.

Making the problem even worse was the continued insistence of George Preston Marshall and other NFL owners on continuing the ten-year-old ban on black players. What should have been an opportunity for blacks to overcome such blatant racism and help the country instead disqualified potential replacement players such as Kenny Washington.

Things got so bad that the NFL nearly ceased its operations before the 1943 season, but it chose to continue. Special accommodations needed to be made. Steelers' owner Art Rooney believed that the league needed at least eight teams to survive. It was his idea for the merger of the Steelers with the Eagles. This idea came quickly to him since, as already noted, two years prior, he had thought about combining the two teams into the Pennsylvania Keystoners.

Eagles' owner Alexis Thompson, who was serving in the US Army as a corporal, was not as keen on the plan since he at least had 16 players under contract. However Thompson remembered how Rooney in 1941 swapped cities with him, allowing him to keep the Eagles in Philadelphia, close to his New York City home. This led to an agreement on combining the teams.

The league approved the merger by a vote of 5–4. However, several owners expressed fears that the merger would produce a team with an unfair advantage. The merger had a slight lean in favor of Philadelphia based on stipulations imposed by Thompson. The team would be known as the Philadelphia Eagles and be based in Philadelphia. Rooney had very little leverage, bringing only six players to the table. However, he was successful in landing two home games in Pittsburgh, while Philadelphia would host four.

The team was also to wear the Eagles' green and white colors instead of Pittsburgh's black and gold. It's funny how the trivial things in life can take on an air of importance. This event officially marked the only time in the Steelers history other than 1941, when green and white were used as well as black and gold, that the team colors were something other than black and gold. The league also stated that helmets were mandated for the first time and that the league would expand in 1944, with the Boston Yanks paying \$50,000 for entry into the league.

Games of the 1943 season

Pittsburgh-Philadelphia "Steagles" vs. New York Giants

The game was played at Shibe Park on October 9, 1943

Philadelphia's Greasy Neale and Pittsburgh's Walt Kiesling became co-head coaches y default because each coach refused to be



demoted. This led to several problems: the first being that the two men hated each other. Secondly even Kiesling's own players did not like him so asking the Eagles players to like him was too much to ask. However, Neale took advantage when Kiesling was delayed en-route to camp, which was held at St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia.

By the time Keisling arrived, Neale already had the offense learning the T-formation, which was the Eagle's style. The T was in vogue in those days because of its success in college football by Frank Leahy at Notre Dame and Red Blaik at Army. This conflict led to Neale serving as the team's offensive coordinator while Kiesling served as the defensive coordinator.

They would then split head coaching duties. According to defensive back Ernie Steele, the situation between the two coaches got so bad that Kiesling and Neale walked off the field after a heated argument in practice the Friday before a game. They returned for the game, but the players were taken back at the behavior. However, after the Steagles' in 1943 & Card-Pitt in 1944, Pittsburgh reverted to using the single-wing formation through 1952, becoming the last NFL team to ever use it as its primary offensive set.

Another difficult issue that at the time, was that the Steelers and Eagles were bitter interstate rivals, much like the NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins-Philadelphia Flyers rivalry of today, and usually ended up at near the bottom of standings each year. The Steagles were the only professional sports team where all the players held full-time war jobs, as it was a requirement of the team.

Playing football was seen as an extracurricular activity. All of the 25 players on the roster kept full-time jobs in defense plants. One of Pittsburgh's players, Ted Doyle, worked at Westinghouse Electric

and figured out later that his work assisted the Manhattan Project, which was America's effort to build the first atomic bomb, according to Matthew Algeo's book *Last Team Standing*.

As the season got underway, fans and newspapers began calling the team the Steagles, a combination of Steelers and Eagles. It had a nice ring to it and was fair to both cities. Steagles eventually became the common name used for the team throughout most of the country, except in Philadelphia, where the writers and even the team insisted on being called the Philadelphia Eagles. Chet Smith, the sports editor of the Pittsburgh Press, was initially the one who wrote in a column the moniker Steagles, for the merged team.

Through hard work, sacrifice, and by playing like a team, slowly, the Steagles began to come together. They even won some games. The Steagles jumped out to a 2–0 start after defeating the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants at Shibe Park. During the New York game the Steagles fumbled the ball a record 10 times; but managed to win 28–14. The Steagles record of 10 fumbles in a game by 1 team is still in existence today.

The squad was referred to at times as a bunch of outcasts and misfits, yet they banded together and managed to tie the defending champion Washington Redskins in their first meeting, and then they defeated Washington in their second meeting. The team stumbled on the road and after seven games had a 3–3–1 record. However, the team regrouped during two games at Pittsburgh's Forbes Field, which were wins over the Chicago Cardinals on Halloween Night and over the Detroit Lions on Nov. 21. The team's final game was played in front of 35,000 fans at Shibe Park against Don Hutson and the Green Bay Packers Green Bay would go on to win the game 38–28.

There were so many issues with the coaches not getting along in this strange merger arrangement of one-time rivals that the players had none of it. In fact, the offense enjoyed playing the T-formation employed by Neale. There was a special bond among the Steagles' 4-Fs—those who wanted to be in the military but were rejected. They took solace in some small way that they were contributing to the war

first winning season other than the Steagles, they failed to qualify for the playoffs for the twelfth consecutive season.

Life went back to normal for Philadelphia after the 1943 season and it got its share of the player from the Steagles temporary merger. However, the NFL was still not back to full-strength. The Steelers and the Chicago Cardinals in fact merged at the beginning of 1944 for just one year because things were not yet completely right. In 1945, there would be a “return to normalcy.”

The 1944 NFL Draft was a bit different this year as a number of colleges had suspended football and there was not as much talent coming from the colleges. Some schools such as perennial basketball power Gonzaga dropped football during the war and never brought it back.

The Draft was held later than usual on April 19, 1944. The draft would be for 32 rounds, not the customary 22 rounds. Again, in round 2 and 4 only the 5 lowest wins teams from the 1943 season would pick. Due to the merger in 1943, The Eagles would alternate with the Pittsburg Steelers in picking either 4th or 9th in each round.

1944 Games of the Season

The season opener for 1944 was played on Sept 26 at Boston. The Eagles beat the Yanks W (28-7) before 25,061. On Oct 8 at home in Shibe, the Eagles tied the Washington Redskins T (31-31). Two weeks later at home, on Oct 22 the Eagles shut out the Boston Yanks in a runaway W (38-0) before 24,638. Then, on Oct 29 at New York, the Eagles defeated the Giants W (24-17) before 42,639.

On Nov 5, at Brooklyn the Eagles beat the Dodgers W (21-7) before 15,289. On Nov 12, at home, The New York Giants and the Philadelphia Eagles played to a tie T (21-21) before 33,248. On Nov 19, at Washington, the Eagles beat the Redskins W (37-7) before 35,540.

Then, on Nov 26, at home, the Eagles suffered their first loss of the season. Without this loss, instead of second place, the Eagles would

have won the East championship this year and be in the playoffs. The Chicago Bears beat the Eagles L (7-28) before 34,035 at Shibe. On Dec 3, at home, the Eagles shut out the Brooklyn Dodgers W 34-0 before 13,467. Then, on December 10, the Eagles capped off their best season ever with a nice win against the Cleveland Rams W (26-13) before 24,123

1945 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1945 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirteenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his fifth season of ten as head coach. Neale had finally broken through the win barrier. This Eagles team finished with a winning season record of 7-3-0, winning seven games and finishing in second place. The Eagles failed to improve on their previous record of 7-1-2, losing three games. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the 13th consecutive season.

The 1945 Draft was held on April 8, 1945. It was the last draft held in Chicago; later in the year the league moved its offices to Philadelphia. It would be 32 rounds with the Eagles getting picks in 30 of them. Because it had such a strong 1944 season, The Eagles picked 9th in the rounds.

The teams with the 5 worse records in 1944 season would be the only teams picking in rounds 2 and 4. Future Hall of Famers in this draft included Charley Trippi, Halfback from Georgia taken 1st round 1st overall by the Chicago Cardinals. Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch, Wide receiver from Michigan taken 5th overall by the Cleveland Rams. Pete Pihos, Defensive end from Indiana University, Tom Fears, End from UCLA, and Arnie Weinmeister, Defensive tackle from Washington.

On Oct 7, at home, the Eagles defeated the Chicago Cardinals W (21-6) before 25,581. On Oct 14, at Detroit, in a close match, the Lions got the best of the Eagles L (24-28) before 22,580. At Washington on Oct 21, the Eagles lost their second game in a row L (14-24) before 35,550. Then, to wrap up October, on Oct 28, at home, the Eagles beat the Cleveland Rams W (28-14) before 38,149.

At Pittsburgh on Nov 4, the Eagles shellacked the Steelers W (45–3) before 23,018. On Nov 11, at home, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W(38–17) before 30,047. Then on Nov 18 at home, the Eagles beat the Steelers again, W (30–6) before 23,838.

At home on Nov 25, the Eagles shut-out the Washington Redskins W (16–0) before 37,306. On Dec 2, at New York, the Giants beat the Eagles in a close match L (21-28) before 45,372. Then, on Dec 9, the Boston Yanks came to Shibe to be beaten by the Eagles W 35–7 before 27,905

1946 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1946 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fourteenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his sixth season of ten as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a winning season record of 6-5-0, winning six games and finishing in second place. The Eagles failed to improve on their previous record of 7–3, losing five games. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the 14th consecutive season.

With the war restrictions behind them, the Eagles moved training camp from West Chester State Teachers College in West Chester, Pennsylvania, to Saranac High School Field in (Saranac Lake, New York). edit

The 1946 NFL Draft was held on January 14, 1946. There was 32 rounds and the Eagles had the 7 or 8th pick in the rounds. Like prior years, the top 5 teams in the league from the previous season did not get a draft pick in rounds 2 and 4 and were instead the recipients of compensatory low value picks in the 31st and 32nd rounds. The Eagles thus made 30 selections in this draft. The overall number one pick in the draft was by the Boston Yanks and they choose Frank Dancewicz, a quarterback from Notre Dame's Fighting Irish.

The season opener took place on Sept 29, after the Eagles took the long journey out to Los Angeles, where they beat the Rams, W (25-

14) before 30,500. Pro football was beginning to look like pro-football. On Oct 6, at home, the Eagles beat the Boston Yanks W (49–25) before 33,986. At 2-0, the Eagles faced off with the Packers on Oct 13 at Green Bay, but could not keep the streak going L (7-19) before 36,127. Loss #2 came the next week at Chicago as the Bears beat the Eagles by one TD L (14-21) before a nice crowd of 41,221.

On Oct 27 at Washington, the Eagles defeated the Redskins W (28–24) before 33,691. Then, on Nov 3, at home in Shibe, the Eagles got a good win against the New York Giants W (24–14) before 40,059. At New York on Nov 10, the Eagles were beaten well by the Giants L (17-45) before a packed house of 60,874. At Pittsburgh on Nov 17, the Eagles could not get up enough steam to beat Pittsburgh and lost by a field goal L (7-10) before 38,882

On November 24, at home, the Eagles lost to the Washington Redskins L (10-27) before 36,633. On December 1, at home, the Eagles beat their intra-state rival Pittsburgh Steelers W (10–7) before 29,943. Wrapping up the season on December 8, at Boston, the Eagles put the right formula together to crush the Yanks W (40–14) before 29,555.

1947 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1947 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifteenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his seventh season of ten as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a championship level winning season record of 8-4, finishing in first place. The Eagles improved on their previous record of 6-5, winning eight games. They qualified for the playoffs for the first time ever but lost the NFL Championship.

For the second year in a row, the Eagles chose Saranac High School Field / Eagles Residence, in Saranac Lake, New York for training camp. Greasy Neale liked having the Eagles train outside of the home city and they only trained near Philadelphia when there were wartime travel restrictions during WW II. Under Neale the Eagles trained in Wisconsin, upstate New York and Minnesota when they were permitted to travel. Greasy Neal had unlocked the secret of the

Philadelphia Eagles, and he clearly gave Doug Pederson the keys in 2017/2018.



1947 National Championship Game v Cardinals

The 1947 NFL Draft was brought back to December after all the war-time adjustments. The NFL began a lottery of a bonus pick for the first pick in the draft. They did this until 1958. In 1947, the Eagles made 29 selections over the 32 rounds. They got the 6th or 7th pick in the rounds in which they had picks.

The top two picks in the draft was a lottery bonus pick as the number-one pick by the NFL champion Chicago Bears. It was Bob Fenimore, a back who attended Oklahoma A&M. With the number-two pick, the Detroit Lions took 1946 Heisman Trophy winner Glenn Davis, a great halfback from Army.

In my recent book, titled, *Great Moments in Army Football*, I had the pleasure of featuring Glenn Davis when he was shredding records along with Doc Blanchard in the Army Cadets heyday during the war years. Unfortunately for the Lions, Davis was unable to play due to his required military service after West Point.

Cal Rossi, a running back from UCLA was drafted again this year with the 4th pick by the Washington Redskins. He had been taken in error with the 9th pick of the 1946 draft when he was still a junior in college. He declined at that time to play pro football.

The future NFL Hall of Famers that were in this draft were Dante Lavelli (12th round), Art Donovan (22nd round) and Tom Landry (20th round). Yes, that is the same Tom Landry who coached the Dallas Cowboys so well for so long.

Some players drafted were signed by All-America Football Conference teams. Not everybody chose the NFL at the time to play their football.

On September 28 at the season and home opener, the Eagles managed a victory over the Washington Redskins in a game that could have gone either way W (45–42) before 35,406 at Shibe. On Oct 5, at home, the Eagles shut out the Giants W (23–0) before 29,823. After traveling to Chicago to play the Bears on Oct 12, the Eagles were pummeled by the Bears L (7–40) before 34,338. Then, on Oct 19, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles lost cleanly to the Steelers L (24–35) before 33,538.

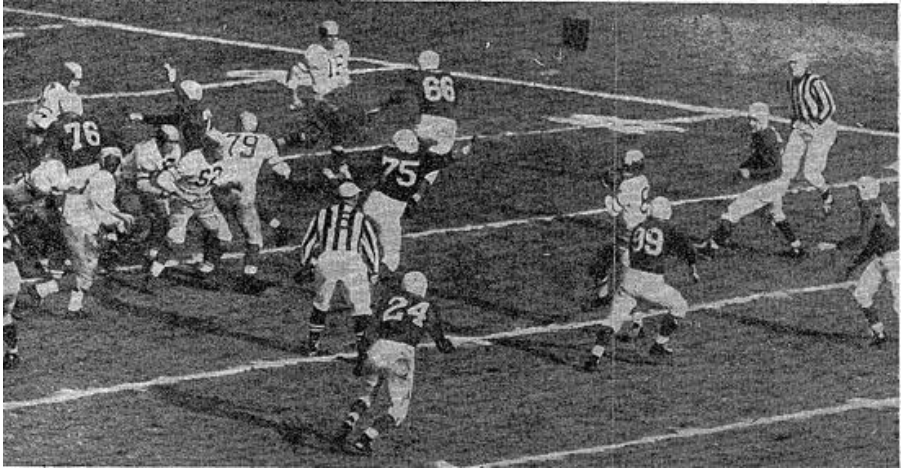
On Oct 26, at home, the Eagles beat the Los Angeles Rams W (14–7) before 36,364. At Washington, on Nov 2, 1947, the Eagles danced over the Redskins for the win W (38–14) before 36,591. At New York on Nov 9, the Eagles put a hurt on the Giants W (41–24) before 29,016. Then, on Nov 16, at home, the Eagles shutout the Boston Yanks W (32–0) before 26,498

This time at Boston, the Yank's home field, on Nov 23, the Eagles could not hold on and lost at Boston L (14–21) before 15,628. On Nov 30, at home, the Eagles shut out the Pittsburgh Steelers W (21–0) before 37,218. Finding another loss unexpectedly, a rolling Eagles team met defeat on Dec 7 at home, at the hands of the Chicago Cardinals L (21–45) before 32,322. In the season ender, on Dec 14, the Eagles got the team moxie together to defeat the Green Bay Packers W (28–14) 24,216. I have been noticing that the cold December games are not as well attended. How about you?

National Championship Game

The Eagles v the Chicago Cardinals was the game played for the 1947 National Football League Championship. It was the 15th annual National Football League (NFL) championship game. It was the Chicago Cardinals, not the St. Louis Cardinals. The game was played on December 28 at Comiskey Park in Chicago. The

attendance was 30,759, well below capacity. As usual in Chicago, it was cold with a wind.



Cardinals-Eagles Game Action

The game featured the Western Division champion Chicago Cardinals (9–3) and the Eastern Division champion Philadelphia Eagles (8–4). A week earlier, the Eagles defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers 21–0 in a tiebreaker playoff to determine the Eastern winner. Both the Eagles and Cardinals were making their first appearances in the championship game.

The Cardinals had won the regular season meeting against the Birds in Philadelphia three weeks prior by a healthy 24 points and after a week off, they were 12-point favorites to win the title game at home. They did.

The Cardinals grabbed a quick 14–0 lead in the second quarter, then the teams traded touchdowns. The Eagles closed the gap to 28–21 with five minutes to go, but the Cardinals controlled the ball the rest of the way on an extended drive to pick up their first title. The Eagles would shine in 1948.

This was the only NFL title game ever played at Comiskey Park and it continues as Cardinals' only win. The two teams returned for a rematch in 1948 in Philadelphia, but the Eagles won in a snowstorm. The Cardinals have not won a league championship since this one in 1947, over seven decades ago, the longest drought

in the NFL. (They made it to the Super Bowl (XLIII) in the 2008 season, but lost by four points.) The Eagles had won BFL championships prior to the 2018 game but had never won a Super Bowl Game until Pederson and company accomplished that in 2018. They're still talking about that 2018 win across the entire NFL.

The Cardinals' win in 1947 kept the NFL title within the city of Chicago; the north end's Bears had won the previous season. This was the Cardinals' last playoff win as a franchise until January 1999; at 51 years and five days, it was the longest post-season win drought in NFL history. They relocated to St. Louis in 1960 and again to Arizona in 1988.

1948 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1948 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixteenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his eighth season of ten as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a championship level winning season and this time got the championship Their record was 9-2-1, finishing in first place. The Eagles improved on their previous record of 8-4, winning nine games and whooping everybody else to get the championship.

They qualified for the playoffs as a repeat in the Eastern Division and they returned to the NFL Championship game, this time defeating the Chicago Cardinals to win their first NFL title. Well-deserved Go Eagles! Go Greasy Neale and thanks for coming by!

The NFL Draft was still a reportable event and so we still are reporting about it. The 1948 NFL draft was held back in December, on the 19, just five days after the end of the regular season, but before the College Bowls. It was held nine days before the championship game was played.

The Eagles had finished the 1947 season with an 8–4 record. Since they were tied well up in the standings with the Chicago Bears and Pittsburgh Steelers, got to pick 7th, 8th or 9th normally in the 32 rounds in which they had picks.

The Washington Redskins won the lottery bonus pick at number one and chose Harry Gilmer. He was a phenomenon at the University of Alabama. In a book I wrote a year ago titled, *Great Moments in Alabama Football*, Harry is highlighted for his great play long before Alabama was known for its great play.

In the first round, the Eagles selected Clyde Scott, a running back from the University of Arkansas. The Eagles' 26th round pick, Lou Creekmur, did not make the team but ended up becoming a Hall of Fame player for the Detroit Lions. That gives us all a perspective on how hard it is to pick the best when you cannot see into their hearts.

Many of the draft picks made by NFL teams ended up playing for teams in the rival All-America Football Conference (AAFC). Today, the NFL has it lots easier as most other opportunities to play are inferior to the NFL, which persisted to become the greatest football league of all time.

On Sept 24 at Chicago, the Eagles were beaten by the Cardinals in the season opener L (24-14) before 24,159. On Oct 3, at Los Angeles, the Eagles tied the Rams T (28-28) before 24,597. On Oct 10 at home, the Eagles walloped the New York Giants in a shutout, W 45-0 before 22,804. On Oct 17, at Washington, the Eagles shut out the Redskins W 45-0 before 35,580.

At home on Oct 24, in a very close match, the Eagles beat the Chicago Bears W (12-7) before 36,227. Then, at Pittsburgh on Oct 31, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (34-7) before 32,859. On November 7, at New York, the Eagles defeated the Giants W (35-14) before 24,983. Then, on Nov 14, at home, in the third 45-0 shutout of the season, the Eagles whipped the Boston Yanks W (45-0) before 22,958

On Nov 21 at home, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W 42-21 before 36,254. At home on Nov 28, the Eagles shut out the Steelers W (17-0) before 22,001. At Boston on Dec 5, the Yanks defeated the Eagles L (14-37) before 9,652. It was just the second loss of the season for the Eagles. On Dec 12, at home, the Eagles beat the Detroit Lions W (45-21) before 15,322 in the final game of the 1948 season.

NFL Championship Game Dec 19, 1948

Eagles Greatest Games

The NFL Championship game was played at Philadelphia's Shibe Park on December 19 during a blizzard.



1948 Eagles v Chicago Cardinals NFL Championship in Philadelphia in a Blizzard

The status of the game was tentative until close to game time. In fact, thinking the game would not be played in such a blizzard, star back Steve Van Buren remained home. He needed a yeoman effort to make it to the stadium to suit up and play that day. It was so bad Van Buren was sure the game was called off. Eagles coach Earle "Greasy" Neale called him and told him the game was still on. Van Buren had to catch 3 trolleys and walk 12 blocks in order to make the game on time.

The paid attendance for the game was 36,309. Only 28,864 were seated as the weather chased a number of fans away. The game was scoreless until early in the fourth quarter. The Eagles recovered a

fumble that set up Van Buren's five-yard touchdown at 1:05 into the fourth quarter. Not seeing the goal line too well with the snow, the Cardinals disputed that the ball or Van Buren had crossed the snow-covered goal line. The referee's call stood regardless.



Earle (Greasy) Neale with the team after defeating the Chicago Cardinals in the 1948 NFL championship game. Linebacker Alex Wojciechowicz said of Neale, "He devoted his life to teaching his men not only sports, but also an understanding and appreciation of life itself."

This was the Cardinals' last appearance in any NFL Championship game in the 20th century. There is said to be a curse on the football Cardinals that followed them from Chicago to St. Louis and on to Arizona. You would need to read another book not written by this author to learn more about the curse.

Looking a bit deeper into the circumstances of this day, the major problem was that they could not remove the tarp with the amount of snow that was piled on it. Eventually the crew had to ask for the help of both the Eagles and the Cardinals players to remove the tarp from the field. Amazing.

Though getting the tarp off was a big enough of a problem, the snow fall was so rapid that seeing the yard lines was nearly impossible. It was up to the head ref to use his best judgment and keen observation

skills to determine first downs, touchdowns and so on. Could you imagine such a decision being used today? Not likely.

Through three quarters of play the scoreboard had not been dented. However, when Chicago fumbled early in the fourth quarter on their own side of the 50-yard line, the Eagles took advantage. Hall of Famer Steve Van Buren scored the game's only touchdown, giving the Eagles a 7-0 lead, which would later become the final score.

Not much else to report

1949 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1949 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventeenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his ninth season of ten as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a championship level winning season and got the championship for the second time in a row

Their record was 11-1-0, finishing in first place. The Eagles improved on their previous record of 9-2-1, winning eleven games and whooping everybody else to get the coveted championship. They qualified for the playoffs as a repeat in the Eastern Division and they returned to the NFL Championship game, this time defeating the Chicago Cardinals to win their first NFL title. Well deserved! Go Eagles! Go Greasy Neale and thanks for coming by!

NFL Draft

The 1949 NFL draft was held on December 21, 1948. It was 25 rounds long. The Eagles had the Lottery Bonus Pick in the draft and picked 1st. The Eagles would choose 26 players total during this draft. They had the last pick in each round as all teams picked in every round. The All-America Football Conference was still a rival league and were doing a good job signing some of the NFL cast offs and draft picks. With the bonus and 1st pick overall, the Eagles took a local hero from the University of Pennsylvania, a center and linebacker, Chuck Bednarik. Along with him, the other future NFL

Hall of Famers picked this year were Norm Van Brocklin, George Blanda, and Doak Walker.

In the first game of the season on Sept 22 at New York, the Eagles defeated the new Bulldogs W 7-0 before 4,355. On Oct 3, at Detroit, the Eagles defeated the Lions W (22-14) before 20,163. At home in Shibe, on Oct 8, the Eagles defeated the Chicago Cardinals W (28-3) before 33,716. At Chicago on Oct 16, the Bears put the only mar for the year on Greasy Neale's Eagles record with a L (21-38) defeat before 47, 248.

On Oct 16, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins at home W (49-14) before 28,602. On Oct 30, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (38-7) before 37,840. On Nov 6, at home, the Eagles beat the Los Angeles Rams W (38-14) before 38,230. Then, at Washington on Nov 13, the Eagles defeated the Redskins W (44-21) before 31,170

Next on Nov 20, at home, the Eagles walloped the New York Bulldogs W (42-0) before 22,165. At home again, on Nov 27, the Eagles beat the Pittsburgh Steelers W (34-17) before 22,191. On Dec 4, at New York, the Eagles beat the Giants W (24-3) before 25,446. In the season closing game on Dec 11, 1949, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W 17-3 before 21,022

The 1949 NFL Championship Game

There were no playoffs to set up the 1949 National Football League Championship Game. The league was still in its infancy. However, it was the 17th title game for the National Football League (NFL). It was played on December 18 at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum in Los Angeles, California. It was lousy weather with a big rain storm that caused the field to become a mud pit. Paid attendance was 27,980, but only 22,245 braved the weather to take a seat in the stadium.

Our Eastern Division champion Philadelphia Eagles (11-1), were the defending NFL champions, and they were matched against the Western Division winners, the Los Angeles Rams(8-2-2). The

Eagles devoured the Rams W (14-0) for their second championship in a row.



Eagles v Rams National Title Game

This was the first NFL title game played in the western United States. The Rams had last appeared in a title game in 1945. They won that game and ironically, it was the franchise's final game in Cleveland. Then, they moved further west to LA.

The Eagles were favored by a touchdown, they won by two TD's shutting out the Rams from scoring. It was the second consecutive shutout for the Eagles in back to back NFL championship games. The score was 14-0. It featured the great rushing of the immortal running back Steve Van Buren, who led the field with 196 yards on 31 carries for the Eagles. The Eagles fabled defense held the Rams to just 21 yards on the ground.

Philadelphia head coach Earle "Greasy" Neale did not like to fly, so the Eagles traveled to the West Coast by train. On the way west, they stopped in Illinois for a workout at Stagg Field at the University of Chicago on Wednesday morning. Cross country trains typically stop in Chicago to pick up another train going west.

1950 Greasy Neale, Coach #3

The 1950 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighteenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Greasy Neale in his tenth and last season as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a .500 record after having won two championships in a row.

Greasy Neale was fired before the 1951 season. It would take a while for the Eagles to regain their prominence in the NFL. This story is a good one and we present it after the games of the 1950 season shown below.

The NFL was doing well but still suffering growing pains. The National Football League and the All-America Football Conference came to an agreement this year to stop competing and merge the teams into one league. The Baltimore Colts, Cleveland Browns, and San Francisco 49ers would join the older NFL. The Philadelphia Eagles would meet the Cleveland Browns in a Saturday night game to open the 1950 season in Philadelphia Municipal Stadium instead of Shibe Park for more seating. On September 16, 1950, a crowd of 71,237 turned out in Philadelphia to watch as the Browns beat the Birds 35–10.

The 1950 NFL Draft was held on January 20–21, 1950. The former AAFC teams got to pick with the NFL teams and the Detroit Lions won the lottery pick. They used it to select Leon Hart, who played end at the University of Notre Dame. With an 11–1 record in the 1949 season and Cleveland at 9–1–2, the Eagles picked last in each round.

The Eagles first draft pick went to University of Minnesota for football and basketball. Leon Hart chose and played for the Minneapolis Lakers in the NBA during the 1950 season. He would join the Eagles in 1951 but left the Eagles after two seasons over money to play in Canadian Football League. He would later go into

the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1983 and the Pro Football Hall of Fame as a coach in 1994.

The season was extended by one week to include a bye week. Still, the # of games played would be 12, but they would be played over a thirteen-week period. Here are the games of the 1950 season:

On September 16, in the home opener played at Philadelphia Municipal Stadium (JFK), the Cleveland Browns defeated the Eagles L (10–35) before a packed house of 71,237. At Chicago on Sept 24, the Eagles whooped the Cardinals W (45–7) before 24,914. The next game was a nice win on Oct 7 at home v the Los Angeles Rams W (56–20) before. At Baltimore on Oct 15, the Eagles defeated the Colts W (24–14) before 14,413.

At Pittsburgh on Oct 22, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (17–10) before 35,662. On Oct 29, at home the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (35–3) before 33,707. After five wins in a row, the Eagles injuries began to mount up and winning became very difficult—but the games were very close. On Nov 5, for example, at home, the Eagles lost to the Pittsburgh Steelers in a tight match L (7–9) before 24,629. At Washington on Nov 12, the Eagles came back for a game to shut out the Redskins, W (33–0) before 29,407.

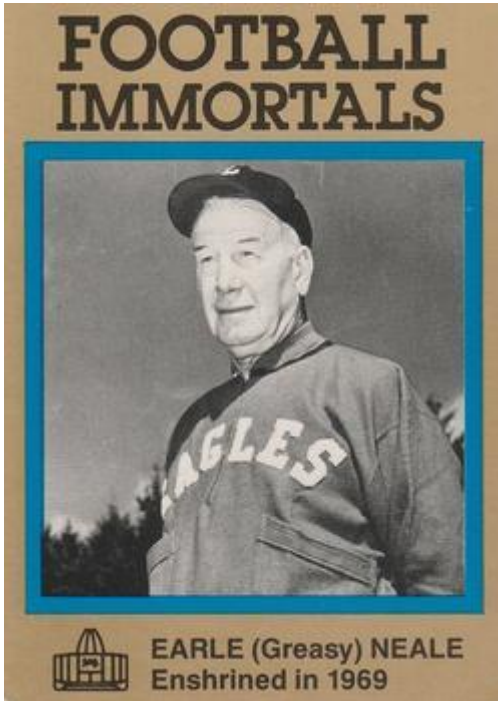
Next at home in Shibe on Nov 19, the Chicago Cardinals picked off the Eagles in a tight game L (10–14) before 28,368. Then, on Nov 26, at New York, in another tight game, the Giants beat the Eagles L (3–7) before 24,093. At Cleveland on December 3, the Browns beat the Eagles in a tight match. In a nail-biter on Dec 10 at home, the Eagles could not finish against the Giants and lost by two points L (7-9). Before 26,440

THE YEAR GREASY NEALE WAS FIRED

By Gene Murdock

[Originally published in Pro Football Digest, April—May 1968, five years before Neale's death in 1973 and 17 years after his controversial ousting.]

It was a tense moment in the Philadelphia Eagles' dressing room at the Polo Grounds on a raw Sunday afternoon in late November 1950. The National Football League champions had just dropped a heartbreaker to the New York Giants, 7-3. The club owner stood in the center of the room and pointed an accusing finger at his coach. "And you," he shouted, "you made mistakes out there; you made mistakes!"



"Damn you," fired back the coach, "I never make mistakes. Or if I do you can't tell me in my clubhouse in front of my football players. If you want to tell me what mistakes I make on the football field, you tell me in your office on Monday morning!"

Seated in his home in Parkersburg, W.Va. 17 years later, 76-year-old Earle "Greasy" Neale still has thunder in his voice as he talks of the shouting match that

openly marked the beginning of the end of his long and colorful coaching career. "Imagine this now -- the president of a ball club standing in the middle of the dressing room after you'd been beaten 7-3, popping off in front of your players, telling me you can't win with three points. Anybody knew that. It didn't take a genius to tell you that!"

The year 1950 had already been a trying one for Greasy, who had led the Eagles to NFL titles in 1948 and 1949, winning "Coach of the Year" honors both seasons. He had taken over the club, a tail-end outfit, in 1941, had converted it into a winner within three or four years and had topped this feat with three divisional and two league crowns.

As the 1950 season approached, the future had looked bright. Neale had most of his championship team back, a team studded with such seasoned stars as Steve Van Buren, Tommy Thompson, Pete Pihos and Vic Sears. In addition, there were outstanding second-year men like Chuck Bednarik, Clyde "Smackover" Scott and Frank Ziegler. Greasy confided to Philadelphia sportswriter Stan Baumgartner on the eve of the College All-Star game his personal optimism: "I don't see why our boys can't do it again. Who is there to beat us?"

But things had not worked out that way. A wave of crippling injuries beset the Eagles in training camp. In the first game of the season, the Cleveland Browns, newly arrived in the NFL after terrorizing the All-America Conference, proved they belonged there by trouncing the Eagles 35-10.

As he looks back on that first game with Paul Brown's team, Greasy admits that he and his Eagles probably took the neophyte Browns too lightly.

"They beat us with passes – Otto Graham to Dub Jones. I thought Russ Craft could cover anybody alive – he covered "Crazylegs" Hirsch all the time and would take the ball right away from him and run for touchdowns – but he couldn't cover Dub Jones. I knew within 10 minutes after that game started that the Eagle defense wouldn't stop the Browns."

But the Eagles bounced back. They won five straight and seemed headed for another championship until they experienced a series of exasperating razor-thin defeats in November and December that destroyed their hopes for a third straight title. The mounting frustration came to a head in the Polo Grounds dressing room with owner Jim 1 THE COFFIN CORNER: Vol. 10, No. 2 (1988) Clark and Greasy blowing up at each other. In picturesque language Neale offered to quit his job on the spot, but Clark quickly retreated and diplomatic relations between the two were temporarily patched up.

As Greasy recalls it: "After that game in New York we went out to Cleveland for our second game with the Browns. Jim and I

rode out together and had a few drinks together. I forced him on Tuesday to come to practice and apologize to the team. He told me then: 'You can coach this team forever for me.'

The cut went too deep, however, and in three months' time the "Coach of the Year" – the man who had wondered: "Who is there to beat us?" – was fired.

What happened? From the distance of years, it looks quite simple. After racing to a 5-1 record to lead the Eastern Conference at the midway point, the Eagles apparently collapsed. In the last half of the season, except for a 33-0 rout of the Redskins, the Philadelphians dropped five games. They ended up in a tie for third place in the East with a 6-6 record, the team's poorest performance since 1942.

But as Greasy tells it, nothing is ever quite that simple. Although only 6-6 for the season, the Eagles outscored their opponents by the lopsided margin of 254 to 141. And, significantly, they dropped those five second-half games by a total of 18 points. The Giants beat them twice (7-3 and 9-7), the Browns once (13-7), Pittsburgh once (9-7) and the Cardinals once (14-10).

In the first Giant game, the one that touched off the Clark-Neale confrontation, Philadelphia was near the goal line most of the time but could not push the ball across and had to settle for a field goal. As Greasy remembers it, they were stopped five times – on the 16-, 20-, 5-, 2-, and 4-yard lines.

He talks of the second clash with the Browns with bitterness lightened by a special kind of pride. "I spent two hours a day for a week on defense before the second Brown game. Imagine that! They only give 20 minutes to defense normally. "

Motley gains 15 yards, Graham doesn't complete a pass. And they beat me on an intercepted pass that they scored on and two fumbles where Groza kicked field goals. They beat us 13-7. They made two first downs – and I'll bet it's the only game Graham ever played in which he didn't complete a pass!"

Greasy's strategy for stopping Marion Motley was simple: "I put Bednarik on that Motley and I said: 'That's your man, and don't you let him go anywhere. When he comes through the line, whether he's got the ball or not, you hit him, and you hit him, and you tear him apart!'"

"That Bednarik, he was something! You know, he was the first lineman ever taken as a first-round draft choice. He and Van Buren and Joe Muha were the best picks we ever made."

The loss of those five games by 18 points resulted less from a collapse of the team on the field -- on defense the Eagles allowed far fewer first downs than any team in the league and were only 70 yards behind the Browns in yards allowed -- than from a succession of damaging injuries, but anytime a coach loses players like Van Buren, "Bosh" Pritchard, Scott and Al Wistert for extended periods, he's in trouble. Greasy was no exception.

Van Buren developed a spur on the bottom of one of his feet in training and after playing in the All-Star game with Novocain deadening the pain, he was returned to Philadelphia for an operation and did not practice for the next six weeks. He missed the season's opener and was far below par all year long. His rushing total dropped from the league-leading figure of 1,146 yards in 1949 to 626 in 1950, with his average declining from 4.4 yards a try to 3.3.

Pritchard, who had finished fifth in the NFL in rushing in 1949 with a 6.0 average, injured a knee in training and didn't play in a single game in 1950. Scott, who as a rookie from Arkansas in 1949 had averaged just under five yards a try in 40 carries, was badly injured in the second quarter of the 1950 opener against the Browns and was finished for the season.

As Stan Baumgartner explained it: "Pritchard and Scott are very fast men who can run the ends, keep the opposing defense spread and make it possible for Van Buren to plunge through the line. When these two carriers were out of the lineup, the opposition concentrated on Van Buren and bottled him up before he could get started. The only other danger was quarterback Tommy Thompson's forward passes. With no far of

Pritchard, Scott or Van Buren, the rival club concentrated on possible receivers. So, Neale's entire intricate offense bogged down."

Greasy was vacationing at Lake Worth, Fla. in February 1951, confident that his Eagles would bounce back the next season, when he got a terse telegram from owner Jim Clark saying: "You will be paid for the one year remaining on your contract, but you are no longer the coach of the Philadelphia Eagles."

"It was a complete surprise," says Greasy. "After that blowup in New York Clark told me that I could coach the Eagles as long as he had the club. It liked to kill my wife. She died two months later."

In Neale's opinion an important factor in his dismissal was a difference of views over his scouting system. "We had the greatest scouting system of any team in the NFL," Greasy proudly claims. "We had the information on every boy who entered school until the time he graduated from any college in America."

According to Greasy, it was in 1943 that he and Alexis Thompson, who then owned the Eagles, and general manager Harry Thayer worked out an elaborate method of compiling complete information on all college football players.

"We had 68 books that we took into the second draft meeting we attended. No team had ever done this before. They laughed at us, but you can bet they stopped after we got ourselves men like Van Buren and Muha with that system! "

The problem was that Jim Clark, who headed the 1,000 stockholders who bought the club from Lex Thompson, didn't know anything about football. He wanted to trim expenses by doing away with my scouts. He thought we were spending too much money for information on football players.

"That scouting system won us championships. But I was wasting my time telling Clark that. He paid no attention to it."

To replace Neale, Clark hired Bo McMillan, who in three years as head coach of the Detroit Lions (1948-50) had compiled a 12-24 won-lost record and had feuded continually with the club-owners. He coached the Eagles for two games in 1951, quitting because of illness. Wayne Millner succeeded him, and the Eagles wound up the year with a 4-8 mark.

Today, Greasy Neale lives in his boyhood hometown in a house filled with trophies. The trophies tell of the days he played football with Jim Thorpe long before the NFL was born, of years as a slick-hitting outfielder with the Cincinnati Reds and as a coach of college football teams – including the Washington and Jefferson giant-killers who held mighty California to a scoreless tie in the 1922 Rose Bowl.

And some of the trophies tell Greasy that he was professional football's "Coach of the Year" two years in a row – just before a season when the percentages took over and five games lost by a total of 18 points brought him and his high-flying Eagles back to earth.

Here is another look at Greasy Neale's record:

1941	Greasy Neale	4th place	2-8-1
1942	Greasy Neale	5th place	2-9-0
1943	Greasy Neale Steagles	3rd place	5-4-1 —
1944	Greasy Neale	2nd place	7-1-2
1945	Greasy Neale	2nd place	7-3-0
1946	Greasy Neale	2nd place	6-5-0
1947	Greasy Neale	1st place	8-4-0
1948	Greasy Neale	1st place	9-2-1
1949	Greasy Neale	1st place	11-1-0
1950	Greasy Neale	T-3 rd place	6-6-0

- 1947 Won Eastern Divisional Playoff (at Steelers) 21-0
- 1947 Lost NFL Championship (at Cardinals) 21-28
- 1948 Won NFL Championship (1) (Cardinals) 7-0
- 1941-1950 Greasy Neale final record (66-44-5)

Chapter 5 Four Great Coaches From 1951 to 1957

Coach # 4 Bo McMillin

Coach #5 Wayne Millner

Coach #6 Jim Trimble

Coach #7 Hugh Devore

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf/Div</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Record</u>
1951	Bo McMillin	American	5 th	2-0-0
1951	Wayne Millner	American	5 th	2-8-0
<u>1951-1951 McMillin / Millner final record (4-8-0)</u>				
1952	Jim Trimble	American	T2 nd	7-5-0
1953	Jim Trimble	Eastern	2 nd	7-4-1
1954	Jim Trimble	Eastern	2 nd	7-4-1
1955	Jim Trimble	Eastern	T4 th	4-7-1
<u>1952-1955 Jim Trimble final record (25-20-3)</u>				
1956	Hugh Devore	Eastern,	6 th	3-8-1
1957	Hugh Devore	Eastern, x	5 th	4-8-0
<u>1956-1957 High Devore final record (7-16-1)</u>				



Eagles 1951 Head Coach Bo McMillan as player -- QB

1951 Bo McMillan, Coach #4 (2-0)

1951 Wayne Millner, Coach #5 (2-8)

The 1951 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their nineteenth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Bo McMillan and Wayne Millner at different times in the season. Both were in their first season of one as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a dismal losing season of 4-8-0.

The Eagles owner fired Greasy Neale and first hired Bo McMillin as head coach on Feb 8, 1951. He took on the challenge of returning the Philadelphia Eagles to their previous glory. However, after just two games (both wins), McMillin underwent surgery for what was believed to be ulcer troubles. The verdict was far worse: stomach cancer, which ended his coaching career. Assistant coach Wayne Millner took over as head coach for the rest of the year. Millner would resign weeks before the 1952 season citing health as the reason for stepping down.

The 1951 NFL Draft was held later -- on January 18–19, 1951. This draft would be for players coming out of college and because the Baltimore Colts had folded after the 1950 season, the draft split up their players. The draft was 30 rounds with eleven teams picking. There was a total of 362 players drafted. 27 former Colts players were drafted including Y. A. Tittle by the San Francisco 49ers. The Eagles would rotate getting the 5th, 6th and 7th picks through the rounds because of their medsa medsa 6–6 record in 1950, tying them with Pittsburgh and Detroit.

With the lottery bonus pick as the #1 pick of the draft, the New York Giants choose Kyle Rote, a halfback from Southern Methodist University. The 2nd pick in the draft was made by the Chicago Bears. This was the Baltimore Colts' 1st round pick that would have been, but which had earlier been traded to Chicago. With this pick they choose Bob Williams a Quarterback from Notre Dame. With their 1st pick as the 7th selection in the 1st round the Eagles choose, Ebert Van Buren, brother of Steve Van Buren, a Fullback/Halfback from LSU.

To open the season, the Eagles traveled to Chicago and in a close match beat the Cardinals W (17–14) before 16,129. On Oct 6, at home, the Eagles beat the San Francisco 49ers W (21–14) before 23,432. After this game, coach Millner took over for Coach McMillan for the remainder of the season. Then, on Oct 14, at Green Bay, the Birds were beaten by the Packers L (24-37) before 18,489. At New York, on Oct 21, the Giants beat the Eagles L (24-26) in a tight match before 28,656.

At home on Oct 28, the Washington Redskins defeated the Eagles L (23-27) before 20,437. On Nov 4, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (34–13) before 19,649. At Cleveland on Nov 11 the Eagles lost to the Browns, L (17-20) before 36,571. On Nov 18, at home (Shibe), the Detroit Lions beat the Eagles L (10-28) before 25,350.

Again at home on Nov 25, the Eagles lost to the Pittsburgh Steelers L (13-17) before 15,537. Note the crowd size depleting as the team record gets bad. On Dec 2, 1951 at the Washington Redskins, the Eagles prevailed W (35–21) before 23,738. Then at home, the Eagles lost on Dec 9, to the New York Giants L (7-23) before 19,322. In the season finale, at home, the Eagles lost on Dec 16 to the Cleveland Browns L (9-24) before 6,263

1952 Jim Trimble Coach # 6

The 1952 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twentieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Jim Trimble in his first season of four as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a winning record of 7-5-0.



Great player Pete Pihos and Coach Jim Trimble in Honors Ceremony

Head coach Wayne Millner, who took over, for ailing head coach Bo McMillin in 1951, resign on September 8, just 3 weeks before the 1952 season started, citing health as the reason for stepping down. He was replaced by coach Jim Trimble just in time for the season. The Eagles problem with coach retention was not helping the team win games.

The 1952 NFL Draft was held on January 17, 1952. Picks made by New York Yanks were assigned to the new Dallas Texans franchise. There were 12 teams picking for 32 rounds.

The Eagles made the 4th pick in each round and made 31 picks in the 32 rounds they had picks in. The New York Yanks had the Eagles pick in the 5th round.

The Los Angeles Rams received this year's Lottery bonus pick. The Rams used it to pick Bill Wade Quarterback out of Vanderbilt University. The Eagles used there number 4 pick in the 1st round to take Johnny Bright, a back from Drake University. Johnny Bright, was chosen before other backs and future NFL Pro Football Hall of

Fame members Frank Gifford, from University of Southern California and Hugh McElhenny, from the University of Washington.

Drake passed on playing for the Eagles. Bright later commented: “ I would have been their (the Eagles') first Negro player. There was a tremendous influx of Southern players into the NFL at that time, and I didn't know what kind of treatment I could expect. The black factor in NFL football was real.

In the season opener on Sept 28 at Pittsburgh, the Eagles defeated the Steelers W 31–25. On Oct 4, at home, the New York Giants overpowered the Eagles L (31–7). At home on Oct 12, the Eagles just about beat the Pittsburgh Steelers W (26–21). Then, on Oct 9 at home, the Eagles were crushed by the Cleveland Browns L (7-49)

At New York, on Oct 26, the Eagles just about beat the Giants W (14-10). Then at Green Bay on Nov 2, the Packers beat the Eagles L (10-12). Next on Nov 9, at home, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (38–20). On Nov 16, at home, the Eagles won another against the Chicago Cardinals W (10–7).

Then at Cleveland on Nov 23, 1952, the Eagles beat the Browns, W (28-20). At Chicago on Nov 30, the Eagles lost to the Cardinals L (22-28). at Cleveland Browns W 28–20. Then, on Dec 7, at home, the Eagles defeated the new team, the Dallas Texans W (38-21). To wrap up the season, at Washington, the Eagles were defeated by the Redskins L (2-27).

1953 Jim Trimble Coach # 6

The 1953 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Jim Trimble in his second season of four as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a winning record of 7-4-1. This was the fourth season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs.

With the merger of the NFL and the All-America Football Conference, there was one less conference to take players who were drafted by NFL teams. However, the Canadian Football League continued to attract those who got a better deal than from the NFL.

For example, at the end of the 1952 season, 2-year player Bud Grant was offered a pay raise in his contract. He chose instead to play football in the CFL (Canadian Football League). He would have a career worthy of being named to the CFL's Hall of Fame as a player. Later in his career, he would make the Pro Football Hall of Fame as coach of the Minnesota Vikings.

The Eagles held training camp at Hershey Park Stadium in Hershey, PA for the 3rd straight year. Matt Guokas, Sr. was hired to be the PA announcer for the Eagles. He had played basketball for Saint Joseph's Hawks in college and the Philadelphia Warriors in the NBA. After losing his right leg in an automobile accident, Guokas turned to broadcasting, and he served as an announcer for the Philadelphia Eagles for 32 years from 1953 to 1985.

The 1953 NFL Draft was held on January 22, 1953 with 30 rounds and 12 teams picking. The San Francisco 49ers got the Lottery bonus pick. With this pick they chose Harry Babcock an End from the University of Georgia.

The 1952 expansion team Dallas Texans (NFL) could not make it in the league and folded during the 1952 season. Then, they became the new Baltimore Colts on January 23, 1953. The new Colts got the #1 pick and chose Heisman Trophy winner Billy Vessels, a halfback from the University of Oklahoma.

Having a 7–5 record in 1952 gave the Eagles the 7th, 8th or 9th pick in the 30 rounds. They traded their 1st round pick before the drafts began and thus their 1st selection was the 7th pick in the 2nd round, 20th overall. They picked Al Conway a back out of Army and William Jewell College. He did not play due to injury and ended up as an official in the American Football League and an official in the NFL for 28 years. Not everything works out in life or football.

The season opener was on Sept 27, at San Francisco. The Eagles lost to the 49ers, L (21-31). On Oct 2, at home, the Eagles and the

Washington Redskins tied T (21–21). Then, on Oct 10, at Cleveland, the Eagles were handed a loss L (13-37). On Oct 17 at home, the Eagles beat the Pittsburgh Steelers W 23–7.

On October 25, at Chicago, the Eagles put a licking on the Cardinals W (56–17). At Pittsburgh. On Nov 1, at home the Eagles overpowered the Steelers W (35–7). On Nov 8, at home, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (30–7). Then, on 8 Nov 15, at home, the Eagles thumped the Baltimore Colts W (45–14). On Nov 21 at home, the Eagles shut out the Chicago Cardinals W (38–0).

On Nov 29, at New York, the Giants beat the Eagles L (28-37). At Washington for the second away game in a row, on Dec 6, the Eagles were shut out by the Redskins in a close match L (0-10). In the last game of the 1953 season played at home on Dec 13, , the Eagles defeated the Cleveland Browns W (42–27).

1954 Jim Trimble Coach # 6

The 1954 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Jim Trimble in his third season of four as head coach. This Eagles team finished with the same a winning record of 7-4-1 as 1953. This was the fifth season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs.

Under Trimble, Philadelphia was not a bad team. They had finished second in the prior two 2 seasons to the Cleveland Browns. And so, Trimble was awarded a three-year contract after the team's second straight runner-up finish in 1953. He had another fine year in 1954 but no cigar.

The Eagles held their training camp in Hershey, PA again. The 1954 season was the first in which the Eagles used the "wings" logo that we know today on their helmets.

The 1954 NFL Draft was held on January 28, 1954. The draft is again 30 rounds long, with 12 teams picking. A total of 360 players

are taken in this 1-day draft. In 2011, a total 254 players were taken by 32 teams over 3 nights.

The Eagles chose 28 players in this year's draft.

On Sept 26, at the home and season opener, the Birds picked off the Cleveland Browns, W 28–10 before 26,546. At Chicago a week later, on Oct 3, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (35–16) before 17,084. At home on Oct 9, the Eagles barely beat the Pittsburgh Steelers W (24–22) before 37,322. Then, the next week on Oct 17, at home, the Eagles thumped the Washington Redskins W (49–21) before 22,051.

At Pittsburgh, on Oct 23, the Steelers beat the Eagles L (7-17) before 39,075. Then, on Oct 30, at home, the Eagles lost to the Green Bay Packers L (14-37) before 25,378. At home on Nov 7, the Eagles beat the Chicago Cardinals W (30–14) before 21,963. Then, on Nov 14, at New York, the Giants defeated the Eagles L (14-27) before 46,565.

At Cleveland on Nov 21, the Eagles were shut out in a close match against the Browns before 41,537. At home on Nov 28, the Eagles pushed through a win against a tough Washington Redskins team W (41–33) before 18,517. Then, on Dec 5, at Detroit, the Lions tied the Eagles T (13–13) before a capacity crowd of 54,939. At home in the Connie Mack Stadium, on Dec 12, to end a fine season. the Eagles pulled out a victory over the New York Giants W 29–14, before 28,449

1955 Jim Trimble Coach # 6

The 1956 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Jim Trimble in his fourth and last season of four as head coach. This Eagles team finished with the losing reverse of a winning record at 4-7-1 as 1953. This was the sixth season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs.

Jim Trimble would not survive after this season though he was doing well. The Eagles fired him after this season. Major league football never really bought on to the recovery notion of better

players because every year the players were the best of the best. Nonetheless, firing Trimble may have been premature.

The replacement for Trimble came with stellar credentials. Hugh Devore, who had been an interim coach at Notre Dame several times, was a great guy and was a well-liked and respected coach, Devore had consistently brought in less than stellar results at ND, but the Eagles expected better. He was hired and coached for two years before getting the axe. As one might expect, as good a guy as he was, Devore predictably brought in less than stellar results. This did not please the Eagles constituency and sooner, not later, the great man, but medsa-medsa coach was given the bum's rush.

Under Trimble, Philadelphia was not a bad team. They had finished second in the prior two 2 seasons to the Cleveland Browns. And so, Trimble was awarded a three-year contract after the team's second straight runner-up finish in 1953. He had another fine year in 1954 but no cigar. When the stubby cigar that was left, could not be lit again, it was time for a departure song as far as Eagle's management was concerned. But, what did they know?

The NFL draft was always a sign that the team savior might be arriving in Spring Training. This year's draft has held on January 27–28, 1955. As usual, it lasted for 30 rounds, with 12 teams selecting 360 players. This was again a draft lottery pick year and the Baltimore Colts got that pick and the third pick in the draft. With the Lottery bonus pick, they chose George Shaw a Quarterback from the University of Oregon football program.

Two picks later they chose 1954 Heisman Trophy winner Alan Ameche, a Fullback that played in the Wisconsin Badgers football program.

Because of a fine 7–4–1 record in the 1954 Philadelphia Eagles season the Eagles normally would have picked 8th in the odd rounds and 9th in the even rounds. They alternated with the San Francisco 49ers The Eagles made a pick in every round.

The Philadelphia Eagles used its 1st round pick, 9th pick in the draft, to select Dick Bielski, a fullback from Maryland. This was not a year

for famous football players. The only draftee from this year draft to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame was Johnny Unitas, a QB from the Louisville, who was taken in the 9th round 102nd overall by the Pittsburgh Steelers. He was a Professional Football Hall of Fame Class of 1979 member. For some, he will always be known as the greatest QB of all time. How about that name?

In the home opener and the season opener on Sept 24, 1955, the Eagles whooped the New York Giants W (27-17) before 29,597. On Oct 1, at home again, the Eagles did not escape the Washington Redskins L (30-31) before 31,891. On Oct 9, at Cleveland, the Eagles were defeated by the Browns L (17-21) before 43,974. Then at Pittsburgh on Oct 15, the Eagles choked and lost the game to the Steelers L (7-13) before 33,413/

At Chicago on Oct 23, 1955, the Eagles tied the Cardinals T (24-24) before 24,620. At home on Oct30, the Eagles shut out the Pittsburgh Steelers W (24-0) before 31,164. Then, on Nov 6, at Washington, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (21-34) before 25,741. At home on Nov 13, the Eagles overpowered the Cleveland Browns W (33-17) before 39,303

At New York, on Nov 20, the Eagles could not move the ball and lost to the Giants, L (7-31) before 22,075. In a nail-biter on Nov 27, at home, the Eagles lost to the LA Rams, L (21-23) before 21,668. Then at home on Dec 4, the Eagles whooped the Chicago Cardinals W (27-3) before 19,478. In the 1955 season-ender, on Dec 11, in a game played at Chicago, the Bears owned the field and beat the Eagles in a tough match L (10-17) before 34,783

1956 Hugh Devore Coach # 7

The 1956 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Hugh Devore in his first of two seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished with a losing record of 3-8-1. This was the seventh season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs. Many of the games were close this year but the Eagles could not close. There were no real blowouts, but the record overall was poor.

The Eagles changed coaches during the off season. Jim Trimble was fired on December 12, and they hired Hugh Devore. Devore had a long career including Notre Dame, Green Bay, NYU, etc. before taking over the Eagles. Jim Trimble's legacy is more connected to football products, thanks to his "slingshot" goal posts. In 1966, he would design and market the idea. Today they are the common goal post at football games.



For the 6th year in a row the Eagles held their training camp in Hershey, Pennsylvania. They would hold training camp in this venue until 1967.

The 1956 NFL Draft was held early this year on November 29, 1955. The draft was 30 rounds long, with 12 teams making picks. A total of 360 players were selected. The Pittsburgh Steelers got this year's Lottery Bonus Pick and with it, they selected Gary Glick a Quarterback who had graduated from Colorado State University.

The 1955 Eagles had finished with a 4–7–1 record and thus got to pick 4th or 5th in the rounds with the Chicago Cardinals. With their first round pick the Eagles selected Bob Pellegrini. He was a Center from the University of Maryland. He was featured on the cover of the November 7, 1955, edition of Sports Illustrated magazine. The Eagles made a total of 30 picks in the draft for 1956.

In the season opener, the Birds traveled to Los Angeles on Sept 30, and lost to the Rams by twenty-points L (7-27) the biggest margin of victory or defeat in 1956. There was a crowd of 54,412 in the stands

to see the game. On Oct 6 at home, the Eagles got one of three wins this season by defeating the Washington Redskins W (13–9) before 26,607. On Oct 14, Pittsburgh, The Eagles made it two in a row and beat the Steelers W (35–21) before 31,375. On Oct 21, at home, the Eagles lost to the Chicago Cardinals L (6-20) before 36,545.

On Oct 28 at New York, the Giants beat the Eagles L (3-20) before 40,960. At Chicago, on Nov 4, the Eagles lost again to the Cardinals L (17-28) before 27,609. At home on Nov 11, the Eagles defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers W 14–7 before 22,652. Then on Nov 18, at home, the Cleveland Browns shut out the Birds L (0-16) before 25,894.

The only tie of the season came on Nov 25 at home against the San Francisco 49ers T (10–10) before 19,326. On Dec 2, at Cleveland, the Browns squeezed out a close win over the Eagles L (14-17) before 20,654. On Dec 9 at Washington, the Redskins beat the Eagles by two points L (17- 19) before 22,333. On Dec 15 at home, the New York Giants bested the Eagles L (7-21) before 16,562 in the last game of the 1956 season.

1957 Hugh Devore Coach # 7

The 1957 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Hugh Devore in his second and last season as head coach. This Eagles team won three more games than in 1956 but still finished with a losing record of 4-8-0. This was the eighth season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs. Other than a walloping by the Washington Redskins in the 11th game, the games were close this year, but the Eagles could not close in their seven other losses.

The 1957 NFL Draft was held on November 27, 1956. This was before the end of the NFL Season and the between time of NCAA College football season and the College bowl games. The draft was still 30 rounds long, with 12 teams picking, and thus, a total of 360 players were selected. This again was a year that there was a Lottery bonus pick. This year's team to get the overall number 1 pick in the draft was the Green Bay Packers that selected, 1956 Heisman

Trophy winner, Paul Hornung who was a great Halfback out of Notre Dame. The Eagles drafted two Hall of famers this year, Sonny Jurgenson QB, and Tommy McDonald, Flanker.

The season opener was on Sept 29 at Los Angeles as the Eagles were beaten in a close match by the Rams L (13-17) before 62,506. At home on Oct 5, the NY Giants beat the Eagles L (20-24) before 28,342. On Oct 13, at Cleveland, The Eagles went down again to the Browns L (7-24) before 53,493. Then on Oct 20 at home, the Eagles beat the Browns, 17-7 before 22,443.

On Oct 27, at Pittsburgh, the Steelers beat the Birds L(0-6) before 27,016, At Chicago on Nov 3, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (38-21) before 18,718. On Nov 10, at home the Detroit Lions beat the Eagles L (16-27) before 29,320. At New York on Nov 17, the Giants beat the Eagles (0-13) before a nice crowd of 42,845

On Nov 4 at home, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W 21-12 before 20,730. At home against Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (7-6) before 16,364. At Washington, on Dec 8, the Redskins walloped the Eagles L (7-42) before 21,304. In the final game of the season, on Dec 14, at home, the Eagles were defeated by the Chicago Cardinals L (27-31) before 12,555

Chapter 6 Three Great Coaches From 1958 to 1968

Coach #8 Buck Shaw
 Coach #9 Nick Skorich
 Coach #10 Joe Kuharich

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Record</u>
1958	Buck Shaw	Eastern	x	T5th	2-9-1
1959	Buck Shaw	Eastern	x	T2nd	7-5-0
1960	Buck Shaw	Eastern	x	1st	10-2-0

- Won NFL Championship v (Packers) 17-13
- Norm Van Brocklin (MVP)
- Buck Shaw (Coach of Year),

1958-1960 Buck Shaw final record (20-16-1)

1961	Nick Skorich	Eastern	x	2nd	10-4-0
1962	Nick Skorich	Eastern	x	7th	3-10-1
1963	Nick Skorich	Eastern	x	7th	2-10-2

1961-1963 Nick Skorich final record (15-24-3)

1964	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	x	T3rd	6-8-0
1965	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	x	T5th	5-9-0
1966	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	x	T2nd	9-5-0
1967	Joe Kuharich	Eastern	Capitol	2nd	6-7-1
1968	Joe Kuharich, Eastern	Capitol		4th	2-12-0

1964-1968 Joe Kuharich final record (28-41-1)



Coach Buck Shaw gets lift from Bobby Walston, 83, Tim Brown, 22, Tommy McDonald 25

1958 Buck Shaw Coach # 8

The 1958 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-sixth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buck Shaw in his first of three seasons as head coach. This Eagles team lost one more game than in 1956 and finished with a losing record of 2-9-1. This was the ninth season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs.

After Hugh Devore was fired in the offseason, Vince Lombardi was offered the Eagles head coaching position, but he refused it. He opted to stay as the Offensive Coordinator of the New York Giants. Buck Shaw took the team that was not in too good a shape from two poor years helping make it a stronger contender.

Buck Shaw had been the Air Force Academy's 1st head coach. He took over a last-place Eagles team and began rebuilding immediately. He was also the 1st coach of the San Francisco 49ers when they formed in the AAFC in 1946. He immediately traded Buck Lansford, Jimmy Harris, and a first-round draft choice to the Los Angeles Rams for 32-year-old, nine-year veteran quarterback Norm Van Brocklin, aka, the Dutchman.

The 1958 NFL Draft was held on December 2, 1957 (rounds 1–4) and January 28, 1958 (rounds 5–30). The draft was 30 rounds long with 12 teams making picks. A total of 360 players were selected. With a 4–8 record in 1957 the Eagles got to make the 6th pick in the 1st round.

This was the last year in which the Lottery Bonus Pick was used. The Chicago Cardinals had the number 1 pick of the draft and the Bonus Pick. They used the picks to select as Lottery Bonus Pick King Hill a Quarterback out of Rice University. With the 2nd pick they chose 1957 Heisman Trophy winner John David Crow a halfback out of Texas A&M University

The Eagles picked a pack of no-name selections. None ever made pro-bowl in their years with the Eagles, and few were primary starters on the team in their positions.

This season would be the first played at Franklin Field. From 1958 until 1970, the stadium was the home field of the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League.

In the first Franklin Field home game and the season opener on Sept 28, 1958, the Eagles were beaten by the Washington Redskins L (14–24) before 36,850. On Oct 5, at home, the Eagles squeaked out a win against the New York Giants W (27–24) before 23,178. Then, on Oct 12, at Pittsburgh, the Steelers overpowered the Eagles, L (3–24) before 23,153. At home on Oct 19, the San Francisco 49ers beat the Eagles L (24–30) before 33,110.

At Green Bay on Oct 26, the Packers beat the Eagles L (35–38) before 31,043. Then, on November 2, at Chicago, the Eagles and the Cardinals played to a tie T (21–21) before 17,486. On Nov 9, at home, the Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Eagles L (24–31) before 26,306. At home on November 16, the Eagles beat the Chicago Cardinals W (49–21) before 18,315.

On Nov 23, at Cleveland, the Browns beat the Eagles L (14–28) before 51,319. On Nov 30, at New York, the Giants defeated the Eagles L (10–24) before 35,438. Then, on Dec 7, the Cleveland Browns beat the Eagles L (14–21) before 36,773. In the final game of the 1958 season, on Dec 14, at Washington, the Redskins shut out the Eagles L (0–20) before 22,621.

1959 Buck Shaw Coach # 8

The 1959 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buck Shaw in his second of three seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished second in the Eastern Conference with a winning record of 7-5-0. This was the tenth season in a row for the team to not make the playoffs.

The 1959 NFL Draft was held on December 2, 1958 (rounds 1–4) and January 21, 1959 (rounds 5–30). The draft was 30-rounds long and had 12 teams making picks. A total of 360 players were selected again in this year draft.

The Lottery bonus pick was no more. It had run the course as all 12 teams had been given the bonus pick and it made no sense to keep the happen chance idea.

Since the Green Bay Packers had the worst record, at 1-10-1, in the 1958 NFL season they had the first draft pick and selected Randy Duncan who played Quarterback for the Iowa Hawkeyes. Ironically, the Packers lone win was on Sunday, October 26, 1958 38-35 over the Eagles in Green Bay.

The Philadelphia Eagles and the Chicago Cardinals both had a 2-9-1 record in the 1958 season, and that was the 2nd worst record in the league, rotated in picking 2nd or 3rd in each round. Both of these teams defeated during the season the eventful Eastern Division champion New York Giants during the regular season. The Eagle 1st round pick, 2nd in the draft, was traded to the Los Angeles Rams for Norm Van Brocklin. The Eagles' first pick in the draft was in round 2 with the 15th pick.

In this year's NFL Season, the Eagles and Packers would both improve to 7-5-0. Then in 1960 the Eagles and Packers would meet in the 1960 NFL Championship Game in Philadelphia. The draft had its purpose for sure.

The following six Eagles drafted this year were pro-bowlers at least one-time in their career: J.D. Smith, Wray Carlton, Nick Mumley, Willmer Fowler, Gene Johnson, and Art Powell. This set the stage for some good Eagles play in the coming years.

In the season opener on Sept 27, 1959 at San Francisco, the Eagles lost to the 49ers L (14-24) before 41,697. On Oct 4, at home, the Eagles whipped the New York Giants, W (49-21) before 27,023. On October, at home, the Eagles beat the Pittsburgh Steelers, W (28-24) before 27,343. At New York on Oct 18, the Giants defeated the Eagles L (7-24) before 68,783.

At Chicago on Oct 25, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (28-24) On Nov 1, at home, the Eagles defeated the Washington Redskins W (30-23) before 39,854. Then, on Nov 8 at Cleveland, the Browns beat the Eagles L (7-28) before 58,275. On Nov 15, at home, the

Eagles beat the Chicago Cardinals W (27–17) before 28,887. After traveling to Los Angeles on Nov 22, the Eagles gained a victory over the Rams W (23–20) before

On Nov 29, at Pittsburgh, the Steelers shutout the Eagles L (0-31). Then, at Washington on Dec 6, the Eagles overpowered the Redskins W (34–14). In the final game of the 1959 season, at home, on Dec 13, the Cleveland Browns defeated the Eagles L (28–21) before 45,952. Notice how the attendance at pro games in the 1950's continued to increase game by game, thereby assuring pro football a long life in America.

1960 Buck Shaw Coach # 8

The 1960 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buck Shaw in his third and last seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished first in the Eastern Conference with a winning record of 10-2-0. This broke the ten years spell of not making the playoffs. This was for Vince Lombardi, a one-time head coaching prospect at Philadelphia, his first year coaching the Green Bay Packers

This great Buck Shaw coaching year and Eagles 1st place, 10-2 performance culminated in the Eagles' beating the Green Bay Packers in the NFL championship game to win their third league title. The victory over the Packers was also the first and only playoff defeat of the great Vince Lombardi's coaching career. The 1960 season was the Eagles' first postseason appearance since their last NFL championship season of 1949. It was their only postseason appearance in the 28 seasons from 1950 to 1977, and their last NFL title until their victory in Super Bowl LII, 57 years later. Go Eagles!

The business of football continued this year. For example, on March 13, 1960, there was an expansion draft to “stock” the new Dallas Rangers with players. The Rangers soon afterwards changed their name to the "Cowboys." In this draft the Eagles lost tight end Dick Bielski, tackle Jerry DeLuca, and linebacker Bill Striegel to Dallas.

The 1960 NFL draft and the 1960 AFL Draft were held separately for college players (the common draft was not initiated until 1967).

The NFL Draft was a draft of 20 rounds with 12 teams picking. The Eagles would rotate having the 7th, 8th or 9th pick in the draft rounds, with Chicago and Cleveland. The quickly assembled NFL franchise of the Dallas “Cowboys,” did not have a chance to pick, as the draft was held on November 30, 1959, before they were formed, on January 28, 1960.

The NFL now had a competition with the AFL. The AFL had its own draft. The 1960 American Football League draft was held on November 22–23, 1959, in Minneapolis, shortly after the organization of the league. It lasted 33 rounds. An additional draft of 20 rounds was held by the AFL on December 2.

The Philadelphia Eagles lost 4 players to the AFL including 1st round pick Ron Burton a running back out of the Northwestern University. A total of 6 NFL 1st round picks in this draft would sign with the AFL this particular year.

On September 18, the Eagles lost to the Cleveland Browns L 24–41 0–1 56,303. It was the home and season opener for the Philadelphia Eagles. The Eagles lost a rare game this year to the Cleveland Browns L (24-41) by a healthy margin before 56,303. On Sept 25, the Eagles regrouped at Dallas and defeated the new “Cowboys” W 27–25 before 18,500. On October 2 at home , the Eagles defeated the St. Louis Cardinals W (31–27) before 33,701. At home on October 9, the Eagles whipped the Detroit Lions W (28–10) before 38,065.

Then, on Oct 16 at Cleveland, Philadelphia beat the Browns by two points W (31–29) before 64,850. The Eagles drew a bye for Oct 23. Then, on Oct 30, at home, the Eagles pounded the Pittsburgh Steelers W (34–7) bringing their record to 5–1, before 58,324 at Franklin Field. Then on Nov 6 at home, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (19–13) before 39,361. On Nov 20 at New York, the Eagles beat the Giants W (17–10) before 63,571.

Against the Giants one week later on Nov 27, at home, the Eagles, at 7–1 beat the Giants W (31-23) making them 8-1 going into December. This game was played before 60,547. Then, on Dec 4, at

St Louis, the Eagles beat the Cardinals 20-6 before 21,358. At Pittsburgh, riding high on none straight wins, the Eagles were set back on Dec 11 at Pittsburgh by the Steelers in a close match L (21-27) before 22,101. In the last game of the year, with the Eastern Championship already in the bag, the Eagles beat the Redskins on Dec 18 at Washington W 38-28 10-2 20,558

NFL Championship Game

In the Championship game on the day after Christmas, December 26, 1960, the Buck Shaw's Philadelphia Eagles got the best of Vince Lombardi's Green Bay Packers W (17-13) at Franklin Field in Philadelphia before 67,325

The 1960 National Football League championship game was the 28th NFL title game. It was played on a Monday, December 26, at Franklin Field in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

This game lives on in history. Some liken it to the landmark 1958 championship game, in which the Baltimore Colts defeated the New York Giants in sudden death overtime. The scribes had no idea how great the legend of Vince Lombardi would be; but looking back we know. This game marked the lone playoff defeat for this great Packers coach before his Packers team established a dynasty that won five NFL championships, including the first two Super Bowls, in a span of seven seasons.



Bednarik makes tackle in 1960 Eagles NFL Title game . Colorization by John Turney

This Eagles victory was the third NFL title for the Philadelphia Eagles, and their final championship until the team won Super Bowl LII in 2018. The 2018 game of course was spectacular, and it ended a 57-season championship drought.

The (AFL)American Football League was in its first season and held its inaugural title game less than a week later. First-year NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle convinced owners to move the league's headquarters from Philadelphia to New York City, and with Congressional passage of the Sports Broadcasting Act of 1961 received an antitrust exemption that allowed the league to negotiate a common broadcasting network representing all of its teams, helping cement football's ascendancy as a national sport.



This was the second and last NFL championship game played in Philadelphia, and the only one contested at Franklin Field. A dozen years earlier, the 1948 title game was held in the snow at Shibe Park and was also an Eagles' victory. As a point of interesting trivia, prices for the game were ten and eight dollars

Today, in a world of professional scalpers controlling football ticket prices, analysts say that there were plenty of tickets on the market several days before the game and the going rate or what the experts call the "get-in price" at the time was just a shade over \$2,800 on February 3.

Having researched this, for Super Bowl 52 in 2018, the face values ticket prices ranged from \$950 to \$5,000. The \$950 face value tickets were found in the upper level end zone sections, with the upper level corner sections a bit more at \$1,250. From 1960 to 2018, 57 years have passed, and the prices increased from \$8 to \$10 per ticket to \$950 to \$5000 per. That is a 100% increase.

No wonder so many people watch the game at home or at a nice comfortable tavern. In fact, many who show up for the game, sell their tickets at their hotels for a ton of cash and then take another vacation at another time. They see the game at the hotels with a group of similarly rich sellers and life is good.

Posting from FEBRUARY 14, 2011

1958: Buck Shaw Hired as Head Coach of Philadelphia Eagles

On February 14, 1958 the Philadelphia Eagles announced that Lawrence “Buck” Shaw had been hired as head coach. The Eagles most recently had endured two disappointing seasons under Hugh Devore.



Buck Shaw, coaching on the sidelines for the good of the Eagles

Since Earle “Greasy” Neale, who built the club into a two-time NFL champion, was let go in 1950, the team had gone through four head coaches, from Bo McMillin, who resigned after two games in '51 due to health reasons, through Wayne Millner, Jim Trimble, and Devore.

The 58-year-old Shaw had been a star player under Head Coach Knute Rockne at Notre Dame (where he was a teammate of the legendary George Gipp) and, with Rockne’s encouragement, went on to coach at Santa Clara, Nevada, and North Carolina State before moving into the pro ranks as the original head coach of the San Francisco 49ers in the AAFC in 1946.

“The Silver Fox”, as he was dubbed due to his full head of gray hair, stayed at the helm for nine years and his record with the 49ers, who became part of the NFL in 1950, was a solid 71-39-4. From there, he had become the first head coach at the Air Force Academy, and resigned after going 9-8-2 in two seasons.

While it was publicly stated that Shaw was signed to an extended contract, it was actually a one-year deal with an option on both sides for a second (the term was at the coach’s request). Shaw also had business interests in California and made clear that he would handle his coaching duties from June through December only, which, even in an era in which pro coaching was not yet a year-round occupation, was still somewhat unusual.

Fortunately for Shaw, while the team had played poorly in the previous three seasons (a combined 11-23-2), they had drafted well. The first four picks in ’57 alone proved valuable to the team’s future – FB Clarence Peaks from Michigan State, Wake Forest HB Billy Barnes, HB Tommy McDonald from Oklahoma, and QB Sonny Jurgensen out of Duke.

While Jurgensen started some games in his first year and showed promise, the new coach made clear at his introductory press conference that, in emphasizing the passing game, he intended to obtain an experienced and accomplished quarterback, and did so with the acquisition of 32-year-old Norm Van Brocklin from the Rams (The Dutchman was unhappy with the LA organization, especially Head Coach Sid Gillman, and was threatening to retire if not traded).

Peaks and Barnes both saw substantial action in ’57, but Coach Devore had taken criticism for his handling of the diminutive McDonald. Too small to play halfback (5’9”, 172 pounds), the coach stubbornly resisted suggestions that he be moved to flanker until late in the season. The immediate results were spectacular, and under Van Brocklin’s tutelage, McDonald developed into an outstanding deep threat.

Shaw was soft-spoken, rarely raising his voice, and acted much as the organization's CEO, letting his strong group of assistants handle the details. Offensive line coach Charlie Gauer was highly regarded, and Van Brocklin largely directed the offense. Jerry Williams proved to be an innovative and highly-effective defensive assistant. Shaw handled administration (which he did ably), made personnel decisions, and set the overall tone.

With a new home field (the University of Pennsylvania's Franklin Field) as well as head coach and quarterback, the Eagles looked to improve in 1958. The record (2-9-1) was actually worse than in '57, but the team was in the process of rebuilding and did show signs of turning around.

Van Brocklin threw the ball well (and often – he led the NFL with 374 pass attempts and 198 completions), and was an outstanding team leader. Barnes joined The Dutchman as a Pro Bowl selection, leading the club in rushing with 551 yards and gaining another 423 on 35 pass receptions.

McDonald caught just 29 passes, but 9 of them were for touchdowns and he gained 603 yards for a 20.8 average gain. Pete Retzlaff, who had been buried on the depth chart at halfback after being obtained from the Lions, was nurtured by Van Brocklin and blossomed into an outstanding end – he caught 56 passes to co-lead the NFL along with Baltimore's Raymond Berry. Veteran end Bobby Walston continued to be a reliable receiver and also handled the placekicking.

The team had been sound defensively under Devore, and contained solid players in DE Tom Scott, DT Jess Richardson, LB Bob Pellegini, HB Tom Brookshier, and safeties Jerry Norton and Lee Riley. However, players at the other positions proved less adept. Such was also the case with the offensive line, where former All-Pro linebacker Chuck Bednarik had moved to center, but holes remained elsewhere. As Van Brocklin said after the season, "We bled for linemen. After last year, Barnes and Peaks are lucky to be alive."

The personnel were overhauled as needed (they traded or released 20 players in 1958), and the Eagles improved to 7-5 in

1959 and 10-2 in '60, when they won the NFL Championship. Important acquisitions included rookies J.D. Smith (OT), Joe Robb (DE), and Gene Johnson (DB) in 1959 and Maxie Baughan (LB) and Ted Dean (RB) in '60 as well as veterans Stan Campbell (G) and Don Burroughs (FS).

Shaw made clear prior to the 1960 season that it would be his last, and he went out on top (he is pictured at top celebrating with #11 Van Brocklin & #60 Bednarik). In making his retirement official the day after the Eagles won the championship, he said "I can't think of a better time to bow out. I can't soar any higher than being head coach of a world championship professional football team. It was a distinct pleasure coaching the Eagles, and I can't pay too high a tribute to this 1960 team. It was a team of tremendous desire, a team that just would not accept defeat."

Shaw returned to California and retirement with a 90-55-5 overall record as a pro head coach (AAFC and NFL) and 2-1 in the postseason. He was remembered long afterward as a quiet but firm gentleman who demanded top performance and molded a championship team (McDonald compared him to Bud Wilkinson, his coach at Oklahoma).

Much to the consternation of Van Brocklin, who believed he had been promised the job, assistant coach Nick Skorich was named as Shaw's successor. After contending in 1961, the injury-plagued Eagles dropped to the basement in '62 and '63. They would not return to the postseason until 1978.

POSTED BY KEITH YOWELL AT 6:18 AM

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<https://fs64sports.blogspot.com/2011/02/1958-buck-shaw-hired-as-head-coach-of.html>

1961 Nick Skorich # 9

The 1961 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their twenty-ninth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Nick Skorich in his first of three seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished first in the Eastern Conference with a winning record of 10-4-0. The Eagles did not make the playoffs this year after losing to the NY Giants in Game

#13 this year. The Giants finished 10-3 to take the Eastern Championship.



Nick Skorich Instructing the troops

The 1961 NFL Draft and the 1961 AFL Draft were separate drafts, and players could end up being drafted by both leagues.

The NFL Draft of 20 rounds with 14 teams picking were separate drafts for college players and took place on December 27–28, 1960. The Eagles would pick last because of their 10–2 record in the 1960 season. This draft was also the first regular draft for the Dallas Cowboys as they had participated only in the 1960 NFL Expansion Draft that year. The Cowboys held the worst record in the NFL the previous season, but selected second in this draft because of the entry of the Minnesota Vikings into the league.

The league would later hold an expansion draft for the Vikings' expansion franchise, and the Vikings were also awarded the first selection position in this draft.

The AFL draft was held on 2 dates 2 weeks apart at the end of the 1960 college season but before the bowl games. The first was a six-round draft held by phone. The second was held December 5 and 6, 1960 for rounds 7 through 30.

The Denver Broncos selected New Mexico State's Bob Gaiters as the overall first draft pick. The Philadelphia Eagles lost their first-round pick to the AFL for the second year. About half of the Eagles' 19 picks either signed with the AFL or remained in college to play their last year of eligibility.

With the addition of Dallas and Minnesota, the NFL teams would play 14 games this year.

In the season and home opener, on Sept 17, the Eagles defeated the Cleveland Browns W (27–20) before 60,671. On Sept 24, 1961, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (14–7) before 50,108. In the first of several season spoilers, on Oct 1 at home, the St. Louis Cardinals barely beat the Eagles L (27–30) before 59,399. On Oct 8 at home for four in a row, the Eagles defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers W (21–16) before 60,671. Then, on Oct 15, at St. Louis, the Eagles beat the Cardinals before 20,262.

On Oct 22, 1961 at Dallas, the Eagles thumped the Cowboys W (43–7) before 25,000. At Washington, on Oct 29, the Eagles prevailed v the Redskins W (27–24) before 31,066. Then, on November 5, at home, the Eagles beat the Chicago Bears by two points W (16–14) before 60,671. At New York, on Nov 12, the Eagles were beaten by the Giants L (21-38) before 62,800. At Cleveland, on Nov 19, the Eagles went down for their third loss of the season l (24–45) before 68,399. If the Eagles had won their next four games, they would have tied for first.

At home on Nov 26, the Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys W (35–13) before 60,127. Then, on Dec 3, at Pittsburgh, the Eagles beat the Steelers W 35–24 before 21,653. In the game that cost first place, on Dec 10, at home, the New York Giants beat the Eagles L (24–28) before 60,671. Eagle attendance was at its best. Then, on Dec 17, in the season finale, at Detroit, the Eagles beat the Lions by three W (27–24) before 44,231

1962 Nick Skorich # 9

The 1962 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirtieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Nick Skorich in his second of three seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished in seventh place in the Eastern Conference with a losing record of 3-10-0. The Eagles had a terrible record and were nowhere close to making the playoffs this year. The Eagles got off to a slow start and it got worse.

On Sept 16, 1962 in the home and season opener, the St. Louis Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (27–21) before 60,671. On Sept 23, at home, the New York Giants Philadelphia L (13–29) before 60,671. At home again on Sept 30, 1962, the Eagles grabbed one of its three wins this season W (36-7) against the Cleveland Browns before 60,671. At Pittsburgh on October 6, the Eagles were defeated by the Steelers L (7–13) before 23,164. Then on October 14, at the Dallas Cowboys, the Eagles lost (19–41) before 18,645. Ironically as the Eagles attendance improved, their record seemed to be getting worse.

At home on Oct 21, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (21–27) before 60,671 at Franklin Field. Then on Oct 28, the Eagles could not beat the newest team in the league and went down at Minnesota to the Vikings L 21–31 before 30,071. On Nov, at Cleveland, the Eagles played the Browns to a tie T (14–14) before 63,848. In one of the worst thrashings ever, Lombardi's Packers ruled Franklin Field on Nov 11, as Green Bay thumped a shutout at Philadelphia L (0–49) before 60,671. At New York on Nov 18, the Eagles went down again to the Giants L (14–19) before 62,705.

At home against the Dallas Cowboys, the Eagles pulled out a W, (28–14) before 58,070. At Washington on Dec 2, the Redskins lost to the Eagles W (37–14) before 32,229. Then on Dec 9, the Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Philadelphia Eagles in a tight match L (17–26) before 60,671. Wrapping up a very poor season that might cost Skorich his job, on Dec 16, at St. Louis, the Cardinals beat the Eagles L (35–45) before 14,989

1963 Nick Skorich # 9

The 1963 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Nick Skorich in his third at last of three seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished in seventh place in the Eastern Conference with a losing record of 2-12-2. The Eagles had a terrible record with one less win than in 1962, and they were nowhere close to making the playoffs again this year. Coach Skorich would not see another year with Philadelphia

For Philadelphia fans, with all the support they were now showing, they would not tolerate losing seasons or worse yet, terrible records in non-winning seasons. Eagles fans go to games to win! Jerry Wolman know but Eagles fans did not know that new coach Joe Kuharich, a nice guy was not accustomed to winning. We will have to get through the season's games in Nick Skorich's last year before we can move in this book to Joe Kuharich's teams. I don't think we will be any more pleased over all.

On Sept 15, at the season and home opener for the Eagles, the 1963 Birds tied the Pittsburgh Steelers T (21–21) before 58,205. Then, on Sept 22, at home, the Eagles lost 2 of 2 to the St. Louis Cardinals L (24–28) before 60,671. At home again on Sept 29, the New York Giants overpowered the Eagles L 37–14 before 60,671. In a fourth home game in a row, on Oct 6, the Eagles won their first—this time over the Dallas Cowboys W (24–21) before 60,671. At Washington, on Oct 13, the Eagles won their second game in a row and last of the season v the Washington Redskins W (37–24) before 49,219 fans.

At Cleveland on Oct 20, the Browns overpowered the Eagles L (7–37) before a packed house of 75,174. At Chicago on Oct 27, the Bears beat the Eagles L (7–16) before 48,514. Then, on Nov 3, at home, Philadelphia lost to the Cleveland Browns L (17–23) before 60,671. On Nov 10, against the New York Giants, Philadelphia could not keep up L (12–42) before 62,936. Then, on Nov 17, at Dallas, the Cowboys managed to beat the Eagles in a fair fight L (20–27) before 23,694.

At home on Nov 24, the Eagles could not keep enough steam to beat the Washington Redskins L (10–13) before 60,671. At Pittsburgh on Dec 1, the Eagles played the Steelers to a tie T (20–20) before 16,721. Then on Dec 8, at St. Louis, the Cardinals wrecked the Eagles L (14–38) before 15,979. On Dec 15, the last game of the 1963 season, the Minnesota Vikings whooped the Eagles L (13-34) before 57,403 fans at home.

1964 Joe Kuharich # 10

The 1964 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Joe Kuharich in his first of five seasons as head coach. This Eagles team finished in third place in the Eastern Conference with a losing record of 6-8-0. The Eagles had a terrible record, yet they had four more wins than in 1963. But, they were nowhere close to making the playoffs again this year. Coach Kuharich's record was much better than the prior Skorich years. As time went by, the Eagles kept giving him one more chance.

Coach Kuharich was hired as Eagles' Head Coach after he left Notre Dames. At ND, his record was less than stellar and when job shopping in Philadelphia. His major accomplishment was historically that he was the Irish's only head coach that had a lifetime losing record, while coaching there. His record was 17–23 in 4 years.

New owner Jerry Wolman of the Eagles was a nice guy who had a lot of money. He wanted Philadelphia to do well but perhaps he interfered too much in operations to make his wish come true. In the picture below, Kuharich looks at his contract and a cameraman and a reporter and he gives the A-OK signal. The picture reveals more than anybody knew at the time. The fans were apparently the last ones considered.



Eagles coach Joe Kuharich, treasurer & VP Ed Snider, & owner Jerry Wolman

Wolman gave an unproven coach, Joe Kuharich, what pundits at the time called “an *unheard-of* contract of \$1 million over 15 years”. Taking over as the boss of the team, Kuharich then traded future Hall of Famers Sonny Jurgensen to the Washington Redskins and Tommy McDonald to the Dallas Cowboys. You tell me? No Eagle fan that I know of was happy about those trades.

Earl Gros and Pro Bowl and Hall of Fame member Jim Ringo were acquired reportedly when he tried to have an agent talk for him during Ringo's 1964 contract talks with Green Bay. The Eagles sent Lee Roy Caffey and their 1965 1st round draft pick to the Packers. Nice guys often finish last but Kuharich was such an engaging individual, he won many hearts and minds to his side. Everybody seemed to like him and so he was a survivor.

Looking at the 1964 NFL Draft and the 1964 AFL Draft, they were 2 different drafts held by the respected leagues. The NFL Draft was held on December 2, 1963, and the AFL Draft was held on November 30, 1963.

NFL teams had rules that said they could draft any eligible player coming out of college, the AFL had territorial picks in the early rounds. These were players that lived in a certain area or went to college there. This could be why the Eagles 2nd round pick (16th pick), was the AFL's 1st pick in the draft.

Some players made arrangements with the AFL leaders that they would sign if a certain team drafted them. It is believed that this information was relayed to the AFL teams. Some of these players signed contracts as soon as their last college game was over on the field or in the parking lot. NFL terms were more rigid.

The NFL Draft this year was for 20 rounds with 14 teams picking. The Eagles had the second pick in those rounds. They ended up picking 18 players.

The best overall pick in the draft was Dave Parks, an End out of Texas Tech. The Eagles choose future Hall of Fame member Bob Brown, an offensive tackle out of Nebraska. There were 10 Hall of Fame members taken in this draft, 4 of them in the first round.

The Dallas Cowboys get 2 of them when they take a chance on Bob Hayes in the 7th round and Roger Staubach in the 10th round. Roger Staubach was not a freebie as he still had to serve a 4-year military obligation in the US Navy before he could play NFL football. They were the rules of the United States Naval Academy.

In the home and season opener for the Philadelphia Eagles in 1964, the 1September 13, 1964, the first year under former Notre Dame coach Joe Kuharich. The Eagles beat the Giants (38–7) before 60,671. In a tight match on Sept 20 at home, the San Francisco 49ers defeated the Eagles L (24–28) before 57,353. Then, on Sept 27, the Eagles went down again to the Cleveland Browns L (20–28) before 60,671. On Oct 4, at home, the Eagles beat the Pittsburgh Steelers W (21–7) before 59,354. Then, on Oct 11, at Washington, the Eagles lost to the Redskins L (20–35).

On Oct 18, at New York, the Eagles beat the Giants W (23–17) before 62,978. At Pittsburgh on Oct 25, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (34–10) before 38,393. At home on Nov 1, the Washington

Redskins defeated the Eagles L (10–21) before 60,671. The Eagles then took off to the West Coast to meet Los Angeles. The Rams beat the Eagles that day L (10–20) before 53,994. On Nov 15 at Dallas, the Eagles beat the Cowboys W (17-14) before 55,972.

The Eagles then lost three of their last four games. The first was on Nov 22 at home against the St. Louis Cardinals L (13–38) The next was on Nov 29 at Cleveland where the Browns handed the Eagles a L (14-24) loss. The next loss was on Dec 13 at St. Louis in a two-point match to end the season against the Cardinals L (34-36) before 24, 636. In between the three losses, the Eagles managed to beat the Cowboys at home W (24-14) on Dec. 6 before 60, 671.

1965 Joe Kuharich # 10

The 1965 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Joe Kuharich in his second of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Jerry Wolman. This Eagles team finished in fifth place in the Eastern Conference with a losing record of 5-9-0. The Eagles had a terrible record with one less wins than in 1964. The Eagles began the season with a win against the St. Louis Cardinals that followed with a loss against the New York Giants. In the season, for every win they had, a loss followed. The Eagles lost four games in a row after winning against the Dallas Cowboys. Those chains of losses caused the team to fall into 5th place of the NFL Eastern Division, and cost them from entering the playoffs.

Both the 1965 NFL Draft and the 1965 AFL Draft both took place on Saturday, November 28, 1964. This happened to be the day of the Army-Navy game that was normally the last game of the college season before the bowl games fired up.

Though at the same time, the two draft sessions were separate from each other and some players were drafted by both leagues. The AFL was going strong at the time, and it wanted future big stars signed. It would do what it could to please them if they signed with the AFL.

Joe Namath signed with New York, where he wanted to live, and he was given a big salary at the time of \$427,000. As in earlier years some players had signed "AFL contracts." In other words, they signed with the league as soon as their last college game was over and when drafted by an AFL team the contract was transferred to the team. To help fight this "unfair piracy" the NFL moved the draft up to near the end of the college season.

A new kind of job was created, "baby sitter". Their job was to hang with the draft prospect and keep him away from the other leagues representative. The Eagles draft pick, Otis Taylor, for example, was held in a motel and had to "escape" from the NFL baby sitter. He later signed with the AFL for money and a "Red Thunderbird Convertible" that the AFL baby sitter was driving. Taylor noticed how a lot of people stared at the car when they drove by, and he wanted one. Marketing to the players was a big deal.

The first player selected in the NFL draft was Tucker Frederickson, a back from Auburn. The NY Giants got the pick. The draft was marked by the failure of the NFL to sign Joe Namath (Cardinals), who signed with the American Football League's New York Jets. As we almost all know, Namath and the Jets went on to defeat the NFL's Colts for the World Championship after the 1968 season. The AFL was very, very successful.

In the home and season opener in 1965, which, by the way was the year I graduated from high school, on Sept 19, the Eagles got off to a great start by beating the St. Louis Cardinals W (34-27) before 54,260. On Sept 26, the Eagles lost by just two points against the New York Giants at home L (14-16) before 57,154. Then, on Oct 3, the Cleveland Browns outplayed the Eagles at Franklin Field and outscored the Eagles 2 to 1, L (17-35) before 60,759. Then, at Dallas on Oct 10, the Eagles their pound of flesh from the Cowboys W (35-24) before 56,249. On Oct 17, at New York, the Giants beat the Eagles by one TD L (27-35) before 62,815.

At home on Oct 24, the Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Eagles L (14-20) before 56,515 fans. Then at Washington, on Oct 31, the Redskins beat the Eagles by just two points in a close match L (21-23) before 50,301. On Nov 7, 1965 at Cleveland, the Eagles were defeated by the Browns L (34-38) before 72,807. Next, at home, the

beat the Washington Redskins W (21–14) before 60,444. Then, on Nov 21, at Baltimore, the Eagles lost another to the Colts L (24–34) before 60,238

On Nov 28, at home, the Eagles beat the St. Louis Cardinals W (28–24) before 28,706. Then, on December 5, at home, the Eagles lost a nail-biter to the Dallas Cowboys L (19–21) before 54,714. At Pittsburgh on Dec 12, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (47–13) before 22,002. Then, in the final game of the season, on Dec 19, the Detroit Lions beat the Eagles L (28–35) before 56,718.

1966 Joe Kuharich # 10

The 1966 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Joe Kuharich in his third of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Jerry Wolman. This Eagles team picked itself up by the bootstraps and played hard enough for coach Kuharich to give them their best season under this coach, finishing tied for 2nd place and making the playoff bowl with a record of 9-5-0. They Lost NFL Playoff Bowl (vs. Colts) 14-20

In the season opener in 1966, in Sept 11, at St. Louis, the Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (13–16) before 39,066. In the home opener at Franklin Field, on September 18, the Eagles beat the Atlanta Falcons, W (23–10) before 54,049, At home again on Sept 25, the Eagles defeated the New York Giants W (35–17) before 60,177. Then the Eagles evened out their record at 2-2 with a loss to the St. Louis Cardinals at home on Oct 2 L (10–41 before 59,305. At Dallas on Oct 9, the Cowboys shellacked the Eagles L (7–56) before 69,372

At Pittsburgh on Oct 16, the Eagles beat the Steelers W (31–14) before 28,233. On Oct 23 at New York, the Eagles overpowered the Giants W (31–3) before 63, 018, giving them their first positive record of the year. Then on Oct 30 at home, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (13–27) before 60,652. On Nov 6, the Eagles were ready for Dallas and would not give up against the Cowboys W (24–23) before 60,658. On Nov 13, at Cleveland, the Eagles lost to the Browns L (7–27) before 77,968.

Next up at San Francisco, on Nov 20, the Eagles got the win in a nail-biter against the 49ers W (35–34) before 31,993. Because there was an expansion team this year, there was no game on Nov. 27. On Dec 4 at home the Eagles beat the Pittsburgh Steelers W (27–23) before 54,275. Then, on Dec 11 at home, the Eagles beat the Cleveland Browns W (33–21) before 58,074. The Eagles finished the season with their fourth win in a row, at Washington, putting the Redskins down W (37-28)

1967 Joe Kuharich # 10

The 1967 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Joe Kuharich in his fourth of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Jerry Wolman. This Eagles team fell backwards this year after a nice 1966. The finished 6-7-1 and grabbed 2nd place in the NFL Capitol Division. They did not qualify for the playoffs.

In the season and home opener on Sept 17, 1967 the Eagles defeated the Washington Redskins W (35–24) before 60,709. On Sept 24, at home, the Baltimore Colts walloped the Philadelphia Eagles L (6-38) before 60,755. On Oct 1, at home, Philadelphia beat Pittsburgh W (34–24) before 60,335. At Atlanta, the Eagles overpowered the Falcons on Oct 8, W (38–7) before 53,868. Back at home, in Franklin Field, on Oct 15, the San Francisco 49ers nipped the Eagles by enough for the win. L (27-28) before 60,825.

On Oct 22 at St. Louis, the Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (14-48) before 46,562. At home, on October 29, the Eagles defeated the Dallas Cowboys W (21–14) before 60,740. Then, on Nov 5, at New Orleans, the Saints beat the Eagles L (24-31) 59,596. At Los Angeles on Nov 12, the Rams beat the Eagles L (17-33) before 57,628. At home, on Nov 19, Philadelphia beat New Orleans W (48–21) before 60,751.

At New York, on Nov 26, the Giants whipped the Eagles L (7-44) before 63,027. Then, on Dec 3, at Washington, the Eagles tied the Redskins T (35–35) before 50,451. On December 10, at Dallas, the

Eagles were beaten by the Cowboys L (17-38) before 55,834. In the season finale, the Eagles found the grit and the muscle to defeat the Cleveland Browns on Dec 17 W (28–24) before 60,658 fans at home.

1968 Joe Kuharich # 10

The 1968 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-sixth fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Joe Kuharich in his fifth and last season as head coach. The owner was Jerry Wolman. This Eagles team fell backwards this year after a nice 1966. They finished 2-12 and came in 4th place in the NFL Capitol Division. They did not qualify for the playoffs. This was Kuharich's worst season with the Eagles after just one winning season in five years.

The fans saw a bad year coming and seemed to think they would have some consolation if they were to O.J. Simpson in the Draft. This would only happen of course if the Eagles went winless. So, the fans who had little respect for the coach at this time, hoped to go winless to help the new coach the following year.

But, with the Eagles at 2-12, this put the Buffalo Bills with a 1-12-1 record in last place and so they got Simpson with the 1st Pick. The Eagles were clearly on target for a winless season at 0–11 until they won their twelfth game. They were the first team in the NFL proper to lose eleven consecutive games in one season since the 1936 season. Though they were part of the AFL, and not the NFL in 1962, the Oakland Raiders lost their first thirteen games that year.

On the lighter side today but not back then in Philadelphia, one of the most infamous incidents in Philadelphia sports history came at halftime of the final game of the dismal 1968 season. The Eagles were well on their way to losing to the Minnesota Vikings at halftime. The team management had planned an extravaganza for half-time. It was to be a Christmas pageant. However, field conditions were so poor, they had to cancel the big deal. Instead, the team found a fan dressed as Santa Claus, and they coaxed him to run onto the field to celebrate with a group of cheerleaders. With their Eagles in such a sorry state, the fans, were in no mood to

celebrate. Instead, they loudly booed and actually threw snowballs at Santa Claus. The sense of frustration was as Nat King Cole would say, “Unforgettable.”

In the season opener on Sept 15, at Green Bay, the Packers beat the Eagles L (13-30) before 50,861. This would be just the first of a string of eleven losses until game 12. It was played before 50,861. On Sept 22, the New York Giants rolled into Philadelphia and beat the hapless Eagles L (25-34) before 60,858. On Sept 29 at home, the Dallas Cowboys smothered the Eagles L (13-45) before 60,858. At Washington, on Oct 6, the Redskins had just enough to beat the Eagles L (14-17) before 50,816. Then, on Oct 13, at Dallas the Cowboys overpowered the Eagles L (14-34) before 72,083

On Oct 20, at home, the Chicago Bears beat the Eagles L (16-29) before 60,858. Then on Oct 27, 1968 at Pittsburgh, in a game with no touchdowns, the Steelers beat the Eagles L (3-6) before 26,908. Then, at home on Nov 3, the St. Louis Cardinals got the best of the Eagles L (17-45) before 59,208. At home again on November 10, the Washington Redskins kept the Eagles winless string going L (10-16) before 59,133. At New York on Nov 17, the Giants beat the Eagles by one point L (6-7) before 62,896.

On the day of Philadelphia’s eleventh straight loss, before 62,338 on Nov 24 at Cleveland, the Browns pounded the Eagles L (13-47). At Detroit on Nov 28, the Eagles captured their first game of the season in their twelfth game against the W (12-0) before 47,909. On Dec 8, at home Philadelphia beat the New Orleans Saints W (29-17) before 57,128, for the second win of the season.

On Santa Snowball day on December 15, at home in the season closer, the Minnesota Vikings took away coach Kuharich’s thoughts of ending his five years on a positive note L (17-24) before a less-than capacity crowd at Franklin Field of 54,530. The Eagles would play just two more seasons at Franklin Field before moving to Veterans Stadium for the next thirty plus years.

Chapter 7 Three Great Coaches From 1969 to 1975

Coach #11 Jerry Williams

Coach #12 Ed Khayat

Coach #13 Mike McCormack

Year	Coach	Conf	Div	Place	Record
1969	Jerry Williams.	Eastern	Capito	4th	4-9-1
1970	Jerry Williams	NFC	East	5th	3-10-1
1971	Jerry Williams	NFC	East	3rd	0-3-0
<u>1969-1971 Jerry Williams final record (7-22-2)</u>					
1971	Ed Khayat	NFC	East	3rd	6-4-1
1972	Ed Khayat	NFC	East	5th	2-11-1
<u>1971-1972 Ed Khayat final record (8-15-2)</u>					
1973	M. McCormack	NFC	East	3rd	5-8-1
1974	M. McCormack	NFC	East	4th	7-7-0
1975	M. McCormack	NFC	East	5th	4-10-0, —
<u>1973-1975 Mike McCormack final record (16-25-1)</u>					

1969 Jerry Williams # 11

The 1969 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football.



Jerry Williams Eagles Coach

They were led by Jerry Williams in his first of three seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. This Eagles team improved over Kuharich's 2-12 season with two more wins. They finished 4-9-1 and came in 4th place again in the NFL Capitol Division. They did not qualify for the playoffs. Williams would last just one more season and part of a third as Jerry Williams did not deliver the wins as expected by the fans.

The Eagles wore both green (for road games) and white (for home games) helmets during the season. The new white helmets would become part of the Eagles' permanent uniform for the subsequent four seasons.

The 1969 National Football League Draft occurred when I was a senior in college. It was part of the Common Draft, the third and final year in which the NFL and American Football League (AFL) held a joint draft of college players. The draft took place on January 28–29, 1969, finishing up a day before my birthday, which as a college senior permitted me to drink what had been the contraband at football games. Philadelphia would alternate with Atlanta in picking 2nd and 3rd in the 17 rounds of the draft.

O.J. Simpson graduated as the incumbent Heisman Trophy winner. He was an impressive running back from USC. The AFL's Buffalo gained his services. As noted previously, the Eagles lost Simpson by being too good of a team. In the 14-game 1968 season the Eagles first win came in week 12 on Nov 18. They beat both the Lions and the Saints before losing their last game. By just a half-game, the lost the first pick to Buffalo.

The Atlanta Falcons (2–12) who would win a coin flip for the rights to the second pick in the draft, George Kunz was their pick. He had been an offensive tackle from Notre Dame. Future Hall of Famer "Mean "Joe Greene, defensive tackle from North Texas would go as a 4th pick, by the Pittsburgh Steelers (2–11–1). The Draft is always exciting in pro football. It's like restocking a liquor cabinet.

There were lots of losses like in the past for this Eagles season and they began right at the beginning in the home and season opener. On Sept 21, the Cleveland Browns won a one TD game L (20-27) before 60,658. The Pittsburgh Steelers were beaten by the Eagles in Game 2

on Sept 28, W (41–27) before 60,658. At home again on Oct 5, the Dallas Cowboys whooped the Eagles L (7–38) before 60,658. At Baltimore on October 13, the Colts beat the Eagles L (20-24) before 56,864. The next game was at Dallas where the Cowboys pounded the Eagles for the second time this season L (14–49) before 71,509.

The Eagles then managed to beat the New Orleans Saints on Oct 26, W (13–10) before 60,658. Ready to win every week, at New York, on Nov 2, the Giants were taken down by the Eagles in a close match W (23–20) before 62,912. At Washington on Nov 9, the Redskins tied the Eagles T (28–28) before 50,502. On Nov 16, at home, the LA Rams slid by the Eagles L (17–23) before 60,658. Then, at St. Louis, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (30–34) before 45,512

At New Orleans on Nov 30, the Saints got the best of the Eagles L (17–26) before a fine crowd of 72,805. On Dec 7 at home, the Washington Redskins beat Philadelphia L (29–34) before 60,658. When the Atlanta Falcons came to Franklin Field in 1969, they beat the Eagles L (3–27) before 60,658. Then, wrapping up the season at San Francisco, the Eagles could not hang on and went down at the hands of the 49ers L (13–14) before 25,391. And so, it went in 1969.

1970 Jerry Williams # 11

The 1970 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirty-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Jerry Williams in his second of three seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. This Eagles team failed to improve over the prior year's 4-win season. They finished 3-10-1 and came in 5th place again in the NFC East. The new name for the division / conference combination.

The Eagles did not qualify for the playoffs. This would be Williams' last full season with the Eagles, but he would begin the 1971 season as head coach none-the-less. Wins were hard to come by during Williams' tenure. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the tenth consecutive season. It would take still a few more coaches to get back the right formula

In the season and home opener on Sept 20, 1970, the Dallas Cowboys delivered an initial blow that marked the rest of the season L (7–17) before 59,728. On Sept 27, at Chicago, the Bears had it all as they beat the Eagles L (16–20) before 53,463. Then, on October 4, my wedding anniversary, at home, the Washington Redskins convincingly beat the Eagles L (21–33) before 60,658. At New York, on Oct 11, consistently tough Giants squad took on and beat the Eagle sin a close match L (23–30) before 62,820. At home on Oct 18, the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Eagles by more than two TD's L (20–35) before 59,002.

At Green Bay on Oct 25, the Packers beat the Eagles L (17–30) before 48,022. On Nov 1 at Dallas, the Cowboys beat the Eagles L (17–21) before 55,736. At home on November 8, the Eagles beat the Miami Dolphins W (24–17) before 58,171. At home, the Atlanta Falcons tied the Eagles on Nov 15, T (13–13) before 55,425. Then, at home on Nov 23, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (23–20) before 59,117.

At St. Louis on November 29, the Eagles were beaten by the Cardinals L (14–23) before 46,581. On Dec 6, at Baltimore, the Colts got the best of the Eagles L (10–29) before 60,240. At Washington on Dec 13, the Redskins overpowered the Eagles L (6–24) before 50,415. Wrapping up the 1970 season at home, on Dec 20, the Eagles defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers W (30–20) before 55,252

1971 Jerry Williams # 11, (0-3-0)

1971 Ed Khayat #12, (6-4-1)

The 1971 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their thirtieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Jerry Williams in his third of three seasons as head coach for the first three games (0-3-0) The owner was Leonard Tose. After the third game, Williams was replaced by Ed Khayat and he led the team to a 6-4-1 record.

With Khayat, this Eagles team improve over the prior year's 3-win season by closing out with six wins in total. They finished 6-7-1 and came in 3rd place in the NFC East. Despite the improvement, the

team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the eleventh consecutive season.



Coach Ed Khayat

The great wide receiver Harold Carmichael, a future Eagle's Pro-Bowler was picked in the seventh round of the draft and he enlivened every game in which he played. This year's home field was the brand-new Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia.

In the season opener at Cincinnati on Sept 19, 1971 at Cincinnati, the Bengals defeated the Eagles L (14-37) before 55,880. In the home opener, the second game of the 1971 season, in the inaugural game in Veterans Stadium, the Dallas Cowboys came in with a full head of steam on Sept 26 and destroyed Philadelphia's first Veterans' Stadium Party L (7-42). It was a lopsided game that made the Cowboys look great. In the third straight loss which prompted Williams' firing on Oct 3, at home, the Eagles were manhandled by the San Francisco 49ers L (3-31) before 65,358.

On Oct 10, at home, Ed Khayat's first game as head coach. Minnesota shut out Philadelphia L (0-13) before 65,358. Notice

how the attendance is up by over 5,000 a game due to the capacity increase of the Vet over Franklin Field. At Oakland, on Oct 17, the Eagles were still losing every game and the Raiders kept the streak going L (10–34) before 54,615. The wins would begin to tickle in, but they were real for sure.

They began on Oct 24, when Philadelphia beat New York W (23–7) at home before 65,358. Then at home again on Oct 31, the Eagles squeaked by Denver W (17–16) before 65,358. The season slowed down when at Washington on Nov 7, the Redskins played the Eagles tough to a tie T (7–7) before 53,041. At Dallas, on Nov 14, the Eagles suffered their second last loss to the Cowboys L (7–20) before 60,178.

On Nov 21, the Eagles played well and beat the St. Louis Cardinals W (37–20) before 48,658. At home on Nov 28, the Washington Redskins inflicted the last loss of the season at home on the now feisty Eagles L (13–20) before 65,358. On Dec 5, at Detroit, the Eagles beat the Lions W (23–20) before 54,418. Then on Dec 12, at home, the Eagles beat the St. Louis Cardinals W (19–7) in a packed house of 65,358. Finishing up the season. At the vaunted, NY Giants, the Eagles prevailed on Dec 19 W (41–28) before 62,774

1972 Ed Khayat #12

The 1972 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fortieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Ed Khayat in his second of two seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. After a promising mid-season takeover in 1971, it was surprising for Ed Khayat to bring in just two wins in the 1972 season.

The Eagles failed to improve on their previous record of 6–7–1. They won only two games and failed to qualify for the playoffs for the twelfth consecutive season. Leonard Tose had yet to have a winning season. Was I this fault? Both of the Eagles' victories were not very convincing with one-point decisions on the road vs. supposedly weaker AFC teams. For example, 21-20 over the Kansas City Chiefs and 18-17 over the Houston Oilers. The meeting with the

Chiefs was the last until 1992, and Kansas City did not come to play Philadelphia until 1998.

Following this disastrous season, the third with three wins or fewer since 1968, general manager Pete Retzlaff resigned, and coach Ed Khayat was fired by owner Leonard Tose. Pro football is for pros.

Being such a poor team for so long, the Eagles should have had good draft picks and should have been able to draft better players. The 1972 NFL Draft was held on February 1–2, 1972. It lasted 17 rounds and a total of 443 players were chosen

The Eagle chose several no-name players such as John Reaves a quarterback from the University of Florida with the 14th pick in the 1st round. They would have the pick 14th in all 17 rounds. They chose 17 players in this year's draft.

The number 1 overall pick went to the Buffalo Bills who chose Walt Patulski a Defensive end from Notre Dame. In the 2nd round with the 40th pick, the Atlanta Falcons took the 1971 Heisman Trophy winner Pat Sullivan, a Quarterback from Auburn University. The eagles winning woes were not yet over.

In the season opener on Sept 17, 1972 at Dallas, the Cowboys defeated the Eagles L (6–28) before 55,850. In the home opener on Sept 24, 1972, the Cleveland Browns beat the Eagles L (17–27) before 65,720. On Oct 2, at home, the New York Giants defeated the Philadelphia Eagles L (12–27) before 65,720. At Washington on Oct 8, the Redskins shut out the Eagles (0–14) before 53,039. Then, after a trip to the West Coast, the Eagles were slammed by the Los Angeles Rams L (3–34) before 65,720.

On Oct 22, at Kansas City, the Eagles beat the Chiefs by just one point. W (21–20) before 78,389. Then, on Oct 29, at New Orleans, the Saints overpowered the Eagles L (3–21) before 65,664. On Nov 5, at home, the Eagles tied the St. Louis Cardinals T (6–6) before 65,720. At Houston on Nov 12, the Eagles won their second game of the season by just one point against the Oilers W (18–17) before 34,175. At home on Nov 19, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Philadelphia Eagles L (7–28) before 65,720.

At New York on Nov 26, the Giants shellacked the Eagles L (10–62) before 62,586. On Dec 3, at home, the Washington Redskins powered through the Eagles L (7–23) before 65,720. On Dec 10, the Chicago Bears beat the Eagles at home L (12–21) before 65,720. In the season finale at St. Louis, on Dec 17, the Cardinals beat the Eagles by one L (23–24) before 34,872

1973 Mike McCormack #13

The 1973 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football.



Coach Mike McCormack with team

The Eagles were led by Mike McCormack in his first of three seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles improved on their previous record of 2–11–1. They won only five games (5-8-1), giving them seven straight losing seasons. Moreover, they failed to qualify for the playoffs for the thirteenth consecutive season.

In the home and season opener at the Vet, on Sept 16, 1973, the St. Louis Cardinals beat Philadelphia L (23–34) before 61,103. At New York on Sept 23, the Eagles made up for last season's walloping and tied the Giants at home T (23–23) before 62,289. What a difference a new coach makes but maybe not for long. At home, on Sept 30, the Washington Redskins defeated the Eagles L (7–28) before 64,147. At Buffalo at Oct 7, the Eagles lost by a point L (26–27) before 72,364. Then, on Oct 14, at St. Louis, the Eagles prevailed over the Cardinals W (27–24) before 44,400.

Then on Oct 21, at Minnesota, the Vikings pulled off a one-TD victory L (21–28) before 47,478. At home, on Oct 28, Philadelphia beat the Dallas Cowboys W (30–16) before 63,300. At home on Nov 4, the Eagles found the one point to beat the New England Patriots W (24–23) before 65,070. Atlanta came into the Vet on Veterans day Nov 11, and the Falcons got the V, L (27–44) before 63,114. Off to Dallas on Nov 18, the Cowboys handed the Eagles a decisive loss L (10–31) before 59,375.

At home, on Nov 25, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (20–16) before 63,086. Off to San Francisco to play the 49ers on Dec 2, the trip resulted in a loss for the Eagles L (28–38) before 51,155. At home on Dec 9, the Eagles beat the New York Jets W (24–23) before 34,621. The crowds were thinning. In the season closer at Washington on Dec 16, the Redskins prevailed L (20–38) before 49,484.

1974 Mike McCormack #13

The 1974 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Mike McCormack in his second of three seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles improved on their previous record of 5-8-1 by winning seven games and hitting 500 after a lot of losing seasons. They won seven games (7-7-0), breaking their seven straight losing season streak. Despite the improvement, they failed to qualify for the playoffs for the fourteenth consecutive season.

Trivia: After having worn white helmets for the previous four seasons, the Eagles switched back to green helmets in 1974. The team has worn green helmets since.

Opening up their season on Sept 15, 1974 at St. Louis, the Eagles could not manage a win against the Cardinals L (3–7) before 40,322. In the home opener on Sept 23, the Eagles quietly beat the Dallas Cowboys W (13–10) before 64,089. At the Vet again the next week, Sept 29, the Eagles defeated the Baltimore Colts W (30–10) before 64,205. At San Diego on Oct 6, the Eagles beat the Chargers W (13–7) before 36,124. When the New York Giants came to the Vet on Oct 13, the Eagles were ready and sent them home losers W (35–7) before 64,801

At Dallas on Oct 20, the Cowboys beat the Eagles L (24–31) before 43,586. At New Orleans on October 27, the Eagles lost to the Saints L (10–14) before 64,257. On Nov 3, at Pittsburgh, the Steelers shut out the Eagles L (0–27) before 47,996. At home, on Nov 10, the Washington Redskins beat Philadelphia by a TD L (20–27) before 65,947. At the Vet again on Nov 17, the St. Louis Cardinals grabbed a win from the Eagles L (3–13) before 61,982

At Washington on Nov 24, the Eagles were beaten by the Redskins L (7–26) before 54,395. At home, on Dec 1 for the winter season. Philadelphia whipped the Green Bay Packers W (36–14) before a group of cold 42,030 fans. On Dec 8, at New York, the Eagles beat the Giants W (20–7) before 21,170. In the last game of the year, on Dec 15, the Eagles smiled at the Vet as they had beaten the Detroit Lions W (28–17) before 57,157

1975 Mike McCormack #13

The 1975 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Mike McCormack in his third and last season as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles could not even match previous mediocre record of 7-7-0 by winning three less games and not even breaking even percentage-wise.

They won four games (4-10), It was the team's 9th consecutive season without a winning record. The Eagles also missed the playoffs for a 15th consecutive season, a franchise record. Following the season, Mike McCormack was fired and replaced the following season by Dick Vermeil.-

In the season and home opener on September 21, 1975, the New York Giants defeated the Philadelphia Eagles L (14–23) at the Vet before 60,798 fans. At Chicago, on Sept 28, McCormack's Eagles lost a nail-biter to the Bear's L (13–15) before 48,071. At home, on Oct 5, Philadelphia beat Washington's Redskins W (26–10) before 64,397. At Miami on Oct 12, the Eagles took it on the chin from the Dolphins L (16–24) before 60,127. At St. Louis the following Sunday on Oct 19, the Cardinals beat the Eagles L (20–31) before 45,242

Then, on October 26, at home the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles L (17–20) before 64,889. On Nov3, at home, the LA Rams shellacked the Eagles L (3–42) before 64,601, Tightening the game up on Nov 9, but not enough at home, Philadelphia was beaten by the St. Louis Cardinals L (23–24) before 60,277. At New York, on Nov 16, the Eagles beat the Giants W (13–10) before 53,434. At Dallas a week later, the Cowboys kept the Eagles at bay and prevailed on Nov 23 L (17–27) before 57,893.

At home again on Nov 30, the Eagles managed to beat the San Francisco 49ers W (27–17) before 56,694. A week later, the Cincinnati Bengals beat the Eagles at home in a major shutout L (0–31) before 56,984. At Denver for Game #13 on Dec 14, the Broncos got the best of the Eagles L (10–25) before 36,860. At Washington, in the last game of the 1975 season, the Eagles played the best all year and took down the Redskins W (26–3) before 49,385

Chapter 8 Coach Dick Vermeil 1976 to 1982

Coach #14 Dick Vermeil

Year	Coach	Conf	Div	Place	Record
1976	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	4th	4-10-0
1977	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	4th	5-9-0
1978	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	2nd	9-7-0
	•	Lost Wild Card Playoffs (at Falcons) 13-14			
1979	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0
	•	Won Wild Card Playoffs(Bears) 27-17			
	•	Lost Divisional Playoffs (at Buccaneers) 17-24			
1980	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	1st	12-4-0
	•	Won Divisional Playoffs(Vikings) 31-16,			
	•	Won NFC Championship(v Cowboys) 20-7			
	•	Lost Super Bowl XV (vs. Raiders) 10-27			
1981	Dick Vermeil	NFC	East	2nd	10-6-0
	•	Lost Wild Card Playoffs(Giants) 21-27			
1982	Dick Vermeil,	NFC	East	13th	3-6-0
	•	Players Strike			

1976-1982 Dick Vermeil final record (57-51-0)

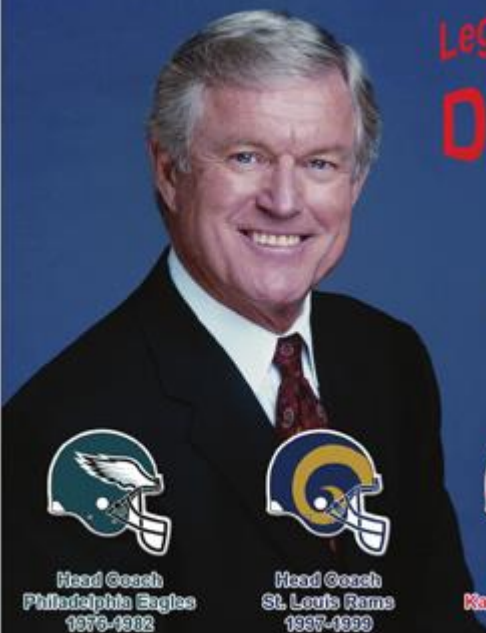
1976 Dick Vermeil #14


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Head Coach
Philadelphia Eagles
1976-1982



Head Coach
St. Louis Rams
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Head Coach
Kansas City Chiefs
2001-2006



Led the Rams to win
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January 30, 2000

The 1976 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his first of seven seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. Like the prior year under McCormack, 4-10 was the best Vermeil could deliver. But, his style offered promise to the lagging Eagles and they needed any glimmer of hope that could be had. Even the press was kind to Vermeil because like many fans, they felt something.

It was the team's 10th consecutive season without a winning record. The Eagles also missed the playoffs for a 16th consecutive season, a growing franchise record. With Dick Vermeil at the helm, there was a lot of hope, but results were expected to come later. It would not be long that this new fiery coach would bring the Eagles to their first playoff berth in 18 years in 1978 and then their first Super Bowl appearance just two seasons later. Won't it be nice for us all to explore the Vermeil years now. As a Vermeil guy, I know how exciting it was to have this coach on the sidelines coaching your team.

Vermeil did not come from nowhere. After coaching #12 UCLA (8-2-1) to a win over #1 Ohio State (11-0), coached by the master, Woody Hayes, in the 1976 Rose Bowl by the score of 23-10 Dick Vermeil was offered the Head coaching job of the Philadelphia Eagles. Because of bad trades by past Eagles coaches, Vermeil did not have a 1st round draft pick until 1978, but Vermeil did big things with the talent he had inherited from previous coaches. Read about Dick Vermeil anywhere. He was and is a fine coach. When he left the Eagles eight years later a lot of fans lamented.

Like all NFL drafts, the 1976 version was very exciting. Teams could go from fourth place to first or last to half-way up the pack with the right draft picks

This annual player selection meeting was held on April 8-9, 1976. It lasted 17 rounds, with the expansion Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Seattle Seahawks making the first two selections. The expansion teams were also given a pair of extra picks at the end of each of rounds 2-5.

The Philadelphia Eagles would pick 9th in the 17 rounds. They still had to overcome the traded away draft picks of the Mike McCormack era. The draft began with first overall pick of Hall of Famer Lee Roy Selmon. He was a defensive end from Oklahoma. He went to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The Eagles had to wait until the fourth round to make a selection with the 111th pick. Vermeil was a miracle worker.

In the season opener on September 12, 1976 at Dallas, the Eagles did not have enough even with Vermeil to beat the Cowboys and went down L (7–27 before 54,052. In the home opener on Sept 19, seeking some respect, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (20–7) at the Vet behind a great crowd of 66,005. The Redskins came in to beat the Eagles on Sept 27, and they did. Washington took no excuses from Philadelphia and walked away with the win L (17–30 before 66,005. At Atlanta, the Eagles coach was pushing for a W and he got it by a squeak against the Falcons W (14–13) before 45,535. At St. Louis on Oct 10, the Cardinals hustled the Eagles and beat them on the field L (14–33) before 44,933

On Oct 17, at Green Bay, the Eagles lost to the Packers L (13–28) before 55,398. At home on Oct 7, Minnesota beat Philadelphia L (12–31 before 56,233. At NY on Oct 31, the Eagles beat the Giants W (10–0) before 68,690. Then, on Nov 7, at home, the Eagles lost to the St. Louis Cardinals L (14–17) at the Vet before 65,505. On Nov 14, at Cleveland, the Browns held the Eagles to a FG, defeating the Birds L (3–24) before 62,120

At home on Nov 21, the Oakland Raiders beat the Eagles L (7-26) before 65,990. At Washington on Nov 28, the Redskins shut out the Eagles L (0–24) before 54,292. On Dec 5, at home, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles L (7-26) before 55,072. In the final game of the 1976 season, the Eagles were victorious against the Seattle Seahawks at home W (27–10) before 37,949

1977 Dick Vermeil #14

The 1977 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL)

football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his second of seven seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles were adjusting to a new coach and this would be another adjusting year. The Birds won one game more than in 1976. Despite the improvement, the team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the seventeenth consecutive season. The Eagles picked up future Eagles star Wilbert Montgomery in this year's draft.

In the season and home opener, the Birds took on the expansion team Tampa Bay Buccaneers on September 18, 1977 and beat the Bucs W (13–3) at the Vet before 63,132. At Los Angeles a week later on Sept 25, the Eagles were shut out by the Rams L (0–20) before 46,031. At Detroit on Oct 2, the Lions beat the Eagles L (13–17) before 57,236. At NY in week 4 on Oct 9, the Eagles won their second game of the season against the Giants W (28–10) before 48,824. Then on Oct 16, 1977 at home, the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Eagles in a close game L (17–21) before 60,535.

On Oct 23 at home, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles L (10–16) before 65,507. At Washington on Oct 30, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (17–23) before 55,031. At home on Nov 6, the Eagles beat the New Orleans Saints W (28–7) before 53,482. On Nov 13, at home the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles by a Field Goal L (14–17) before 60,702. Note how the Eagles losses were by fewer points under Vermeil. On Nov 20, at St. Louis, the Cardinals beat the Birds L (16–21) before 48,768

On Nov 27, at New England's Foxboro Stadium, the Patriots beat the Eagles L (6–14) before 57,893. At Dallas on Dec 4, the Cowboys beat the Eagles by 10, L (14–24) before 60,289. At home on Dec 11, the Eagles beat the Giants W (17–14) before 47,731. In the season finale at home on Dec 18, Philadelphia shut out the New York Jets W 27–0, before 19,241, thereby ending Vermeil's second season on a positive note.

1978 Dick Vermeil #14

The 1977 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-sixth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his third of seven seasons

as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles had finally adjusted to Dick Vermeil and were performing well, The Birds won four more games than in 1977. At 9-7-0, with this improvement, the team qualified for the playoffs for the first time in eighteen years. Let me say that again for so long we could not say it. The Eagles reached the postseason for the first time in eighteen years, which ended the longest postseason drought in the franchise's history and one of the longest in the history of the NFL

The 1978 NFL Draft The draft was held May 2–3, 1978. The league also held a supplemental draft after the regular draft and before the regular season. The draft was 12 rounds long with a total of 334 players selected.

The Eagles, because of previous trades made, had to wait until the 3rd round for their first pick. They would only have 7 picks and of these 7 players selected, 5 made the team and played during the season. With the 66th pick the Eagles as their first pick in the draft the Philadelphia Eagles selected Reggie Wilkes a Linebacker out of Georgia Tech.

The number 1 overall pick in the draft was taken by the Houston Oilers who selected the 1977 Heisman Trophy winner, Earl Campbell a Running Back out of the University of Texas Future Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee, in 2006, Warren Moon, a Quarterback from University of Washington, went undrafted. He is also in the Canadian Football League's Hall of Fame. It is amazing how all those sunny minds in the NFL missed out initially on a guy named Moon.

On August 5, in the pre-season, the NFL played its first game in Mexico City. The New Orleans Saints beat the Philadelphia Eagles by a score of 14–7. The 1978 season would be the first in which the teams each played sixteen games

In the season and home opener, on September 3, 1978 the Sunday before Labor Day, the Los Angeles Rams won by two points over the Eagles L (14–16) at the Vet before 64,721. At Washington, on Sept 10, the Redskins beat the Eagles by five, L (30–35) before 54,380. At New Orleans on Sept 17, the Eagles beat the Saints W

(24–17) before 49,242. Then, on Sept 24 at home, the Eagles defeated the Miami Dolphins W (17–3) at the Vet before 62,998.

At Baltimore, on Oct 1, the Eagles beat the Colts W (17–14) before 50,314. At New England, on Oct 8, the Patriots beat the Eagles L (14–24 before 61,016. Then at home, on Oct 15, Philadelphia beat the Washington Redskins W (17–10) before 65,722. On Oct 22, at home, Dallas beat Philadelphia L (7–14) before 60,525.

On Oct 29, at home, the St Louis Cardinals defeated Philadelphia L (10–16) at the Vet before 62,989. On Nov 5, at home the Eagles defeated the Green Bay Packers W (10–3) before 64,214. Then, on Nov 12, the Eagles defeated the New York Jets W (17–9) before 60,249. At NY on Nov 19, the Eagles defeated the Giants W 19–17 before 70,318. Picture of this game “miracle” below:



Herman Edwards: “The Miracle at the Meadowlands”

Finishing the 1978 Season

On Nov 26, at St. Louis, the Eagles brought home a victory from the Cardinals W (14–10) before 39,693. On Dec 3, 1978 at Minnesota,

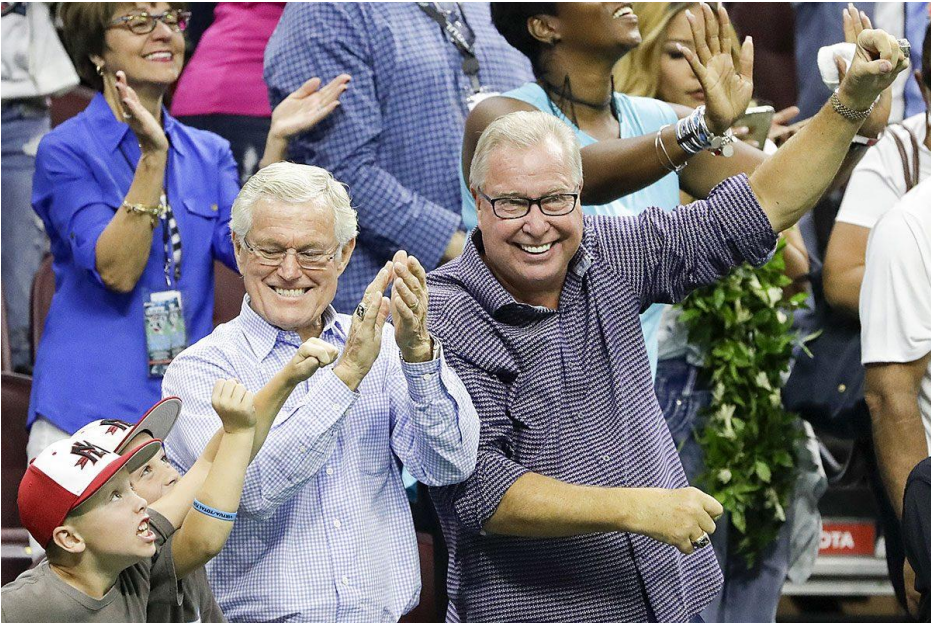
the Vikings beat the Eagles by one point L (27–28) before 38,722. On Dec 10, at home, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Philadelphia Eagles L (13–31) before 64,667. In the last game of the season, on Dec 17, the Eagles triumphed over the New York Giants, W (19-17) before 56,396

The 1978 Playoffs

Both Philadelphia and Atlanta had suffered extremely prolonged postseason droughts. The Falcons were in the playoffs for the first time in their 13-year history while the Eagles were playing their first playoff game since their victory in the 1960 NFL Championship Game.

Dick Vermeil's Eagles had been plagued with problems at the placekicker position all year long. Starting kicker Nick Mike-Mayer had made just 8/17 field goals before suffering a season-ending injury in week 12. To replace him, coach Dick Vermeil used punter Mike Michel. Michel had done some placekicking in college, so Vermeil assigned him both roles. This did not pay off, as Michel missed 3 of 12 extra points during the remainder of the season, performing so poorly that the Eagles started attempting fourth down conversions deep in opponent territory rather than field goals.

Coming into this playoff game, Michel had not attempted a single field goal, and the Eagles issues in the kicking game would ultimately play a decisive role in their loss to the Falcons. As an aside, the irony of the Eagles' placekicking dilemma is that the Falcons kicker in this game was rookie Tim Mazzetti. He had been cut by Philadelphia in the preseason.



Dick Vermeil, coach, & Ron Jaworski, QB, years later at a benefit

The Eagles were winning the game, but the Falcons came back to win their first playoff game in team history. They came back from a 13–0 deficit by scoring two TD's in the final 5 minutes of the game. It seemed to be the old Philadelphia death-wish in play again.

In the first quarter, Philadelphia's Cleveland Franklin recovered a fumble from Billy Ryckman on a punt return at the Falcons 13-yard line, setting up wide receiver Harold Carmichael's 13-yard touchdown reception from Ron Jaworski. However, Michel missed the ensuing extra point, which would later prove to be costly. Neither team would score again until the third quarter when the Eagles took advantage of another Atlanta special teams miscue, this time a dismal 17-yard punt by John James that gave them a first down on their 40-yard line.

Ron Jaworski was roughed up and the Falcons were called on it, The penalty plus two nice receptions by Charlie Smith, helped Jaworski lead the team 60 yards to score on Wilbert Montgomery's 1-yard rushing touchdown. Michel's extra point was partially deflected, but still went in to give the Eagles a 13–0 lead. Later in the period, Michel had a chance to put the team up by three scores, but he missed a 42-yard field goal attempt, the first field goal kick of his career.

Nonetheless, Philadelphia was apparently in control of the game as the fourth quarter approached. Then, with 9:52 left in 4Q, things got to look even better as Eagles cornerback Bobby Howard intercepted Falcons QB Steve Bartkowski's pass. This was the 5th turnover of the day for Atlanta. The Eagles moved the ball to Atlanta's 15-yard line, and were ready to take it in to ice the game. However, with 8:16 to go, linebacker Fulton Kuykendall recovered a fumble from fullback Mike Hogan on the 13. A few plays later, faced with second down and 10 on the 26, Bartkowski launched a deep pass to Wallace Francis, who was tightly covered by defensive back Herm Edwards. Both players went up for the ball and both came down with it, resulting in a simultaneous catch between each of them.

Under NFL rules, a simultaneous catch goes to the receiver, so Atlanta kept the ball and gained 49 yards on the play. It was devastating. Three plays later, Bartkowski, on target, hit tight end Jim Mitchell wide open in the end zone for a 20-yard touchdown pass, cutting the score to 13-7 with 4:56 remaining.

The Eagles went three-and-out were forced to punt the ball back to the Falcons. The Eagles' Franklin tackled Ryckman for a 5-yard loss on the return, but he committed a 15-yard facemask penalty in so doing and this put Atlanta in a great position on their 49-yard line. After 5 plays, the Falcons were on the 37. They had moved just 12 yards and were faced with a 3rd and 10. Bartkowski came through again with a deep toss to Francis again.



He outran safety Randy Logan to score on a 37-yard touchdown completion. With Mazzetti's extra point, the Falcons grabbed their first lead of the game, 14–13, with 1:37 left in the game. Now it was the Eagles turn. The Birds had one last shot to win the game as Jaworski completed four passes to get them to Atlanta's 16-yard line with just 13 seconds remaining. Vermeil called for a 34-yard field goal attempt, which failed, and the Falcons ran out the rest of the clock.

Bartkowski completed passes as needed clicking on 18 of 32 passes for 243 yards and two touchdowns, with two interceptions. His top target was Francis, who caught 6 passes for 135 yards and a touchdown. Jaworski did just about as well completing 19/35 passes for 190 yards and a touchdown. The Eagles leading receiver was Smith, who caught 7 passes for 108 yards. This was and to this day remains the only playoff game ever to feature two Polish-born starting quarterbacks (Bartkowski and Jaworski.) Both were born in the USA of Polish descent. Michel was released by the Eagles in the offseason after this game and never played in the NFL again. The Eagles had gotten to the dance but a kicker with two left feet stepped all over their chances of moving on in the dance contest.

1979 Dick Vermeil #14

The 1979 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL)

football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his fourth of seven seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles were playing great football under Dick Vermeil and the fans were enjoying the performances. The Birds won two more games than in 1978. At 11-5-0, with this improvement, the team qualified for the second time in a row for the playoffs. And, so, at the end of the season, they Birds won the Wildcard Playoff over the Bears W (27-17) but then they lost the NFC Divisional Round against the Buccaneers L(17-24).

The prior year they had ended the longest postseason drought in Eagle's history. With Vermeil's guidance, they would make the playoffs again in the following two seasons before undergoing a six-year drought.

As was typical, the teams with the better records did not get as many shots at drafting players. After having gone 9-7 in the 1978 season and making the playoffs, the Eagles found themselves having to follow rule 3 of the draft – "Teams that made the playoffs are then ordered by which round of the playoffs they are eliminated" – meaning four teams with a record the same or better than the Eagles would pick in front of them. The Eagles were similarly punished in the 1979 Draft.

It was held May 3-4, 1979 in New York City. It would last 12 rounds. Philadelphia got the 19th to the 21st picks in the 12 rounds. They had finally overcome the traded-away draft picks of the Mike McCormack era. This year, they finally got to pick in the first-round pick and they got some other low-round draft picks. They would use these and build up their team as 7 of the 10 draft picks made the team for several years to come.

The draft began with first overall pick of Tom Cousineau, linebacker from Ohio State, by the Buffalo Bills. With the number 7 pick the New York Giants selected Phil Simms, a quarterback from Morehead State. The crowd, made up of mostly New York fans, voiced their displeasure of his selection.

The Eagles were very pleased to get Tony Franklin, a kicker from Texas A & M. Franklin in the draft. Franklin was best known for his “barefoot” kicking style

In the season and home opener, Philadelphia defeated New York on September 2, 1979 W (23–17) before 67,366 at Veterans Stadium. The capacity had recently been increased to 71,384. At home on Sept 10, the Atlanta Falcons beat the Eagle L (10–14) before 66,935. At New Orleans on Sept 16, the Eagles beat the Saints W (26–14) before 54,212. At New York on Sept 23, the Eagles beat the Giants W (17–13) before 74,265.

At home on Sept 30, the Eagles defeated the Then, Pittsburgh Steelers W (17–14) before 70,352. On Oct 7, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (28–17) before 69,142. Then, on Oct 14, at St. Louis, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (24–20) before 48,367. The Eagles then went on a three-game losing streak. At Washington on Oct 21, the Redskins defeated the Eagles L (7–17) before 54,442

At Cincinnati on Oct 28, the Bengals pounded the Eagles in a big loss L (13–37) before 42,036. At home, on Nov 4, 1979 Cleveland Browns L 24–19 69,019 At Dallas on Nov 12, the Eagles beat the Cowboys W (31–21) before 62,417. Then, at home on Nov 18, Philadelphia defeated the St. Louis Cardinals W (16–13) before 70,235.

At Green Bay on Nov 25, the Eagles Beat the Packers W (21–10) before 50,023. At home, on Dec 2, the Eagles defeated the Detroit Lions W (44–7) before 66,128. On Dec 8, at home, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Philadelphia Eagles L (17–24) before 71,434. At Houston, on Dec 16, in the final game of the season, the Eagles beat the Oilers W (26–20) before 49,407

Wild Card Playoffs—Bears v Eagles

It was the first NFL postseason game played in Philadelphia since the 1960 NFL Championship Game. In a 1979 Wild-Card game Eagles QB Ron Jaworski was on the mark. He threw for 204 yards

and 3 touchdown passes as Philadelphia wiped out a 17–10 Bears halftime lead. The Eagles won 27-17

Divisional Playoffs



The Buccaneers stopped Eagles rushing play--1979 NFC Divisional Playoffs.

The Buccaneers started by jumping to a 17–0 lead and held the Eagles to just 48 rushing yards. Ricky Bell clocked in with 142 rushing yards and 2 touchdowns. Tampa Bay prevailed 24-17.

1980 Dick Vermeil #14

The 1980 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his fifth of seven seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles were playing great football under Dick Vermeil and the fans were enjoying the performances.

The Birds won one more game than in 1979. At 12-4-0, with this improvement, the team came in first place and qualified for the third in a row for the playoffs. And, so, at the end of the season, they

Birds won the Divisional Playoffs and the NFC Championship and got their first chance at a Super Bowl Ring.

This was the first time the Eagles had won the Division title in 20 years. 1980 was a fine Eagles' season. It marked Philadelphia's third consecutive playoff appearance under coach Dick Vermeil, and culminated in the team's first Super Bowl appearance, where they were defeated by the Oakland Raiders.

Games of the 1980 Season

In the home and season opener for the 1980 Philadelphia Eagles on Sept 7, 1980, the Eagles pounded the Denver Broncos W (27-6) before 70,307. Eagles fans had again begun to love coming to Eagles' games. At Minnesota, on September 14, 1980 at Minnesota, the Eagles thumped the Vikings in a big win W (42-7) before 46,460. At home, on Sept 22, the Eagles whipped the New York Giants W (35-3) before 70,767. At St. Louis on Sept 28, the Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (14-24) before 49,079.

At home at the Vet on Oct 5, the Eagles soundly defeated the Washington Redskins W (24-14) before 69,044. At New York, on Oct 12, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (31-16) before 71,051. On October 19, Philadelphia beat the Dallas Cowboys at home W (17-10) before 70,696. Then, on October 26, at home, the Eagles got the best of the Chicago Bears W (17-14) before 68,752.

The Eagles picked up another win on Nov 2, at Seattle as the Seahawks lost W (27-20) before 61,047. At New Orleans on Nov 9, the Eagles won against the Saints W (34-21) before 44,340. At Washington, on Nov 16, the Eagles shut out the Redskins W (24-0) before 51,897. At home on Nov 23, the Eagles slipped a win away from the Oakland Raiders W (10-7) before 68,535

At San Diego, on Nov 30, the Chargers defeated the Eagles by one-point L (21-22) before 51,567. At home, on Dec 7, the Atlanta Falcons squeaked in a win against Philadelphia L (17-20) before 70,205 fans. Then, at home again, on Dec 14, the Eagles defeated the St. Louis Cardinals W (17-3) before 68,969. Finishing up the 1980 season at Dallas, on Dec 21, 1980, the Cowboys beat the Eagles L (27-35) before 62,548

Divisional Playoffs: Philadelphia Eagles 31, Minnesota Vikings 16

This game was played at Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on January 3, at 12:30 p.m. EST to a crowd of 70,178 under cloudy skies and 29 degree weather.

The Eagles were on their game as they forced eight turnovers, with seven in the second half, rolling to a 31–16 victory, while holding the Vikings to just 215 total yards, with a mere 36 yards on the ground. The Eagles had shellacked the Vikings 42-7 during the regular season and so this smaller loss was little consolation,



NFC Championship: Philadelphia Eagles 20, Dallas Cowboys 7

This game was played at Veterans Stadium in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on January 11, at 12:30 p.m. EST to a crowd of 71,522 under sunny skies and 17 degree breezy weather.



1980 NFC Championship Game.

Philadelphia quarterback Ron Jaworski had a tough day completing only nine of 29 passes for 91 yards and he was intercepted twice. Nonetheless, running back Wilbert Montgomery led the Eagles to a victory by rushing for 194 yards and a touchdown. Dallas had a great season as the highest scoring team in the NFL during the regular season.

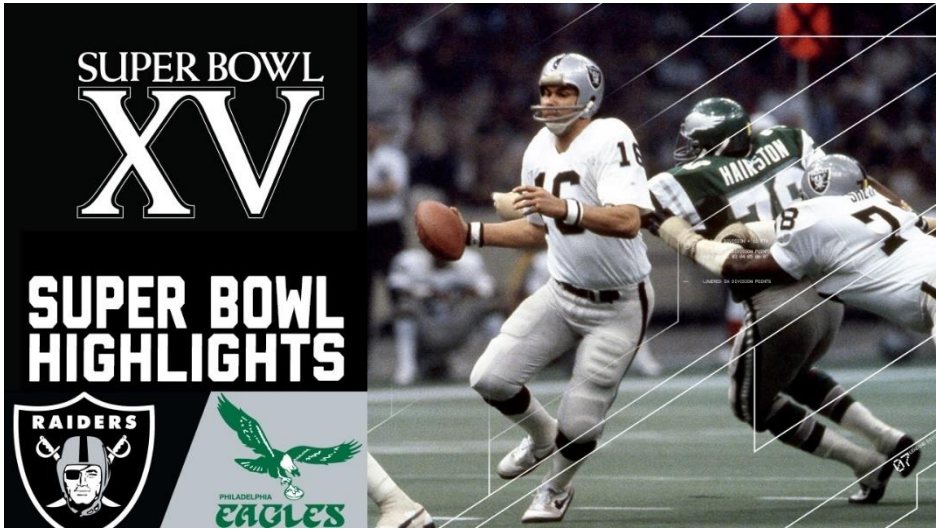
However, against the Eagles defense, they could only manage 206 yards and score a single touchdown. They also fumbled five times, losing three of them.

Super Bowl XV

Philadelphia Inquirer BUD SHAW, Daily News Staff Writer
(Article was first published on January 26, 1981.)

Please enjoy this review of Super Bowl Fifteen by Bud Shaw, Daily News Staff Writer for the Philadelphia Inquirer. This had to hurt to writ. The days headline was

“Super Bowl XV: After big break, QB Jim Plunkett leads Raiders in rout of Eagles.” After Kenny Stabler Got Hurt, it was all Plunkett. It’s one game the Eagles would love to have to play again.



NEW ORLEANS - Nobody expected it to happen this way. It was Bjorn Borg losing in straight sets, Sugar Ray Leonard getting knocked out in a sparring session.

Super Bowl XV stiffed the Eagles. It left them feeling ugly and unwanted.

The Eagles had taken 20 years of frustration and stuffed it down the Cowboys' throats two weeks ago; they swallowed a whole new kind of frustration last evening.

They'll have a hard time digesting a 27-10 loss to the Oakland Raiders. The numbers must be gnawing at their insides. It was a day that'll cry out for retribution with tears as salty as the ones drenching living rooms back in Philly yesterday.

The No. 1 defense in the league came snorting out of the tunnel early yesterday and three hours later it limped back in. It was hard to distinguish the burn marks from open wounds.

The Eagles weren't playing the Pittsburgh Steelers of a couple years ago. This game was supposed to be a coin toss, an arm wrestling match between two teams that claimed destiny as their coach.

Fate held both of them at arm's length and let them go at each other like two bulldogs fighting in a pit. The Raiders were the only ones growling when it was all over.

"I hated to see us go out like this," said Frank LeMaster. "I would've rather seen it be a situation where we get beat by one point or lose in the last couple minutes of a game.

"It hurt to see our defense end the season this way. I can't use the word 'embarrassed.' All I can say is we didn't play up to our capabilities. Not at all.

"I really don't have an answer either. We'll all be searching for a reason. We'll be thinking back on it and trying to find an explanation."

The Eagles got here because they generally treated every week like a street fight. They were the guy you wanted breathing at your side when you walked down a dark alley.

THERE WAS NEVER any reason to question their mood. It was always intense and nasty, but yesterday they sagged like a wet dishrag.

"We seemed fired up at the start of the game," said Ron Jaworski, "but I sensed a lack of emotion during the game and it never seemed to get stronger.

"We usually have a strong second half, a snowball emotional effect, but it just didn't swell up in the second half of this game."

The Eagles got here because their defense swallowed whole teams and spit out fragments. They got there because they rushed quarterbacks and bruised running backs, but yesterday Jim Plunkett and Mark van Eeghen looked like they spent the afternoon at a cocktail party.

The Eagles had sacked Plunkett eight times back in their 10-7 win in November. The Raiders' equipment people had seven less turf stains to wash away when it was all over yesterday.

"We let him stand back there all day and pick us apart," said LeMaster. "They were the same team they were last time, but we weren't anywhere near the same. It's a hard thing to explain."

Plunkett sat back and threw passes like he was dropping stones into a lake. He was 13 of 21 for 261 yards and 3 touchdowns.

The Eagles had given him one big play the last time, an 86-yard bomb to Cliff Branch, but yesterday there were enough to make into a 60-minute highlight film.

Yesterday, Plunkett found Branch again for an early touchdown after Ron Jaworski drilled his first pass into linebacker Rod Martin's chest. Plunkett found running back Kenny King a while later, and the Birds were gulping into the neon lights of the scoreboard.

The pass to King was a busted pattern, a play that summed up the Eagles' day in one tangled mass of confusion. Plunkett was scrambling, King got behind the coverage and all Herm Edwards could do was wave and chase. They play covered 80 yards, setting a Super Bowl record.

And don't think that the offense was winning its share of the dogfight. The only first-half points provided came on a 30-yard field goal by Tony Franklin.

They had blown a 40-yard touchdown pass to Rodney Parker when Harold Carmichael went in motion and broke toward the line too quickly. And when a drive late in the half died at the Raider 11-yard line, Tony Franklin had a field goal blocked by Ted Hendricks.

The Eagles were losing 14-3 at the half. It didn't look very good. But hell, the Eagles had always played the final 30 minutes of the game like the other team had been locked inside its dressing room.

It didn't happen this time, and there were as many reasons as there were people watching the game. On the opening drive of the second half, Branch rose up and grabbed a 29-yard pass away from Roynell Young near the goal line and tumbled in. It was 21-3. The Super Bowl had been yanked away in one graceful leap, but only because the Eagles had already given up some of it in several clumsy exchanges.

"I had the outside position on that one," Young explained. "I was trying to gauge where the ball was and keep a feel for Branch, too.

"He just came back and took the ball away from me. By the time I knew where he was, it was too late. I had my hand on it for a second but I just couldn't control the ball.

"I CAN'T SAY how that made me feel. Seeing him with the ball in the end zone just hurt. That's all."

It was something other than a tug-of-war at that point. The Raiders had the Super Bowl trophy in their fingers and the Eagles couldn't pull it away.

The Birds got here because Ron Jaworski spent a helluva lot of Sunday afternoons boosting them up on his shoulders, but he couldn't do it yesterday.

Jaws made it to the Pro Bowl and was the NFC Player of the Year. Neither's going to untie the knot in his stomach when he stares down at his naked ring finger today.

Lester Hayes said he was going to catch more passes than Harold Carmichael. Super Bowl hype being what it is, Lester never quite made it. But nobody bothered to ask Rod Martin. He managed to come a helluva lot closer.

Jaws was 18-for-38 for 291 yards, but he threw 3 interceptions, all to Martin. Some of his passes were dropped, others overthrown. It didn't help that the Eagles rushed for only 69 yards, or that Wilbert Montgomery got only 44 of those.

Jaworski had brush-stroked a masterpiece of a season until yesterday. The final touches were a little like throwing a can of paint at the easel.

"I'm not one to reflect on my individual performance," Jaws said. "We needed a team effort and we didn't get one today. We got behind early and played right into their hands."

The Eagles managed to make it 21-10 when Jaworski hit Keith Kreple for an eight-yard TD early in the fourth quarter, and you could hear the Eagles' heartbeat again.

But the Raiders ate the clock and the field with a long drive. They got two field goals from Chris Bahr, and the Eagles' Super Bowl hopes had fallen short and wide left.

"We have a great team," said Charlie Johnson, "and we shouldn't be sad about what happened today. We've had five great seasons in which we've gotten better and better. I'm proud to be standing here.

"I feel bad about it so I can imagine 26 teams must be feeling miserable. We're going to be back next year. That's for sure.

"What happened during the week didn't have anything to do with it. All the attention didn't bother us. What happened out there on the field was our load and we'll just have to carry it with us. "

"After the game," said Dick Vermeil, "we just had a short prayer session. Then I told the players how proud I was of them. I just reminded them of all the hard work we did for five years to get here."

The Eagles made it to the Super Bowl, and it had been an orgy of a season until yesterday.

They had their biggest date in 20 years and got stiffed. It hurt like hell.

There was very little etiquette involved in the way they got stood up.

1981 Dick Vermeil #14

The 1981 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their forty-ninth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his sixth of seven seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles were playing great football under Dick Vermeil and the fans were enjoying their performances. The Birds had just missed out on the Super Bowl and there were many looking for a repeat performance in 1981.

The Eagles had a good year but not as good as the 12-4 year in 1980. At 10-6-0, the team came in 2nd in the NFC East. and qualified for their fourth in a row run in the playoffs. In the post-season, the best the Birds could do was lose to the Giants in the Wild Card Playoffs (21-7). Eagles fans thought Dick Vermeil was a miracle worker and he sure was after taking over for Mike McCormack, but no coach can work miracles all the time.

To go from losing seasons to losing in the playoffs was a great tribute to Dick Vermeil but once the taste of victory is in a fan's blood, nothing but winning matters. Dick Vermeil ultimately was a victim of the love of his fans as much as he was a victim of not always being a winner.

Let's talk a bit about this phenomenon before we show the results of the 1981

In summary, this 1981 team record bought the Eagles an appearance in the postseason for the fourth straight season (first time in franchise history the Eagles had made the postseason four straight times). The team was coming off a Super Bowl appearance though a loss to the Oakland Raiders just the previous season.

Because they had made the Super Bowl in 1980, they were picked by many to not only reach the Super Bowl, but this time, to win it as well. The Eagles began the 1981 season like they owned the league

with 6 straight wins, their best ever start to a season at the time. The Eagles would win then 3 of their next 5 games to sit at 9-2. They were on their way, but something happened that was inexplicable. Maybe they had forgotten how hard it was to win NFL football games.

They would then lose their next 4 games to slip to 9-6 and were in danger of missing out on the playoffs. The next week, they hammered the Cardinals 38-0 to clinch a playoff berth for the fourth straight season. In the playoffs, they met their arch rivals the Giants. It was New York's first playoff appearance in 18 years. They were hungry and the Eagles loved winning but perhaps no longer had the thirst for blood.

In the game, the Giants would stun the Eagles 27-21. This put the kibosh to the Eagles' season as well as hopes for a second straight Super Bowl appearance. The Eagles would not make the playoffs again until 1988, seven years later. They also wouldn't reach the Super Bowl again until 2004..

Nothing in life, worth having, is easy.

Games of the 1981 Season

In the season opener on Sept 6, 1981 at New York, the Eagles defeated the Giants W (24-10) before 72,459. In the home opener on Sept 13, 1981, the Eagles beat the New England Patriots W (13-3) before 71,089. At Buffalo on Sept 17, the Eagles beat the Bills W (20-14) before 78,331. At home on Sept 27, the Eagles defeated the Washington Redskins W (36-13) before 70,664.

On Oct 5, at home, the Eagles beat the Atlanta Falcons W (16-13) before 71,488. At New Orleans on Oct 11, the Eagles knocked off the Saints W (31-14) before 52,728. Then, on Oct 18, at Minnesota, the Eagles lost their first game of the year v the Vikings L (23-35) before 45,459. At home on Oct 25, the Eagles beat the Tampa Bay Buccaneers W (20-10) before 70,714.

On Nov 1 at home, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles by a field goal L (14-17) before 72,111. On Nov 8, at St. Louis, Philadelphia blew out the Cardinals W (52-10) before 48,421. At home on Nov

15, the Eagles hammered the Baltimore Colts W (38–13) before 68,618. At home on Nov 22, the New York Giants bested the Eagles L (10–20) before 66,827.

On the last day of November, 1981, Nov 30, at Miami, the Dolphins got past Philadelphia L (10–13) before 67,797. At Washington, on Dec 6, the Eagles were defeated by the Redskins L (13–15) before 52,206. At Dallas on Dec 13, the Cowboys defeated the Eagles L (10–21) before 64,955. In the season closer on Dec 20, the Eagles roared back to shut out the St. Louis Cardinals W (38–0) before 56,656

Wild Card Playoffs Eagles v Giants

Even without starting quarterback Phil Simms and linebacker Brad Van Pelt, the Giants were off to the races from the kickoff. They grabbed a 20–0 lead in the first quarter and withstood an Eagles comeback at the end to hold on to a 27–21 win.



The Eagles made up for the Giants injuries by making mistakes on the field.

Next year's players strike contributed to the demise of the Vermeil era as the coach was gone after the 1982 season. The Eagles would sorely miss him.

1982 Dick Vermeil #14

The 1982 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fiftieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Dick Vermeil in his last of seven seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles had played great football under Dick Vermeil and the fans had been enjoying some great performances. The Birds had made the playoffs again and lost a nail-biter to the Giants in the Wild Card game. There were many looking for a repeat performance in 1981. The Eagles had a very poor year (3-6) after a 10-6-0 just one year before. The Eagles did not make the playoffs.

The bottom line was that the play of the Philadelphia Eagles this year resulted in a losing season. It would be the end of an era under a great head coach Dick Vermeil. While under Vermeil the Eagles had the most successful period of their existence up to that time, making the playoffs four straight seasons (1978–1981) and having a record of 54–47 in six seasons with Vermeil (1976–1982), including a Super Bowl year in 1980. Vermeil retired due to “burnout” but would return to coaching in 1997 with the St. Louis Rams and would lead them to a Super Bowl victory in 1999.



QB Jaworski getting field instructions from Coach Dick Vermeil

There isn't much to say about a season shortened by two months of bickering and finger-pointing and a bad blood player strike. Dick Vermeil had given it his all. At 46 years old, he had had it. Too many all-nighters with film and trying to figure out the un-figurable. The bitter players strike, and its impact overall was the straw perhaps, but Dick Vermeil and his family felt he needed an emotional break.

His wife is credited with saying We're "outta" here! This was when Vermeil himself could not make a decision about whether he would be back in 1983. Leonard Tose and all of the Philadelphia sports community did not want him to go. It took Dick Vermeil about 17 years to come back to the field as a coach. The painful 1982 season is now presented.

Before the players strike, the NFL played two weeks of the season. The players wanted the fans to feel the pain and we did. The strike could have occurred before any games were played but that was not what was apparently wanted for the most effect.

The Eagle's season opened at home on Sept 12, 1982 Washington Redskins and lost a squeaker L (34-37) before 68,885. In the last

game before the strike, on Sept 19, at Cleveland, the Eagles had regained their composure and beat the Browns W (24–21) before 78,830. From September 19 through November 20, there was no Eagles football. Many fans were ready to throw in the towel on pro-football by the time the season resumed on November 21. The Eagles for one reason or another never really came back to form in

On Nov 21, the Eagles were off their game but not by much as they were beaten at home by the Cincinnati Bengals L (14–18) before 65,172. Home attendance was down by about 6,000 fans and it stayed that way 'til the end of the season. On Nov 28, 1982 at Washington, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (9–13) before 48,313. At home, on Dec 5, the St. Louis Cardinals prevailed v the Eagles L (20-23) before 63,622. The margin of loss was not high, but they were losses nonetheless. The Eagles had lost the edge.

On Dec at New York, the Giants were victorious L (7–23). This was the biggest loss margin of the year. On Dec 9, at home the Eagles finally won a post-strike game at home on Dec 19. They got the best of the Houston Oilers W (35–14) before a light crowd of 44,119. The season was extended two weeks to get in more games. On the day after Christmas, Dec 26, at Dallas, the Eagles beat the Cowboys W (24–20) before 46,199. On January 2, at home, the New York Giants rained on Dick Vermeil's swan song L (24–26) before 55,797. At the time, nobody knew this was the coach's last game.

Chapter 9 Coaches Marion Campbell & Buddy Ryan, 1983 to 1990

Coach #15 Marion Campbell

Coach #16 Fred Bruney

Coach #17 Buddy Ryan

Year	Coach	Conf	Div	Place	Record
1983	Marion Campbell	NFC	East	4th	5-10-0
1984	Marion Campbell	NFC	East	5th	6-9-1
1985	Marion Campbell	NFC	East	4th	7-9-0
1985	Fred Bruney	NFC	East	4th	1-0-0 (wk16)

1983-1985 Marion Campbell final record (17-29-1)

1985-1985 Fred Bruney final record (1-0-0)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Record</u>
1986	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	4th	5-10-0 —
1987	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	4th	7-8-0, —
1988	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	1st	10-6=0
	•				Lost Divisional Playoffs (at Bears) 12–20
1989	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0,
	•				Lost Wild Card Playoffs(Rams) 7–21
1990	Buddy Ryan	NFC	East	2nd	10-6-0
	•				Lost Wild Card Playoffs(Redskins) 6–20

1986-1990 Buddy Ryan final record (43-38-1)



Coach Marion Campbell with Eagles Players

1983 Marion Campbell #15

The 1983 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Marion Campbell in his first of three

seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. The Eagles had played great football under Dick Vermeil and the fans expected it to continue. But, it would not be OK with this coach. eat performances The play of the Philadelphia Eagles this year resulted in a losing season.

The Eagles followed up their record of 3–6 during the strike-shortened 1982 season with another losing campaign. They failed to qualify for the playoffs for the second straight season. The Eagles started off strong, winning four of their first six games. But then they caught a losing fever which persisted 'til the end of the season as they won just one more game. Despite the disappointing season, wide receiver Mike Quick established himself as a new star with 1,409 receiving yards.

In the season opening game on September 3, 1983 at San Francisco, the Marion Campbell Eagles got off to a fine start with a win against the 49ers W (22–17) before 55,775. At home, on Sept 11, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (13–23) before 69,542. On Sept 18, at Denver, the Eagles defeated the Broncos W (13–10) before 74,202. At home on Sept 25, the St. Louis Cardinals beat Philadelphia L (11–14) before 64,465.

At Atlanta on Oct 2, the Eagles beat the Falcons W (28–24) before 50,621. At New York, on Oct 9, the Eagles defeated the Giants W (17–13) before 73,291. None of the Eagle wins were substantial, yet nobody really was expecting a losing streak of seven games coming up. At Dallas on Oct 16. The Cowboys outpowered the Eagles L (7–3) before 63,070. On Oct 23, at home, the Chicago Bears barely took down the Eagles L (6–7) before 45,263.

On Oct 30, at home, Baltimore Colts beat the Eagles by one point L (21–22) before 59,150. At home again on Nov 6, the Dallas Cowboys won by one TD (L 20–27) before 71,236. On Nov 13, at Chicago, the Bears beat the Eagles by a FG L (14–17 before 47,524. Then, on Nov, the nemesis New York Giants shut-out the Eagles L (0–23) before 57,977, at the Vet.

On Nov 27, at Washington, the Redskins dropped the Eagles L (24–28) before. The Eagles last win of the season came on Dec 14 way across the country as they defeated the Los Angeles Rams W (13–9)

before 32,867. On Dec 11 at home, the New Orleans Saints beat the Eagles by a FG in a close match L (17–20) before 45,182. Then, on Dec 18, at St. Louis, the Cardinals thumped Philadelphia in the season closer L (7–31) before a scant crowd of 21,902. Fans like good games played by good teams.

1984 Marion Campbell #15

The 1984 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Marion Campbell in his second of three seasons as head coach. The owner was Leonard Tose. Missing the fine tutelage of Dick Vermeil, the Eagles had begun to falter and losing seasons were about to become a constant reality. The Eagles would improve after this year's 6-9-1 record by winning one more game in Campbell's last season.

Though Philadelphia improved upon their previous record of 5–11, winning six games, it was nothing to write home about. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the third straight season and there would be more to come. There was an outside chance that Philadelphia might make the playoffs, but those hopes were gone after a November 25 injury at St. Louis when starting and star quarterback Ron Jaworski suffered a broken leg and missed the remainder of the season.

It was the most serious injury the "Polish Rifle" ever suffered in his long career. Joe Pisarcik, from Northeastern PA's Hanover Township, who had come over from the Giants took for the final three-(1-2) could not impact the negative destiny of the 1984 squad.

The season began with tough luck and ended with tough luck. The first stroke of bad luck was going to New York for the season opener and finding a stubborn, NY Giants team willing to do whatever it took to keep its 1-point lead to defeat the Eagles L (27–28) before 71,520. Somehow, the Eagles overcame that close loss and then in the home opener, pulled off an amazing two-point win against the Minnesota Vikings on Sept 9, W (19–17), before a less than stellar attendance of 55,942. The next bad luck would come mostly from bad playing beginning with a trip to Dallas on Sept 16 in which the

Cowboys beat the Birds L (17–23) before 64,521. Then the Eagles were whooped by San Francisco at home L (9–21) before 62,771.

Finishing the three-game losing streak, on Sept 30, 1984 at Washington, the Eagles suffered a shutout L (0–20) before 53,064. The Eagles would then stage a comeback for three games beginning at Buffalo on Oct 7, W (27–17) before 37,555. Then, on Oct 14, at home the Birds beat the Indianapolis Colts W (16–7) before 50,277. At home again, the Eagles beat the Giants on Oct 21, W (24–10) before 64,677

On Oct 28, at the Vet, tough times were coming again as the St. Louis Cardinals overpowered the Eagles L (14–34) before 54,310. At Detroit on Nov 4, the Eagles tied the Lions T (23–23) before 59,141. At Miami on Nov 11, the Dolphins grabbed another one-point game from the Eagles L (23–24) before 70,227. Then, on Nov 18, at home, the Washington Redskins were defeated by Philadelphia W (16–10). The Eagles still actually had a chance to make the playoffs with some solid play.

On November 25, after taking it on the chin on Oct 28 at St. Louis, the Eagles were headed for a victory until there was 14 minutes left in the last quarter. With Philadelphia up by two points, the Cardinals got a field goal and with Jaworski out with a broken leg, the game was over in another one-pointer L (16–17) before 39,858.

After reserve QB Joe Pisarcik on Dec 2 at home could not overcome the Cowboys (L (10–26), 66,322, he led the Birds to a win over the New England Patriots on Dec 9 at home, W (27–17) before 41,581. Not that they were playoff contenders in the end but Pisarcik and company could not overwhelm the Falcons at Atlanta on Dec 16, and so, in the season finale, the Birds ended their season in last place with a loss (10–26) before 15,582

1985 Marion Campbell #15

1985 Fred Bruney #16

The 1985 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Marion Campbell in his last of three

seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 7-9 record brought the Eagles a fourth place NFC East finish. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the fourth straight season.

Nonetheless Philadelphia was in the mix all year long to earn a wild-card berth with a 6-5 record by late November. However, the candle of hope was blown out by the strong wind caused by a four-game losing streak. The final streak of the season foiled their playoff hopes.

It also cost head coach Marion Campbell his job before the season finale at Minnesota. The Eagles took out their frustration by not permitting Campbell to finish the season. They brought in interim coach Fred Bruney, and the Eagles pulled off a 37-35 miracle victory at the Metrodome to finish the season on an up note.

Two bright spots emerged at the quarterback position as Ron Jaworski returned from the broken leg suffered at the end of the 1984 season, and performed well enough (3,450 passing yards, 17 touchdowns) to be considered for comeback player of the year, though no award was given out.

Additionally, the Bird's second-round draft pick Randall Cunningham made his debut on September 22 at Washington and earned his first career victory at RFK Stadium. In terms of season game highlights, on November 10, at Veterans Stadium, Jaworski combined with wide receiver Mike Quick for a club-record 99-yard touchdown pass in overtime to beat the Atlanta Falcons, 23-17.

In another poor season start under coach Marion Campbell, on Sept 8, 1985, at New York, the Giants shut out the Eagles L (0-21) 76,141. On September 15, in the home opener, the LA Rams got the best of the Eagles L (6-17) before 60,920. On Sept 22, at Washington, the Eagles defeated the Redskins W (19-6) before 53,748. In the final game of September, on the 29th, the New York Giants beat the Eagles in OT, L (10-16) before 66,696.

At New Orleans on Oct 6, the Saints beat Philadelphia in a two-point match (l (21-23) before 56,364. On Oct 13, the Eagles beat the St. Louis Cardinals at the Vet, W (30-7) before 48,186. Then, on Oct 20 at home, the Eagled defeated the Dallas Cowboys W (16-14)

before 70,114. At home on Oct 27, Philadelphia defeated Buffalo W (21–17) before 60,987.

On Nov 3 at San Francisco the 49ers beat the Eagles L (13–24) before 58,383. Then, at home on Nov 10, Philadelphia beat Atlanta W (23–17) in OT) before 63,694. On Nov 17 at St. Louis, Philadelphia prevailed W (24–14) before 39,032. Then, on Nov 24, at Dallas, the Cowboys beat the Eagles convincingly L (17–34) before.

On Dec 1, at home, Minnesota beat Philadelphia L (23–28) before 54,688. At home on Dec the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (12–17) before 60,737. On Dec 15, at San Diego, the Chargers beat the Eagles L (14–20) before 45,569. In the final game of the year, with a new coach, Fred Bruney, on Dec 22, the Eagles defeated the Minnesota Vikings, W (37–35) 49,722

1986 Buddy Ryan #17

The 1986 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buddy Ryan in his first of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 5-11-1 record brought the Eagles a fourth place NFC East finish. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the fourth straight season. How does a team once OT rules are in effect come out of a game with a tie?



Here's how. The game was tied and in OT and still no team could score, though they had their chances in the OT period. The Cardinals' Eric Schubert missed three field goals, two in overtime, the last with five seconds left. Philadelphia's Paul McFadden missed two field goals, one in the extra period. How many chances do kickers need?

Schubert, who replaced injured John Lee, missed his first field goal, a 31-yarder, with 4:39 left in the third quarter and the score was 3-3 at the time. "It was a high snap," he said. Schubert also had a 40-yarder blocked by Eagles defensive end Reggie White 4:05 into overtime. "The snap was low," he said.

On the 37-yard miss with five seconds remaining, Schubert said, "It might have been tipped, but when I hit it, I thought I was about three yards inside the upright, just not a good feeling." That's why there were still ties in 1986.

In 1986, Philadelphia got itself a new coach, Buddy Ryan. Those around back in those days may recall the controversial "Bounty Bowl" that got Buddy Ryan a lot of bad press. There are a lot of other coaches in the league that got their fill of Buddy Ryan. Just one memorable quote: When asked about his relationship with Mike Ditka when we worked for him at Chicago, Ryan enjoyed saying "We hardly ever spoke. I'd just put the game plan on his secretary's

desk and she'd put it on his desk. Not that he understood much of it."

The Eagles did not improve upon their previous record of seven wins. They got just five victories and of course they got a tie after OT expired in the Cardinals game. It was the fifth consecutive season in which the team failed to qualify for the playoffs. Ryan had been the defensive coordinator of the 1985 Chicago Bears, the team that won the Super Bowl in 1985. Ryan eventually showed he could get more out of the Eagles than they had been giving Campbell.

The QB role was split between 35-year-old veteran Ron Jaworski (who started nine games in this, his final season with the team) and second-year quarterback Randall Cunningham. Veteran quarterback Matt Cavanaugh also started two games.

The Eagles were not on the mark in passing this year, winding up with the third-fewest passing yards in the league (2,540), and the fewest yards-per-attempt (4.1). Jaws was no longer getting the job done.

When things are not good sometimes circumstances make them look even worse. The Eagles had some records for example they would prefer to bequeath to any other team. For example, they gave up a record number of sacks (a still-standing NFL-record of 104) and they were also tops on yardage allowed on sacks (708). No other team in football history had ever given up more than 78 sacks or 554 yards on quarterback sacks.

To put "bad" in perspective, Philadelphia gave up three-or-more sacks in every single game of the 1986 season, the only team in NFL history to do so. It helps to remember that Buddy Ryan buttered his bread for years by being great of the D side of the ball. He'd need to tighten up the O-line if he were going to last.

There were a few season highlights but there were not many. For example, on the road, on October 5, the Birds barreled into Fulton County Stadium intent on whipping the previously-undefeated Atlanta Falcons. The Eagles shut out the Falcons 16-0. Then, the stole another unexpected win in a comeback 33-27 OT win against

the Raiders at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on November 30. This was the first Eagles' win over the Raiders since the 1980 season and first-ever victory on the road against the Oakland/LA version of the Raiders.

The Eagles had some good luck in the Draft this year picking up three players who became stars and mainstays of the Eagles' team. Keith Byars, Seth Joyner, and Clyde Simmons became Eagles franchise players in 1986.

Beginning the season away at Washington on September 7, 1986, Buddy Ryan's Eagles were pounded by the Redskins L (14-41) before. At Chicago, on Sept 14, the Bears beat the Eagles L (10-13) before 65,130. At the home opener on Sept 21, the Denver Broncos whooped the Eagles L (7-33) before 63,839. At the Vet again on Sept 28, the Los Angeles Rams beat the Eagles giving the Birds their fourth loss in a row. After four weeks, Buddy Ryan had not won a game for Philadelphia fans.

On Oct 5, at Atlanta, the Eagles beat the Falcons W (16-0) before 57,104. At New York, on Oct 12, the Giants pummeled the Eagles L (3-35), before 74,221. At the Vet on Oct 19, the Dallas Cowboys picked off the Eagles L (14-17) before 68,572. Then, on Oct 26, at home, Philadelphia beat the San Diego Chargers W (23-7) for the second win of the season.

Then, on Nov 2, 1986 at St. Louis, the Cardinals won the match L (10-13) before 33,051. At home on Nov 9, the New York Giants beat the Eagles by a FG L (14-17) before 60,601. On Nov 16, at home, the Detroit Lions prevailed over the Eagles L (11-13) before 54,568. At Seattle, on Nov 23, the Seahawks beat the Birds L (20-24) before 55,786.

At Los Angeles on Nov 30, Philadelphia beat the Raiders W (33-27) before 53,338. On Dec 7, at the Vet, the St Louis Cardinals tied the Eagles after OT expired with no scoring T (10-10) before 50,148. At Dallas, on December 14, the Eagles beat the Cowboys by two points W (23-21) before 46,117. In the season finale at the Vet, on Dec 21, the Washington Redskins were victorious L (14-21) before 61,816

1987 Buddy Ryan #17

The 1987 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buddy Ryan in his second of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 7-8 record brought the Eagles a second place NFC East finish. The team failed to qualify for the playoffs for the fifth straight season.

The second strike in six seasons interrupted the schedule and one game was canceled and others were played with replacement players. Regardless of who was playing, the Eagles improved upon their previous output of 5-10-1, going 7-8. However, three of those losses came during the three-game stretch during the strike when teams were staffed primarily with replacement players who crossed the picket lines to suit up. The regular players were very unkind to the replacements who were looking to star in the NFL. They called them "scabs."

Defensive lineman Reggie despite the major issues in the season had a breakout season, establishing a new NFL record by exploding for 21 sacks in the only 12 games in which he played. .

When the strike was settled, the first game was played on Oct 25 at Veterans Stadium. Eagles head coach Buddy Ryan called for the infamous "fake spike" in the final seconds with the Eagles leading the Dallas Cowboys by 10 points. The fake eventually led to another late touchdown, which was a payback for Cowboys head coach Tom Landry running up the score with starters who crossed the picket line to play two weeks earlier at Texas Stadium. One week later, Philadelphia won its final road game against the Cardinals at the old Busch Stadium, before the franchise moved to Phoenix for the 1988 season, becoming the Arizona Cardinals.

The Eagles played their season opener at Washington on Sept 13, where the Redskins prevailed L (24-34) before. The home opener for the Eagles at Veterans Stadium was on Sept 20, 1987 as the Eagles defeated the New Orleans Saints W (27-17) before 57,485. The Sept 27, 1987 game at San Francisco's 49ers was canceled due to the strike. On Oct, at home, the Eagles were battered by the Chicago Bears L (3-35). On Oct 11 at Dallas, the Cowboys, using franchise

players hammered the Eagles using replacement players L (22–41) before 40,622.

On Oct 18, at Green Bay, the Eagles lost to the Packers L (10–16) before 35,842. At home on 6 Oct 25, the Eagles whipped the Dallas Cowboys W (37–20) before 61,630. On November 1, at St. Louis, the Eagles nailed the Cardinals W (28–23) before 24,586. On Nov 8, at home, the Eagles nipped the Washington Redskins W (31–27) before 63,609.

At home, on Nov 15, the New York Giants defeated the Birds, L (17–20) before 66,172. At home on Nov 22, the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Eagles L (19–31) before 55,592. At New England on Nov 29, the Eagles barely got enough to beat the Patriots W (31–34) before 54,198. At New York, on Dec. 6, the Giants beat the Eagles L (20–23) before 65,874.

Then, on Dec 13, at home, the Eagles were beaten by the Dolphins L (19–28) before 63,841. On Dec 20, 1987 at New York, the Jets went down at the hands of the Eagles W (38–27) before 30,572. In the final game of the 1987 season, the Eagles defeated the Buffalo Bills on Dec 27 W (17–7) before 57,547.

1988 Buddy Ryan #17

The 1988 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-sixth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buddy Ryan in his third of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 10-6 record brought the Eagles a first-place finish in the NFC East. The team broke the five-streak of playoff misses and earned the right to compete in the NFL playoffs this year.

The Eagles won the NFC East for the first time in seven seasons, but lost to the Chicago Bears in the NFC Divisional round during the Fog Bowl. That was one game that should not have been played... IMHO.

On the final day of the regular season, Philadelphia dumped Dallas, 23–7, but had to wait for the end to the Jets-Giants game at Giants

Stadium to learn if they had clinched the division or not. The Jets won the game, 27–21, on a late TD strike from Ken O'Brien to Al Toon, giving the Eagles the NFC East crown on the tiebreaker of having beaten the Giants in both regular-season meetings. Buddy Ryan had delivered a playoff berth in his third season.

In the draft, Keith Jackson from Oklahoma, and Don McPherson from Syracuse, two college greats suited up for the Eagles in 1988.

On Sept 4 in the season opener at Tampa Bay, the Eagles beat the Buccaneers W (41-) before 43,502. On 2 Sept 11 at home, the Cincinnati Bengals beat the Eagles L (24 28) before 66,459.. Then, on Sept 18 at Washington, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (10-17) before 53,920. At Minnesota on Sept 25, the Eagles lost a very close match to the Vikings L (21-23) before 56,012.

On Oct 2 at home, the Eagles beat the Houston Oilers W (32-23) before 64,692. At home, on Oct 10, the Eagles stole a good game from the NY Giants in a fine win W (24 13). The Eagles were now 3–3. This game was before 63,736. On Oct 16 at Cleveland, the Eagles lost to the Browns, L (3-19) before 78,787. At home on Oct 23, the Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys in a game decided by 1 point W (24-23) before 66,309.

At home again on Oct 9, the Eagles lost to the Atlanta Falcons by a Field Goal L (24 27) before 60,091. Again, at home, against the Los Angeles Rams on Nov 6, the Eagles prevailed W (30-24) before 65,624. At Pittsburgh in a rare game, on Nov 13, the Eagles won a one-point game W (27-26) before 46,026. On Nov 20, at New York, the Eagles beat the New York Giants in OT W (23-17) before 43,621.

In the first game ever against the former St. Louis Cardinals, now the Phoenix Cardinals, on Nov 27 at home, Philadelphia prevailed W (31-21) before 57,918. At home, on Dec 4, the Washington Redskins defeated the Eagles in a one-point match L 19-20) before 65,947. Travelling to Phoenix for the first time ever, the Eagles defeated the Cardinals W (23-17) before 54,832. At Dallas on Dec 18, in the last game of the regular season for both teams, the Eagles defeated the Dallas Cowboys W (23-7) before 46,131. The next game for the Eagles would be in the playoffs.

The Divisional Playoffs Philadelphia v Chicago

The NFL playoffs for the 1988 season began on December 24, 1988. This postseason tournament concluded with the San Francisco 49ers defeating the Cincinnati Bengals in Super Bowl XXIII, 20–16, on January 22, 1989, at Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami, Florida. There was a lot of action before America and the world got to see this final game played. Due to Christmas, the two wild card playoff games were held in a span of three days. The Eagles were not part of the Wild Card weekend as the Birds had won the Divisional Championships.



In a game affectionately known as the Fog Bowl, the Bears defeated the Eagles 20–12, in a contest in which a heavy, dense fog rolled over Chicago's Soldier Field during the second quarter and cut visibility to about 15–20 yards for the rest of the game. The only fair thing about the game was that both teams experienced the same conditions.

I watched the game from my new home, where I had lived for just a year at the time. And though I was cozy, it was a tough game to

watch as all the Eagle's talent was minimized by the fog and the game was tough to see on TV or anyplace for that matter.

1989 Buddy Ryan #17

The 1989 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buddy Ryan in his fourth of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 11-5 record brought the Eagles a second-place finish in the NFC East. The team earned the right to compete in the NFL Wild Card Playoffs this year.

Despite a fine year, deep sorrow struck the Eagles late in the season with the death of quarterbacks' coach Doug Scovil from a heart attack. For the remainder of the season, the Eagles wore a black stripe made of electrical tape over the wings on their helmet in tribute.

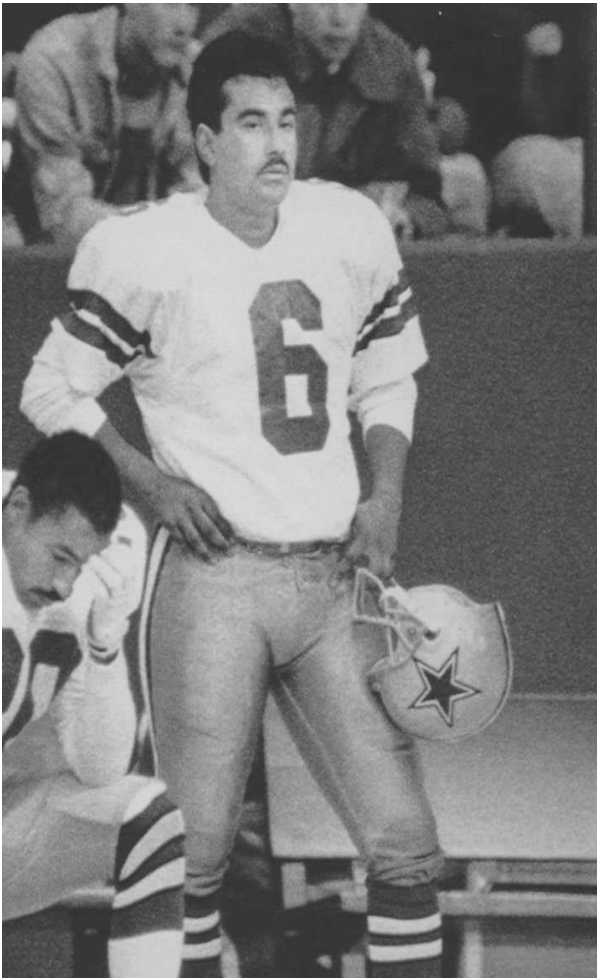
Chris Carter had on and off-field troubles this year, and so it would be the Hall of Famer's final season in Philadelphia. His issues led to his release the following preseason. Carter would then sign with the Minnesota Vikings.

Randall Cunningham took all the snaps this year as he enjoyed the second of back-to-back breakout seasons. His great year began with his leading the Eagles to a 42-37 comeback victory at RFK Stadium v the Redskins on Sept 17, right after signing a contract extension.

The Birds won five of their last six games to challenge the Giants for the division lead. On Thanksgiving Day at Texas Stadium, the Eagles whooped the Cowboys, 27-0, while there were accusations that certain defensive players were rewarded with bounties to take out several Dallas offensive players, including kicker Luis Zendejas. Two Saturdays later, back in Philadelphia, Eagles fans pelted the Cowboys and game officials with snowballs packed in ice thanks to freezing temperatures and snowfall from the previous day. The two matchups between the Cowboys and Eagles became known as the Bounty Bowls.

The Bounty Bowls

Late in November 1989, Eagles coach Buddy Ryan made his mark on two Dallas / Philly football games. Ryan was accused by first-year Dallas Cowboys coach Jimmy Johnson, the coach many fans in the country loved to hate after his years of controversy at Miami coaching the “thugs,” of offering bounties to Eagles if they injured Cowboys players.



Jimmy Johnson was not quiet about it. After the Eagles made mush out of the Cowboys, Johnson was livid, and he said Ryan had bounties of \$500 on Cowboys quarterback Troy Aikman and \$200 on placekicker Luis Zendejas, who had been an Eagle just three weeks earlier.

In the Irving Texas game, the Eagles (8-4) looked as good as they had in years. Randall Cunningham had his most productive day in two months. Cris Carter made two acrobatic touchdown catches and the Eagles' defense posted its first

shutout since 1986.

The fan action came after the game when the postgame interviews were a hundred times more exciting than the game play. It all

seemed to begin when placekicker Luis Zendejas threatened to deck a portly, peaceful man named Buddy Ryan.

One comment of note was "Hey, they played a football game, and WrestleMania IV broke out." "I congratulate them," Johnson said before storming out of the interview room, "but I have absolutely no respect for the way they played the game...having bounties on opposing players is not the way it's supposed to be done. "

Zendejas was leveled by linebacker Jessie Small on the second-half kickoff, and wobbled in the general direction of Ryan before gravity and better sense directed him elsewhere.

He said that if he could have stood up straight, he would have tried to slug Ryan right then and there. "The fat little guy. He can't take you out himself, so he pays somebody else to do it for him," Zendejas said. Ryan took the charges in stride, shrugged his shoulders and denied the accusations. "I didn't send anybody after anybody, That's ridiculous... "Maybe he just saw all the friendly faces and thought he was still with us," Ryan deadpanned.

On Sept 10, 1989 in the home and season opener, the Eagles defeated the Seattle Seahawks W 31-7 before 64,287 at Veterans Stadium. On Sept 17, at Washington, Ryan's Eagles beat the Redskins W (42-37) before 53,493. Then, on Sept 24, at home, the San Francisco 49ers defeated Philadelphia L (28-38) before 66,042. On Oct 2, at Chicago, the Bears defeated the Eagles L 13-27) before 66,625.

At home on Oct 8, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (21-19) in a close match before 65,688. At Phoenix on Oct 15, Philadelphia defeated the Cardinal L(5-17) before 42,620. On Oct 22, at home, the Eagles defeated the Los Angeles Raiders W (10-7) before 64,019. Then, at Denver on Oct 29, the Eagles beat the Broncos W (28-24) before 75,065.

At San Diego on Nov 5, the Chargers defeated Philadelphia L (17-20) before 47,019. On Nov 12, at home, the Washington Redskins beat the Birds L (3-10) before 65,443. Then, on Nov 19, in a one point match, Philadelphia beat Minnesota W (10-9) before 65,944 at

the Vet. On Nov 23, at Dallas, in the Bounty Bowl I, the Eagles crushed the Cowboys W (27–0) before 54,444

On Dec 3, for the second time this season, the Eagles beat the New York Giants. This time in NY W (24–17) before 74,809. At Veteran Stadium on December 10, in Bounty Bowl II, the Eagles dropped the Cowboys again W (20–10) before 59,842. At New Orleans on Dec 18, the Saints beat the Eagles L (20–30) before 59,218. In the last game of the season, the Eagles ended the season on a high note at home by defeating the Phoenix Cardinals on Christmas Eve, W (31–14) before 43,287

Wild Card Playoffs Dec 31, 1989

The LA Rams got past the “balmy” 50 degree Philadelphia weather and the rowdy fans, as well as the Eagles stalwart defense, and quickly pushed forward to beat the Eagles at the Vet, 7-21 on December 31, 1989, New Year's Eve, before 57,869 mostly comfortable fans. 1989. The Eagles big problem in the game was injury concerns from the season just ended.

1990 Buddy Ryan #17

The 1990 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Buddy Ryan in his last of five seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 10-6 record brought the Eagles a second-place finish in the NFC East. The team earned the right to compete in the NFL Wild Card playoffs again this year.

Making the postseason again with a 10–6 overall record, was made much more difficult by a poor season beginning the season with disappointing games early, bringing the Eagles record to 1–3 in the first four games and 2–4 after six.

The Eagles had a good offense, running for 2,556 rushing yards in 1990, which is the most of any team in a single season in the 1990s.

Other season highlights were a 28–14 win at Veterans Stadium over the Washington Redskins on November 12. This game got the nickname the “Body Bag Game,” since the defense managed to knock both Redskins quarterbacks from the contest plus several other key players.

At Buffalo in a 30–23 loss on December 2, Randall Cunningham made one of the signature plays of his career, eluding Bills Hall of Fame defensive end Bruce Smith in the end zone before launching the ball into the middle of the field to wide receiver Fred Barnett, who completed the 95-yard touchdown play.

One week prior, the Eagles avenged an opening-night loss at the Meadowlands, whipping the 10–0 Giants by a 31–13 score.

The Eagles began the season at New York on Sept 9, 1990 at New York where the Giants defeated them L (20–27) before 76,202. On Sept 16, in the home opener, the Phoenix Cardinals beat the Eagles by two points L (21–23) before 64,396. At Los Angeles, on Sept 23, the Eagles defeated the Rams W (27–21) before 63,644. At home on Sept 30, the Eagles lost a one-pointer to the Indianapolis Colts L (23–24) before 62,067. On Oct 8, the Eagles drew a scheduled bye as the league extended the season by one week.

At home, on Oct 15, the Eagles beat the Minnesota Vikings W (32–24) before 66,296. On Oct 21 at Washington, the Redskins beat the Eagles for the fourth loss in six games this year L (7–13) before 753,567. The Eagles would lose just two more games in the regular season this year. On October 28, at Dallas, in a classic one-point game, the Eagles beat the Cowboys W (21–20) before 62,605. On Nov 4, the Eagles shellacked the New England Patriots W (48–20) before 65,514

At home on Nov 12, the Eagles whooped the Washington Redskins W (28–14) before 65,857. This game is forever noted as “The Body Bag Game”. The pundits have it written up as one of the Eagles Great Games

The Body Bag Game

Buddy Ryan was the source of a lot of controversy in his time at Philadelphia. The Body Bag Game was a Monday Night Football game that was played on November 12, 1990, between the Eagles and Redskins at Veterans Stadium. The Eagles defeated the Redskins, 28–14. The game's nickname is because nine Washington Redskins players left the game with injuries, and an Eagles player reacted to one of those injured Redskins by yelling, "Do you guys need any more body bags?" Funny?

This was game # 2 between the two NFC East rivals. The Redskins had won the Super Bowl just two years earlier, but they were classified as an again team at the time of the body bag encounter. The Eagles were in their fifth and last season under defensive mastermind Buddy Ryan, but they were coming off two straight early playoff exits. In the previous game, on October 21, the 3–2 Redskins beat the 2–3 Eagles 13–7, behind a rushing touchdown by Gerald Riggs and two Chip Lohmiller field goals. The rematch would come three weeks later, on Monday Night Football, with the second-place Redskins being 5–3 and the third-place Eagles being 4–4.



They scored first, on a 30-yard interception return for a touchdown by cornerback William Frizzell. In the second quarter, Washington tied the game 7–7 behind a Rutledge pass to tight end Don Warren. But, by the third quarter, the Eagles took control of the game with three touchdowns.

The first TD was on a trick play. Fullback Keith Byars threw a 9-yard pass to Heath Sherman. The second TD was collected by the defense, when defensive end Clyde Simmons returned a fumble 18 yards. The third TD in a row was another pass to Sherman, this time from QB Randall Cunningham. The Redskins would finish the scoring in the fourth quarter. Brian Mitchell took it in on a one-yard run. The score would not become a comeback. The Eagles won the game 28–14.

Get the body bags! During this game, the pundits counted at least nine Redskin players who were injured. These included starting quarterback Jeff Rutledge and backup QB Stan Humphries. Washington, already playing without quarterbacks Mark Rypien (who was injured earlier in the season) and Gary Hogeboom (inactive). They had to finish the game with rookie running back Brian Mitchell at quarterback.

After this “exciting” Body Bag Game, the Eagles won five of their last seven under Cunningham, finished the season 10–6 and earning a wild card playoff berth. They were fourth seed in the tough NFC.

The Redskins meanwhile also won five of their last seven to finish the season 10–6, losing the number four seed spot to the Eagles. Despite this, the Redskins would return to Veterans Stadium and defeat the Eagles in the Wild Card playoff game, 20–6. No body bags were spotted in the playoff game.

The Redskins lost to defending Super Bowl champion San Francisco in the divisional round. However, as told in the NFL Network presentation *America's Game: The Story of the 1991 Washington Redskins*, coach Joe Gibbs and others pointed to this game as the foundation for the successes of the 1991 Redskins, who would go on to win Super Bowl XXVI.

After the season, the NFL had to address the problem of two quarterbacks being injured in the same game. The began to permit a third quarterback in addition to the regular 45-man game-day roster. Under that rule, the third quarterback could be played, but if he entered the game before the fourth quarter, neither of the other quarterbacks could return to the game. That rule was changed again for the 2011 season when the game-day roster size was simply increased to 46. ---End of body bag write-up

1990 Season games continued

At Atlanta on Nov 18, in another one-point classic, the Eagles dropped the Falcons W (24–23) before 53,755. Then at home on Nov 25, the Eagles crushed the New York Giants W (31–13) before 66,706. At Buffalo on Dec 2, the Eagles lost by a TD to the Bills L (23–30) before 79,320.

At Miami on Dec 9, the Dolphins beat the Eagles L (20–23) before 67,034. On Dec 16, at home, the Eagles had all cylinders firing and shut out the Green Bay Packers W (31–0) before 65,627. At home again on Dec 23, the Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys W (17–3) before 63,895. At Phoenix on Dec 29, the Eagles beat the Cardinals by two points W (23–21) before 31,796

For three years of close but no cigar, Head Coach Buddy Ryan was fired after the 1990 Season. Philadelphia offensive coordinator Rich Kotite was promoted to replace Ryan as Eagles head coach, a position Kotite held for the next four seasons.

The Wild Card Playoffs 1991

The Eagles drew first blood against Washington with a Roger Ruzek in Veterans Stadium on January 5. The Eagles held the lead for the entire first quarter and then upped the ante in the second quarter with another Ruzek field goal—this one of 28-yards. Eagles fans wanted more but were ok that the Eagles were winning. But it would be short-lived.



Randall Cunningham off with the ball in the Wild Card Game v Washington

Before halftime, Washington would score twice to first take the lead and then add to it. Redskins Art Monk caught a 16-yard TD pass from Mark Rypien and Chip Lohmiller added the kick, putting Washington up 7-6. From then, Redskins would shut out the Eagles.

In the third quarter, with the lead well assured, the Redskins Chip Lohmiller connected on two goals. One was 20-yards, and the other 10-yards, Near the end of Q3, the Redskins wrapped up their scoring when Mark Rypien connected with Gary Clark on a two-yard TD pass after a nice drive. Lohmiller added the point. Game over. 20-6

Chapter 10 Coaches Rich Kotite, & Ray Rhodes 1991 to 1998

Coach #18 Rich Kotie

Coach Ray Rhodes

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Pl</u>	<u>W-L-T</u>
1991	Rich Kotite	NFC	East	3rd	10-6-0
1992	Rich Kotite	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0
	•				Won Wild Card Playoffs (at Saints) 36-20
	•				Lost Divisional Playoffs (at Cowboys) 10-34
1993	Rich Kotite	NFC	East	3rd	8-8-0
1994	Rich Kotite,	NFC,	East	4th	7-9-0
1991-1994 Rich Kotite final record (37-29-0)					
1995	Ray Rhodes	NFC	East,	2nd	10-6-0
	•				Won Wild Card Playoffs(Lions) 58-37
	•				Lost Divisional Playoffs (at Cowboys) 11-30
	•				Ray Rhodes Coach of the year
1996	Ray Rhodes	NFC	East,	2nd	10- 6- 0,
	•				Lost Wild Card Playoff s (at 49ers) 0-14
1997	Ray Rhodes	NFC	East	3rd	6-9-1
1998	Ray Rhodes,	NFC,	East	5th	3-13-0
<u>1995-1998 Ray Rhodes final record (30-36-1)</u>					



Coach Rich Kotite taking it seriously

1991 Rich Kotite #18

The 1991 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their fifty-ninth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Rich Kotite in his first of four seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 10-6 record brought the Eagles a third-place finish in the NFC East. The team did not make the playoffs

Despite their 10–6 record and finishing with the top-ranked defense in the NFL, the Eagles did not make the playoffs. Besides that, the injury bug was back in Philadelphia. For example, during Week 1, quarterback Randall Cunningham was lost for the season with a knee injury.

Statistics site Football Outsiders ranked the 1991 Eagles as the greatest defensive team in their ranking's history. "The 1991 Eagles completely lap the field in terms of defensive DVOA. Only the 2002 Bucs had a better pass defense, and only the 2000 Ravens had a better run defense, and the Eagles were much more balanced than either of those teams.

"It's crazy to imagine how few points the Eagles might have given up if they were playing with a halfway-decent offense instead of losing Randall Cunningham to a torn ACL in the first game of the season. The Eagles were stuck depending on an over-the-hill Jim McMahon for 11 starts, plus Jeff Kemp for two and Brad Goebel for two. McMahon actually wasn't half bad ... but the other two quarterbacks were awful, especially Goebel who had no touchdowns with six interceptions. And the running game was dreadful, with 3.1 yards per carry as a team.

"Still, the Eagles were fifth in the league in points allowed, and first in yards allowed by nearly 400 yards – and the team that was second in yards allowed is also on that top-ten defenses list, the 1991 New Orleans Saints. The Eagles allowed 3.9 yards per play, where no other team allowed fewer than 4.5. As bad as their running game was, their run defense was even better, allowing 3.0 yards per carry.

“Three-fourths of the starting defensive line was All-Pro (Reggie White, Jerome Brown, and Clyde Simmons). Linebacker Seth Joyner and cornerback Eric Allen made the Pro Bowl as well.”

On January 8, 1991, team owner Norman Braman opted not to renew the contract of Buddy Ryan, the Eagles' head coach since 1986. On the same day, Braman promoted then-offensive coordinator Rich Kotite, making him the 18th head coach in club history.

The Eagles opened with a 3–1 mark, their best start since 1981, despite having lost Cunningham for the year due to a knee injury suffered at Green Bay thanks to a hit from Bryce Paup on opening day. After coming on to lead the Eagles to their solid start, backup QB Jim McMahon was also injured in Game 5, a shutout loss to the Redskins. The Eagles had a winless October.

With McMahon sidelined, the Birds offense would stall completely, including a stretch of 11 straight quarters without scoring a touchdown, culminating into a four-game skid. By mid-season, Philadelphia had used five different quarterbacks, including rookie Brad Goebel, Pat Ryan and Jeff Kemp in eight games and seen its record sink to 3–5.

In Week 10 saw McMahon came back to the line-up for a Monday night, 30–7 victory over the defending Super Bowl Champion New York Giants at Veterans Stadium. However, the following week at Municipal Stadium would be a little closer. The Eagles did win the match 32–30 but Philadelphia spotted Cleveland a 23–0 lead early in the second quarter, before staging a comeback behind a battered McMahon (passing for 341 yards and three touchdowns).

Before the game, as the folklore goes, McMahon's elbow was so swollen, his roommate Ron Heller had to tie his pony tail for him. He then told his lineman he wouldn't be able to play. But Birds trainer Otho Davis had other plans knowing how vital McMahon was to the team at that point. He put together a concoction he called "Grandma's Goop" on the elbow and McMahon was able to go.

These two wins brought the season back from collapse to vitality. The Birds would continue this surge right into contention for a

playoff berth with a six-game winning streak (the club's longest since the start of '81). This upped their record to 9–5.

Their most significant win of the run was a 13–6 Monday night victory against the Oilers in Houston on December 2. It was later dubbed the "House of Pain" game for the Eagles' defense punished Warren Moon and his receiving corps en-route to the big victory.

How is this for a quote: "In '91, I broke five ribs off my sternum in New York and bruised my heart. I could've punctured it, but it just bruised." -Jim McMahon, 2014. The season ending rib injury to McMahon in Week 15 (a 19–14 win against the Giants) made way for a devastating loss at home to Dallas the following week in Week 16. The loss ended Philadelphia's playoff hopes.

However, the season was highlighted by a 10–6 record, allowing the Eagles to join the 49ers as the only NFL clubs to post 10-or-more wins in each of the last four seasons. Both teams missed the postseason in '91 despite having won 10 games.

As noted previously, Philadelphia's defense finished the season ranked first in the NFL in fewest passing yards, rushing yards, and total yards allowed. As such, the Eagles became only the fifth club in NFL history and the first since 1975 to accomplish this rare triple.

The D was the best ever. Five members represented the Eagles in the Pro Bowl – DEs Reggie White and Clyde Simmons, DT Jerome Brown, and LB Seth Joyner were selected as starters while CB Eric Allen also made the NFC squad. The selection of White, Simmons, and Brown marked only the sixth time in NFL history that three defensive linemen from one team were elected to the Pro Bowl. They were that good. Can you imagine what a consistent QB could have done this year.

In addition, the Eagles' defense led the NFL in sacks and fumble recoveries and tied for the league lead in takeaways. The Eagles' 48 defensive takeaways in 1991 is tied for the most in the NFL in the 1990s.

In the season opener on Sept 1, 1991 at Green Bay, Jim McMahon led the Eagles over the Packers for the victory W (20–3) before 58,991. On Sept 8, at home. The Eagles lost to the Phoenix

Cardinals L (10–26) before 63,818. At Dallas on Sept 15, the Eagles threw a shutout W (24–0) before 62,656. Then, on Sept 22, at home, the Eagles beat Pittsburgh W (23–14) before 65,511.

On Sept 30, the losing season began at Washington when McMahon was sidelined for four weeks. The Redskins shutout the no-offense eagles L (0–23) before 55,198. At Tampa Bay, the Bucs won by one point over the Eagles on Oct 6, L (13–14) before 41,219. At home on Oct 13, the Eagles lost to the New Orleans Saints L (6–13) before 64,224, at the Vet. Then came the Bye Week followed by Oct 27 at home as the Birds were knocked off by the San Francisco 49ers L (7–23) before 65,796.

The six-game win streak began on Monday Night with a mostly well Jim McMahon back at the controls. On November 4, at home, the Eagles whipped the NY Giants W (30–7) before 65,816. At Cleveland on Nov, the Eagles beat the Browns, W (32–30) before 72,086. Then, on Nov 17, the Eagles beat the Cincinnati Bengals W (17–10) before 63,189. At Phoenix on Nov 24, the Eagles beat the Cardinals, W (34–14) before 37,307.

On Dec 2, at Houston, the Birds beat the Oilers W (13–6) before 62,141. Then, at New York, on Dec 9, the Eagles beat the first place Giants again W (19–14) before 76,099. At home, on Dec 15, the Eagles lost to the Dallas Cowboys L (13–25) before 65,854 at the Vet. In the season closer, the Eagles grabbed a win on Dec 22, at Washington from the Redskins W (24–22) before 58,988. At 10-6, the Eagles (6 losses) were in third place behind the #1 Redskins (2 losses) and the #2 Cowboys (5 losses). Now, you can see how important the home loss of Dec 15 v Dallas actually was. It kept the Eagles from the playoffs.

1992 Rich Kotite #18

The 1992 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixtieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Rich Kotite in his second of four seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 11-5 record brought the Eagles a second-place finish in the NFC East.

They made the playoffs; won in the Wildcard game; but lost the Divisional playoffs.

The Eagles fought through adversity from game one and improved upon their previous record of 10–6. They won eleven games and returned to the playoffs after missing one year.

After their six of seven win streak at the end of the prior regular-season games, the Birds kept the momentum going and posted grabbed their first playoff victory since the 1980 NFC Championship game. They beat the Saints in New Orleans in the first round.

There were a number of highlights in the season including: the first 4–0 start since going 6–0 to begin the 1981 campaign. They had a home shutout of the Denver Broncos on September 20; a memorable seven-play goal-line stand in a 7–3 win over the Cardinals on October 25; a come-from-behind 47–34 win over the New York Giants at the Meadowlands (which included a Vai Sikahema punt return for a touchdown and his iconic boxing with the padding at the base of the goal posts); and cornerback Eric Allen batting away a Mark Rypien pass at the goal line to seal a playoff-spot-clinching 17–13 decision against the Washington Redskins on December 20.

The entire season was the focus of Mark Bowden's best-selling book "Bringing the Heat", which also dealt in great detail with prominent recent-term figures who were not with the 1992 Eagles, including tight end Keith Jackson as he became one of the first NFL players ever to enjoy full free agency and signed with the Miami Dolphins and former coach Buddy Ryan.

On Sept 6 in the season and home opener, Rich Kotite's Eagles beat the New Orleans Saints W (15–13) before 63,513 at Veterans' Stadium in Philadelphia. On Sept 13, at The Eagles beat the Cardinals W (31–14) before 42,533. At home, on Sept 20, the Eagles blanked the Denver Broncos W (30–0) before 65,833. At home on Oct 5, the Birds beat the Dallas Cowboys W (31–7) before 66,572.

On Oct 11, at Kansas City, the Eagles lost to the Chiefs L (17–24) before 76,626. On Oct 18, at Washington, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (12–16) before 56,380. Then, at home in the Vet on Oct 25, Philadelphia defeated the Phoenix Cardinals W (7–3) before 64,676.

On Nov 1, at Dallas, with Troy Aikman at QB, the Cowboys beat the Eagles L (10-20) before 65,012.

On Nov 8, at home, the Eagles beat the Los Angeles Raiders W (31-10) before 65,388. At Green Bay on Nov 15, 199, the Packers barely beat the Eagles L (24-27) before 52,689. At NY on Nov 22, the Eagles beat the Giants in a shootout W (47-34) before 68,153. At San Francisco on Nov 29, the 49ers beat the Eagles L (14-20) before 64,374.

At home, on Dec 6, Philadelphia defeated the Minnesota Vikings W (28-17) before 65,280. At Seattle on Dec 13, the Eagles beat the Seahawks W (20-17) before 47,492. On Dec 20, at home, Philadelphia beat Washington W (17-13) before 65,841. At home to close the season, on Dec 27. The Philadelphia Eagles defeated the New York Giants W (20-10) before 64,266

1993 Rich Kotite #18

The 1993 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Rich Kotite in his third of four seasons as head coach. The owner was Norman Braman. This year's 8-8 record brought the Eagles a third-place finish in the NFC East. The team did not make the playoffs.

Philadelphia did not improve upon their previous season record of 11-5, winning only eight games and as noted, they failed to qualify for the playoffs for only the second time in six seasons. Ten of their sixteen games were decided by a touchdown or less. Football is a game of inches and a lot of luck. The team was without future hall of fame defensive end Reggie White, who had signed a free agency contract with the Green Bay Packers.

The downturn this year could be directly related to the twin losses of QB Randall Cunningham (broken leg) and WR Fred Barnett (ACL tear). These season-ending injuries occurred in a 35-30 win against the New York Jets on October 3. Though the Eagles won their first four, following that game, lost six straight to fall out of playoff contention.

Bubby Brister the backup QB was only able to do so much in a starting role, but the club rallied to win their final three games, including their first road win in San Francisco in 10 years.

One notable feat by an opponent came on Halloween in Philadelphia, was when Dallas Cowboys running back Emmitt Smith waded his way to 237 yards and one touchdown at a soggy Veterans Stadium in a 23–10 Dallas victory

In the home and season opener on Sept 5, the Eagles beat the Phoenix Cardinals W (23–17) before 59,831 at Veterans Stadium. On Sept 12, at Green Bay, the Eagles beat the Packers W (20–17) before 59,061. At home on Sept 19, the Eagles defeated the Washington Redskins W (34–31) before 65,435. The next week was the first of two byes for the season. Then, on Oct 3, 1993 at New York, the Eagles beat the Jets W (35–30) before 72,593. After this game, Randall Cunningham and Fred Barnet were out for the season. Bubby Brixter was the replacement QB.

At home, on Oct 10, the Eagles lost to the Chicago Bears L (6–17) before 63,601. At NY on Oct 17, the Eagles lost to the Giants L (10–21) before 76,050. On Oct 24, was bye week #2. At the Vet on Oct 31, the Eagles lost to the Dallas Cowboys L (10–23) before 61,912/ At Phoenix, on Nov 7, the Eagles lost to the Cardinals L (3–16) before 41,634.

At home on Nov 14, the Eagles lost to the Miami Dolphins L (14–19) before 64,213. On Nov 21, at home, the Eagles lost to the NY Giants L (3–7) before 62,928. At Washington on Nov 28, the Eagles beat the Redskins W (17–14) before 46,663. Then, at Dallas on Dec 6, Philadelphia lost to the Cowboys L (17–23) before 64,521.

At home on Dec 12, the Eagles lost to the Buffalo Bills L (7–10) before 60,769. At Indianapolis on Dec 19, the Eagles defeated the Colts W (20–10) before 44,952. On the day after Christmas, Dec 26, Boxers Day in Canada, Philadelphia defeated the New Orleans Saints W (37–26) before 50,085. At San Francisco on Jan 3, in the season finale, the Eagles defeated the San Francisco 49ers W (37–34) before 61,653.

1994 Rich Kotite #18

The 1994 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Rich Kotite in his last of four seasons as head coach. The prior owner Norman Braman sold the team to Jeffrey Lurie this year before the season. This year's 7-9 record brought the Eagles a fourth-place finish in the NFC East. The team did not make the playoffs.

Philadelphia did not improve upon their previous season record of 8-8, winning only seven games and as noted, they failed to qualify for the playoffs for the third time in seven seasons.

The sale of the team went through on May 6, 1994. The NFL approved the transfer of majority interest in the club from Braman to Lurie. With the new owner and a not too spiffy season in 1994, Rich Kotite's fate as Eagles head coach was sealed after a seven-game losing streak to end the season knocked Philly out of contention. Having been at 7-2, this was unacceptable to management and the fans. One key injury was the season-ending broken leg suffered by linebacker Byron, He was lost in game #10 against Cleveland and the team won no more games.

If it could have been worse it would have been or so it seemed as the low point of the collapse came on Christmas Eve at Cincinnati, when the 2-13 Bengals scored six points in the final seconds thanks in part to the recovery of a fumbled kick return – to steal a win.

The high point of the '94 season occurred early when all players were injury-free. On Oct 2 at Candlestick Park, the Eagles steamrolled the eventual Super Bowl winning 49ers by 40-8.

In the season opener on Sept 4, 1994 at New York, the Eagles lost to the Giants L (23-28) before 76,130, At home on Sept 12, in the home opener, the Eagles beat the Chicago Bears W (30-22) before 64,890. At home on Sept 18, Philadelphia defeated the Green Bay Packers W (13-7) before 63,922, On Sept 25, Bye. At San Francisco on Oct 2, 1994, the Eagles thumped the to-be Super Bowl champion 49ers W (40-8) before 64,843.

At home, on Oct 9, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (21–17) before 63,947. At Dallas, on Oct 16, the Eagles lost to the Cowboys L (13–24) before 64,703. At home on Oct 24, the Eagles beat the Houston Oilers W (21–6) before 65,233. On Oct 30, at Washington, the Eagles beat the Redskins W (31–29) before 53,530.

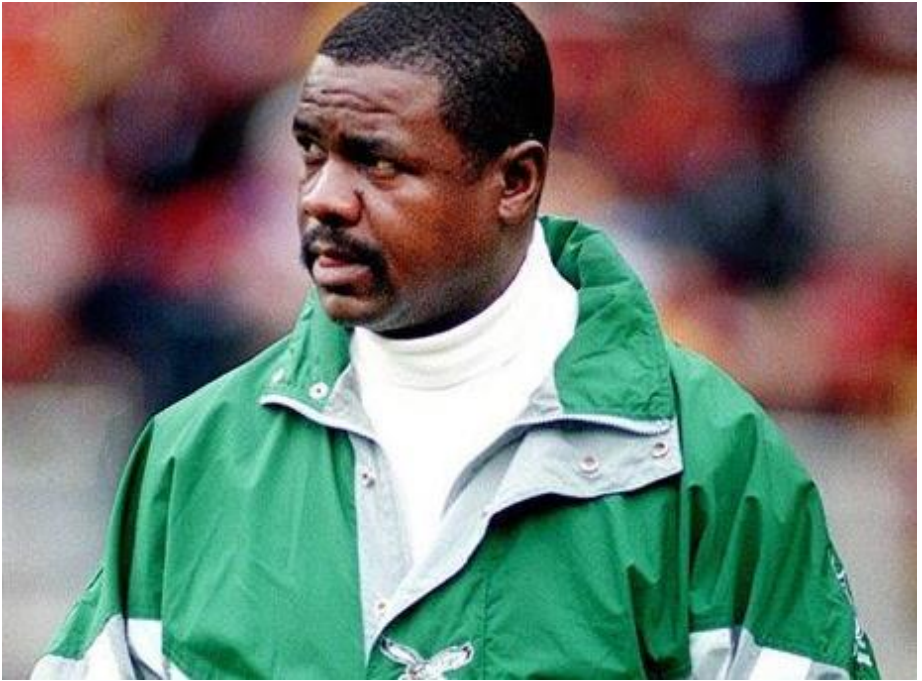
At home, on Nov 6, the Eagles beat the Arizona Cardinals W (17–7) before. All games from this point on were losses:

Game #	Date	Team,	Score	Fans
11	Nov 13	Cleveland Browns	L 26–7	65,233
12	Nov 20	at Arizona Cardinals	L 12–6	62,779
13	Nov 27	at Atlanta Falcons	L 28–21	60,008
14	Dec 4	Dallas Cowboys	L 31–19	65,974
15	Dec 11	at Pittsburgh Steelers	L 14–	55,474
16	Dec 18	New York Giants	L 16–13	64,540
17	Dec 24	at Cincinnati Bengals	L 33–30	39,923

Looking at all those losses in a row, though some games were close, it is understandable that Rich Kotite was replaced.

1995 Ray Rhodes #19

The 1995 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Ray Rhodes in his first of four seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 10-6 record brought the Eagles a second-place finish in the NFC East. The team made the playoffs and won a wild-card berth game. However, the Eagles lost in the Division Championship game.



It wasn't an optimistic start. Ricky Watters had signed as a free agent from the Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers. He had a great shot at catching a nice pass over the middle in the Birds' season-opening 21–6 home loss to Tampa Bay. He did not seem to try. Following the contest, when asked why he didn't commit to catching the ball and taking a hit, he replied "For who? For what?"

Many fans did not know of the interview or Watters, who was at Philly for just three years, would have been gone sooner. He made a big mistake. "I don't want to go there, and people still think, 'For who, for what?' I really loved playing there. I felt like wherever I went people were coming up to me, and everyone acted and they treated me like their native son. And I think that, that's what I am. And I love that feeling," he said. Watch what you say and watch what you think Ricky?.

In week four of the season, the Eagles were thumped by a 31-point margin against the Raiders in Oakland. However, the momentum swung in a positive direction after that, as the Eagles won four straight and seven of their next eight to get back in the playoff hunt.

Fans remember on a frigid December 10 at the Vet against the Cowboys, the Eagles defense twice stopped Emmitt Smith on 4th-and-1 in Dallas territory late in the fourth quarter of a 17–17 tie. The change of possession resulted in the game-winning field goal from Philly's Gary Anderson and bragging rights forever W (20-17) . A win over Phoenix the following week clinched a playoff berth for Ray Rhoads's Eagles in his first year, but a loss at Chicago in the season finale on Christmas Eve torpedoed any hopes of winning the NFC East crown. It was the final season with the Eagles for quarterback Randall Cunningham, who retired from the Eagles following the season before he joined the Vikings for the 1997 season.

The season opener was also the home opener. It was played on Sept 3, 1995 against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The Eagles lost the contest before 66,266 by a score L (6-21). At Arizona on Sept 10, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (31–19) before 45,004. At home on Sept 17, Philadelphia lost to the San Diego Chargers L (21–27) before 63,081 At Oakland on Sept 24, the Eagles were shellacked by the Raiders L (17–48) before 48,875.

Getting back to winning. At New Orleans, the Eagles beat the Saints on Oct 1, W (15–10) before 43,938. At home, on Oct 8, 1995 the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins by a field goal W (37–34) before 65,498. At NY, on Oct 15, the Eagles beat the Giants W (17–14) before 74,252 fans. The next week was a bye. Then, on Oct 29, at home, the Eagles defeated the St. Louis Rams W (20–9) before 62,172.

At Dallas, on Nov 6, at home, the Cowboys pounded the Eagles L (12–24) before 64,876 Still at home, on Nov 12, the Eagles whooped the Denver Broncos W (31–13) before 60,842. At home, on Nov 19, the Eagles got the best of the New York Giants W (28–19) before 63,562. At Washington, on Nov 26, 1995 the Redskins lost to the Eagles W (14–7) before 50,539.

At Seattle on Dec. 3, the Seahawks beat the Eagles L (14-26) before 39,893. At home, on Dec 10, Philadelphia got by the Dallas Cowboys W (20–17) before 66,198. This game is one of the great ones played by Philadelphia according to the Pundits. After we finish describing the last two games, we will be back for this one

On December 17, at home, the Eagles pulled a one-point special on the Arizona Cardinals with a nail-biter win W (21–20) before 62,076. In the season closer at Chicago on Dec 24, the Bears beat the Eagles L (14–20) before 52,391. This loss cost the Eagles the NFC East Championship.

1995 Wild Card Game

In the 1995 Wild Card game, the Eagles under coach Ray Rhodes shellacked the Detroit Lions W (58-37). The scoring just would not end.



T The Divisional Playoff Game

Cowboys 30; Eagles 11

The results of the NFC: Divisional Playoff game is already posted in history as Dallas Cowboys 30, Philadelphia Eagles 11. We offer a short game summary as the Eagles failed to make a great showing in this contest. The game was held in Texas Stadium in Irving, Texas

right outside of Dallas. The game was played at 12:30 p.m. EST/11:30 a.m. CST. The weather was good for football at 32 degrees and clear. The 64,371 in the stands were ready for anything. The TV announcers on Fox) were Pat Summerall and John Madden. Injuries would again affect the Eagles in a city in which nobody paid bounties.

Eagles' QB Rodney Peete was out of the game early and the Eagles offensive machine was tilted without Peete in control. The Cowboys held the Eagles to just 227 yards and 11 points, and there was not a lot of bounce coming from the Eagle's cleats.

1996 Ray Rhodes #19

The 1996 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Ray Rhodes in his second of four seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 10-6 record brought the Eagles a second-place finish in the NFC East. The team made the playoffs and lost the wild-card berth game, thereby eliminating them from the rest of the playoffs and the Super Bowl.

Eagles fans were continually thinking that their coaches could not make it to the big games and win them. Results such as losing the 1996 Wild Card game would not be forgotten by the fans nor the power brokers in Philadelphia.

After a season ending injury to Rodney Peete, who by the way today is a Hallmark Channel star along with his family in a show about the Peete's, Ty Detmer took over the starting QB role. With a full stable of healthy horses, for the second time in three seasons, Ray Rhodes' Eagles were 7-2 at the nine-game mark. The Eagles had the services of Brian Dawkins for 1996 as he was picked up in the draft. So early on, things looked good.

One of the reasons was a thrilling win November 3 on the road against Dallas. The topper to that contest was a combined 104-yard interception return between James Willis and Troy Vincent in the final moments. This changed the momentum as a potential game-winning drive by the Cowboys into a Philadelphia victory.

As in 1994 under Rich Kotite, the Eagles wilted on the vine. Something was supposed to happen, but it never happened. Out of nowhere, the Eagles stopped playing like Super Bowl Champions. The Coach always gets blamed as it is his job to make sure no such bleeps occur.

This time, the Eagles suffered four losses in five games, including an embarrassing 27-point setback on national TV at Indianapolis v the Colts. This forced the Eagles to become scramblers in the playoff picture when at one time, it looked like a sure thing.

However, wins against the lowly Jets and Cardinals managed to right the ship just enough, and the team got a wild-card berth as their reward. But, when the wild-card game was played, the tune was “Let’s see what happens in 1997.”

The 1996 season was the first season in which the Eagles showed their new midnight green, white, and black look, with new helmet designs and the logo and end zone font as well.

On Sept 1, 1996, in a pre-labor day season opener v the Washington Redskins the Eagles squeaked out a victory W 17–14. On Sept 9, 1996 at Green Bay, the Packers pounded the Eagles L (13–39) On Sept 15, the Eagles beat the Detroit Lions W (24–17). At Atlanta on Sept 22, the Eagles defeated the Falcons W (33–18).

Then at home on Sept 30, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles L (19–23). Oct 6 was a bye. Then, at New York, on Oct 13, the Eagles prevailed over the Giants W (19–10). Next on Oct 20, at home, Philadelphia beat the Miami Dolphins W (35–28). On Oct 27, the Eagles beat the Carolina Panthers W (20–9) .

At Dallas on Nov 3, Philadelphia beat the Cowboys W (31–21). Then, at home against Buffalo on Nov 10, the Bills beat the Eagles (17–24). At home on Nov 17, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles L (21–26). At Arizona on Nov 24, the Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (30–36).

At home on Dec 1, Philadelphia shut out the New York Giants W (24–0). At Indianapolis on Dec 7, the Colts walloped the Eagles L

(10–37). The next two games would be wins against the poorest record teams in the league at the time. On Dec 14, at NY Jets W (21-20) On Dec 22, in the season finale, at home v Arizona Cardinals W (29-19)

1996 Wild Card Playoffs December 29

San Francisco 14; Philadelphia 0

One of the ironies in this Wild Card game was that the Eagles gained more yards than the 49ers. Nonetheless a game is more than just yardage.

Philadelphia was shut out though not shut down in a rain-soaked, muddy game with 62 miles per hour winds at Candlestick Park.

With Candlestick Park doing its best to help the 49ers, San Francisco won 14-0 in what coach George Seifert called "the swampy tundra of Candlestick." (A reference to John Facenda's famous description of Lambeau Field as "the frozen tundra") Despite the poor weather, San Francisco finished the game without losing any turnovers.

To say that Philadelphia had bad luck, would imply that the Birds actually had any luck. They did not.

1997 Ray Rhodes #19

The 1997 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Ray Rhodes in his third of four seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 6-9-1 record brought the Eagles no accolades in a poor third place finish in the NFC East

The team had a losing record with no chance of making the playoffs. They had imploded in 1996 and carried the implosion into the 1997 season. Eagles fans were continually thinking that their coaches could not make it to the big games and win them. This season, the

Eagles fans such as myself longed for the days when we could make the playoffs. This was a poor year.

As I read some analyses of this season in doing team research, I found subtle ways in which the pundits and sportscasters described the poor showing of the Eagles this year. In one particular analysis, that has roots in Wikipedia, the writer chose not to use the word highlights to describe brief moments of the season. Instead, he or she used the term Lowlights. Amusing but annoying nonetheless for as disappointed Eagles fan. One such set of sentences include the following:

“Lowlights of the '97 campaign include a disheartening one-point loss at Dallas in Week 3, where starter Ty Detmer led the Birds on a potential game-winning drive late in regulation, only to see holder Tommy Hutton botch the hold on what would have been the deciding field goal from ex-Cowboys kicker Chris Boniol.”

There were others as this year gave some fruitful example. In Week 7, for example, the Eagles could not even beat the newest team in the league, the Jacksonville Jaguars. The new teams were most often easy pickens.

So, the Eagles went ahead and lost their first-ever game against the three-season-old Jacksonville Jaguars. Then, as if they could not be embarrassed, on Nov 10, in a Monday Night Football 24–12 home loss against San Francisco, a fan was spotted firing a flare gun in the upper deck. I did not get this at first myself, but it signaled the fans were calling for help.

Time marched on and so six days later, at Memorial Stadium, the Eagles and Ravens engaged in a 10–10 tie at me when there was plenty of time for there to be no ties if teams could only score three points. This was the Bird’s first deadlock since 1986 against the Cardinals.

One of very few bright spots during this year came on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Rookie QB Bobby Hoying stepped in under center and threw for a career-high 313 yards and four touchdowns in a 44–42 win against the Cincinnati Bengals. How about those apples?

The 1997 campaign was notable in that it ended a 13-year radio partnership between broadcasters Merrill Reese and former Eagle Stan Walters on 94 WIP. Mike Quick became the color commentator the following season.

Let's take a very quick look at a season most Eagles fans would like to forget.

In the season opener at New York on Aug 31, 1997, the Eagles lost to the Giants L (17–31) before 77,344. At home, the Eagles got a one-point win in their home opener W (10–9) before 66,803. At Dallas on Sept 15, the Cowboys pulled a one-point special on the Eagles, prevailing L (20–21) before 63,942. Week 4 was a bye, In week 5 of the season on Sept 28, at Minnesota, the Eagles lost to the Vikings L (19–28) before 55,149.

At home, on Oct 5, 1997 Philadelphia beat the Washington Redskins W (24–10) before 67,008. At Jacksonville in a game that was a sure thing, the Eagles lost it on Oct 12, 1997 at Jacksonville Jaguars L (21–38) before 69,150. The game was not close. Then, at home, against the Arizona Cardinals, on Oct 19, the Eagles prevailed W (13–10) 66,860. At home, v the Dallas Cowboys on Oct 26, the Eagles hogged the victory by one-point W (13–12) before 67,106.

At Arizona, on Nov 2, the Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (21–31) before 39,549. At home on Nov 10, 1997 the Eagles lost to the San Francisco 49ers L (12–24) before 67,133. On Nov 16, 1997 at the Baltimore Ravens, the Eagles played to a tie T (10–10) before 63,546. At home v the Pittsburgh Steelers, on Nov 23, the Eagles got the win W (23–20) before 67,166.

As the season was getting into the cold weather, at home on Nov 30, the Eagles just got by the Cincinnati Bengals W (44–42) before 66,623. The NY Giants came into the Vet like the meant it and they left with a win on Dec 7 L (21–31 before 67,084. At Atlanta on Dec 14, the Falcons beat the Eagles L (17-20) before 42,866. Wrapping up the 1997 season, on Dec 21, at Washington, the Redskins won a hard fought match with the Eagles L (32–35) before 75,939

1998 Ray Rhodes #19

The 1998 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-sixth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Ray Rhodes in his last of four seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 3-13 record brought the Eagles no accolades in a poor last place finish in the NFC East

Philadelphia did not improve from their poor output of 6-9-1. They won only three games. This was their worst record since 1972 and one of only two seasons since then, until 2012 they have won fewer than five games. Head coach Ray Rhodes, whose four years took him from star to goat, was fired at end of season, finishing his four-year tenure with a record of 29-34-1.

The first five games of the Season were losses beginning on Sept 6 at home v the Seattle Seahawks L(0-38). On Sept 13, at the Atlanta Falcons L (12-17). On Sept 20, at the Arizona Cardinals L (3-17). Then on Sept 27, at home v the Kansas City Chiefs, L (21-24) and finally on Oct 4, at the Denver Broncos L (16-41).

On Oct 11, in the sixth game of the year, Philadelphia finally won a game at home against the Washington Redskins W (17-12). Losing again on Oct 18, against the San Diego Chargers, the score was L (10-13). On Oct 25, there was a bye week.

On Nov 2, at home against the Dallas Cowboys L (34-0). On Nov 8, 1998, the Eagles scored a win, W (10-9). Then on Nov 15, at Washington Redskins the Eagles lost again L (3-28). On Nov 22 at New York, the Giants beat the Eagles L (0-20). Then on Nov 29, at Green Bay, the Packers beat the Birds L (16-24).

With just four games left, the Eagles won the first and lost the last three. On Dec 3, v the St. Louis Rams, the Eagles won W (17-14) On Dec 13, the Arizona Cardinals beat the Eagles L (17-20). Then, on Dec 20, at Dallas, the Eagles lost to the Cowboys L (9-13). After all the presents were given, the Eagles could not muster one more for the fans and lost on Dec 27 v New York's Giants in the last game of a long season, L (10-20).

As a light commentary, if you think it is hard experiencing or reading about such a poor season. Let me assure you, it is not fun writing about it. We can all take solace in knowing that Doug Pederson's boys brought us the Super Bowl this year. In a season such as the one just covered, this is a needed reminder. Thank you.

Chapter 11 Coach Andy Reid 1999 to 2012

Coach #20 Andy Reid

Year	Coach	Conf	Div	Pl	W-L-T
1999	Andy Reid	NFC	East	5th	5-11-0
2000	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	11- 5- 0,
					• Won Wild Card Playoffs(Buccaneers) 21–3
					• Lost Divisional Playoffs (at Giants) 10–20
2001	Andy Reid	NFC	East,	1st	11-5-0
					• Won Wild Card Playoffs(Buccaneers) 31–9
					• Won Divisional Playoffs (at Bears) 33–19
					• Lost NFC Championship (at Rams) 24–29
2002	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	12-4-0,
					• Won Divisional Playoffs(Falcons) 20–6
					• Lost NFC Championship(Buccaneers) 10–27
					• Andy Reid, Coach of year
2003	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	12-4-0
					• Won Divisional Playoffs(Packers) 20–17 (OT)
					• Lost NFC Championship(Panthers) 3–14
2004	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	13-3-0
					• Won Divisional Playoffs(Vikings) 27–14
					• Won NFC Championship(Falcons) 27–10
					• Lost Super Bowl XXXIX (vs. Patriots) 21–24
2005	Andy Reid	NFC	East	4th	6-10-0
2006	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	10-6-0
					• Won Wild Card Playoffs(Giants) 23–20
					• Loat Divisional Playoffs (at Saints) 24–27
2007	Andy Reid	NFC	East	4th	8-8-0
2008	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	9-6-1
					• Won Wild Card Playoffs (at Vikings)26–14
					• Won Divisional Playoffs (at Giants) 23–11
					• Lost NFC Championship (at Cardinals) 25–32
2009	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	11-5-0
					• Lost Wild Card Playoffs (at Cowboys) 14–34
2010	Andy Reid	NFC	East	1st	10- 6-0
					• Lost Wild Card Playoffs(Packers) 16–21
2011	Andy Reid	NFC	East	2nd	8-8-0,
2012	Andy Reid	NFC	East	4th	4- 12-0
1999-2012 Andy Reid final record (140-102-1)					



Coach Andy Reid from the sidelines—One heck of a record.

1999 Andy Reid #20

The 1999 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his first of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 5-11 record and last place finish in the NFL East brought Andy Reid's Eagles no accolades in a poor last place finish in the NFC East. But, still great things were expected next year.

Philadelphia did improve from their poor output of 3-13-0. The Eagles hired Andy Reid away from the Green Bay Packers to be their new head coach prior to the start of the season. In the 1999 NFL Draft, the team drafted quarterback Donovan McNabb with the second overall pick.

Eagles Great Coaches--Andy Reid

When Andy Reid was hired from Green Bay, Packers coach Mike Holmgren was viewed as a master and Reid, one of his protégé's was quite welcome in Philadelphia. As way of an introduction, this piece was in the Philadelphia Inquirer announcing the great happening for Philadelphia readers. Thank you to Phil Sheridan and the Inquirer:

Eagles hire Packers assistant Andy Reid as new head coach

Updated:

DECEMBER 30, 2012 — 1:50 PM EST

REPRINTS

by Phil Sheridan, Inquirer Staff Writer

Originally published on Monday, Jan. 11, 1999.

After a courtship of four days, the Eagles will introduce Andy Reid as their 20th head coach today.

The former Green Bay Packers assistant is something of an unknown, but his strong interview and enthusiasm impressed the Eagles, who were not thrilled with remarks made last week on the West Coast by Reid's primary competitor for the job, Pittsburgh's Jim Haslett.

Reid, 40, is making the rare jump from position coach to head coach. He will be the second-youngest head coach in the NFL, behind only Oakland's Jon Gruden, a former Eagles assistant coach.

From the moment Reid became available last week, the Eagles focused their full attention on him, and they were struck by his positive attitude. But according to those familiar with the process, the search to replace Ray Rhodes, who was dismissed last month after four years as head coach, began several months ago.

Owner Jeffrey Lurie, director of football operations Tom Modrak and executive vice president Joe Banner put together a relatively short list of candidates. Reid and Haslett, the Steelers' defensive coordinator, were at the top.

The team interviewed Haslett first because, when the Steelers failed to make the playoffs, he was available first. Modrak, who worked in Pittsburgh last year, likes Haslett and believes he will make a good NFL head coach. Clearly, Modrak's relationship with Haslett prompted the Eagles' keen interest in him.

But the Eagles had to be concerned about Haslett's public and private comments that Philadelphia wasn't his first choice. After leaving here, Haslett interviewed in Seattle, where he raved to reporters about the Seahawks' facilities and plans for a new stadium. After four seasons of rumors that Rhodes was unhappy in Philadelphia, that kind of talk couldn't have helped Haslett.

It was Modrak, in fact, who made one of the most telling public comments of the last two weeks. Asked what he sought in a candidate, Modrak talked about leadership, intelligence and

passion, then added: ``And you want a guy who wants to be here. That's important. ''

Reid is that guy. Modrak was also high on Reid from the beginning. As Lurie said Dec. 28, when Rhodes was fired, he retained final say on hiring the head coach. But he planned to lean on Modrak, who was hired in May because of his football lifer's insight into the NFL. Simply put, Modrak knows who the up-and-coming coaches are, and Reid was near the top of his list.

The Eagles contacted Reid last Monday, the day after the Packers were knocked out of the playoffs by the 49ers in San Francisco. Also last Monday, the Eagles contacted Reid's mentor, former Packers head coach Mike Holmgren. They knew all along that Holmgren, who sought a head coach/general manager's job, was a long shot but decided to make a run at him.

Because of his commitments in Green Bay, the Eagles couldn't bring Reid in for an interview until Thursday. They talked to former Carolina head coach Dom Capers on Wednesday. Reid came in Thursday. Oakland defensive coordinator Willie Shaw interviewed Friday.

What no one knew at the time was that Reid stayed in Philadelphia on Thursday night and talked to the Eagles again Friday morning. When Holmgren took a job with the Seattle Seahawks that day, the Eagles' decision was made. Holmgren had already indicated to Reid that he would take him to Seattle as his offensive coordinator.

Reid flew home to Green Bay on Friday. On Saturday, a plane chartered by the Eagles brought Reid and his wife, Tammy, back to Philadelphia. The couple spent Saturday looking around the area, considering it as a home for themselves and their five children. They dined at Lurie's home Saturday night.

Bob LaMonte, Reid's agent, flew in yesterday from his Nevada home to complete the deal. Terms were not available. It is believed to be a five-year contract. LaMonte, who is also

Holmgren's agent, will pull off the neat trick of attending introductory news conferences on opposite coasts in three days.

The next important move for the Eagles is hiring a defensive coordinator. Reid's experience is on the offensive side of the ball. There were indications last night that Packers coordinator Fritz Shurmur might join Reid's staff. That would fill the need for an experienced, innovative defensive presence.

Nolan Cromwell, who coached the Packers receivers, could join the Eagles as secondary coach. Cromwell spent 11 seasons as a safety with the Los Angeles Rams.



Andy Reid and Mike Holmgren trademark glasses

Andy Reid was well known when he was hired by the Eagles. His work with Mike Holmgren and the Packers was well known and Reid attracted considerable notice throughout the league. This led to his being hired as the head coach of the Eagles on January 11, 1999.

At the time, many in the local media, who were unaware of the type of coaching that came from Green Bay, criticized the hiring, citing

the availability of other candidates who had past records of success as head coaches.

The Eagles, under former coach Ray Rhodes, finished in a three-way tie for the NFL's worst record at 3–13 the season before Reid took over. They improved two games in 1999 to finish at 5–11 (including the team's first road victory in 19 games, a 20–16 win over the Bears at Chicago on October 17. This was the first time the Philadelphia franchise had won an away game over the Bears since 1933.

Donovan McNabb was drafted second overall by the Eagles in the 1999 NFL Draft. He was a great pick I watched him scramble for years at Syracuse. McNabb saw his first NFL regular season action in the second half against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in a 19–5 home loss on September 19. He made his first career start at home against Washington on November 14, completing eight of 21 passes for 60 yards in a 35–28 win.

In his early days in the NFL, he often trusted his feet more than his arm. He also had nine carries for 49 rushing yards and led the team to a pair of successful two-point conversions (1 rush and 1 pass).

With that win, McNabb became the first Eagles rookie QB to win his first NFL start since Mike Boryla (December 1, 1974, vs. Green Bay) and the first Eagle QB to win his first start since Ty Detmer (October 13, 1996, at NYG). Things were shaping up but nothing good happens overnight.

McNabb threw the first TD pass of his career (6 yards to tight end Chad Lewis) vs. Indianapolis in a 44–17 home loss on November 21. He then went on to start six of the Eagles' final seven contests. He did miss the December 19 home game against New England, a 24–9 victory, due to injury. Donovan McNabb became the first Philadelphia Eagles rookie to start in the quarterback position since Brad Goebel on October 13, 1991, and the first Eagles rookie draft pick to start since John Reaves in 1972. McNabb would go on to have a great career.

1999 would not be a typical Andy Reid great year, but it was a much better year than Ray Rhodes last year running the Eagles show.

In the home and season opener before 64,113, on September 12, 1999 the Arizona Cardinals beat Reid's Eagles by just one point L (24–25). The Eagles then lost again at home on Sept 19 to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers L (5–19) before 64,285. At Buffalo on Sept 26, the Bills overpowered the Eagles L (0–26) before 70,872. At New York, on Oct 3, in another one-point match, the Eagles lost their fourth in a row to the Giants (15–16) before 73,274.

The Eagles first win came at home at the Vet on Oct 10, 1999 as the Birds found enough muscle to beat the Dallas Cowboys W (13–10). Before 66,669 fans. At Chicago on Oct 17, the Eagles beat the Bears W 20–16 before 66,944. At Miami on Oct 24, 1999, the Dolphins defeated the Eagles L (13–16) before 73,975. At home on Oct 31, the Eagles lost to the New York Giants L (17–23) before 66,481.

On Nov 7, at Carolina, the Panthers thumped the Eagles L (7–33) before 62,569. At home, on Nov 14, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (35–28) before 66,591 at the Vet. . On Nov 21, at home, the Indianapolis Colts outgunned the Eagles L (17–44) before 65,521 The Washington Redskins beat the Eagles on Nov 28, L (17–20) before 74,741.

At Arizona, the Cardinals squeaked out a victory over the Eagles on Dec 5, L (17–21) before 46,550, in a close match. At Dallas, on Dec 12, the Cowboys defeated the Eagles L (10–20) before 64,086. Back at home on Dec 19, with the season winding down, the Eagles found some strength and beat the New England Patriots W (24–9) before 65,475. On Dec 26, the Eagles got a late season bye. On January 2, 2000, Philadelphia beat the St. Louis Rams at home W 38–31 before 60,700. In the next season, Andy Reid makes a winning team again out of the Eagles.

2000 Andy Reid #20

The 2000 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his second of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 11-5 record was very positive and a look at things to come bringing a

second-place finish in the NFL East. The Eagles made the playoffs and won their Wild Card Match but failed to win the Divisional Championship



Akers—top Eagles scorer

2000 Andy Reid #20

The 2000 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his second of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 11-5 record was very positive and a look at things to come bringing a second-place finish in the NFL East. The Eagles made the playoffs and won their Wild Card Match but failed to win the Divisional Championship

Andy Reid fooled everybody at the start of the season when he called for an onside kick to start the season in Dallas. Nobody expected an onside kick and so the Eagles lined up normally and placed the onside kick well enough to recover it to start the game. This game is also known as the Pickle Juice Game, as the Philadelphia players were given pickle juice by Andy Reid in order to prepare for the high temperatures in Dallas that day. Reid wanted to win.

This year was Donovan McNabb's first full year as starting QB after seeing limited action during his rookie season. With McNabb, the team posted an 11–5 record. For his efforts, the Syracuse Flash was named to the Pro Bowl following the season. He would make several more Pro Bowl appearances during his time in Philadelphia.

The Eagles played great ball for Andy Reid and much of that was led by McNabb. He brought them to five NFC Championship games and a Super Bowl (2004) during the McNabb era.

The Eagles easily defeated the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the Wildcard round in 2000, but their season ended with a defeat to their rival and eventual NFC Champions, the New York Giants, in the Divisional Round.

In Week 5, their star running back Duce Staley broke his foot. This ended his season as he needed to be placed on injured reserve. Staley was a great runner. He rushed for 344 yards while active in five games.

In the season opener on September 3, 2000 at Dallas Cowboys the Eagles dominated W (41–14) 62,872. In the home opener on Sept 10, the Eagles fell to the New York Giants L (18–33) before 65,530. In the lowest scoring game of the 2000 NFL season, the Eagles could not muster up the four points to pull out a victory against the Green Bay Packers. On Sept 17, the Eagles lost L (3-6) before 59,869. At New Orleans on Sept 24, the Eagles beat the Saints W (21–7) before 64,900.

At home on Oct 1, the Eagles whooped the Atlanta Falcons W (38–10) before 65,424. In a three-point match, on Oct 8, at home, the

Washington Redskins defeated the Eagles L (14–17) before 465,491. At Arizona on Oct 15, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (33–14) before 38,293. At home, on Oct 22, the Eagles barely beat the Chicago Bears W (13–9) before 65,553.

At New York, on Oct 29, before 78,087 fans, the Giants defeated the Eagles L (7–24) before 78,087. On Nov 5, at home, the Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys W (16–13) before 65,636. At Pittsburgh, on Nov 12, the Eagles defeated the Steelers W (26–23) before 56,702. At home, on Nov 19, Philadelphia thumped Arizona W (34–9) before 65,356.

At Washington on Nov 26, the Eagles got the best of the Redskins W (23–20) before a packed house of 83,284. On December 3, the Eagles lost to the Tennessee Titans L (13–15) at home before 65,639. At Cleveland Browns on Dec 10, the Eagles triumphed W (35–24) before 72,318. In the season finale on Dec 24, at home against Cincinnati's Bengals, the Eagles prevailed W (16–7) before 64,902.

Wild Card Playoffs Dec 31, 2000

NFC: Philadelphia Eagles 21, Tampa Bay Buccaneers 3

The game was played at Veterans Stadium, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The game time was 4:00 p.m. EST Dec 31, 2000. The weather was 35° and cloudy. It was played before an attendance of 65,813.

Divisional Playoffs January 7, 2001

The game began with the Eagles kicking to the Giants. It all might have been OK except the Eagles could not stop the return. Ron Dixon returned the opening kickoff 97 yards for a TD to set the Eagles back on their heels. They never recovered.

For the rest of the game, Philadelphia gained only 186 yards and scored 10 points, despite forcing three Giants' turnovers.

Philadelphia failed to get a first down on their first three possessions. It was not a pretty game for Philly as the Giants won 20-10.

2001 Andy Reid #20

The 2001 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their sixty-ninth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his third of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 11-5 record was equal to the prior year's very positive showing. The Eagles looked strong and they grabbed a second-place finish in the NFL East. The Eagles made the playoffs and won their Wild Card Match and they also won the Divisional Championship

And, so the 2001 Eagles made the postseason for the second consecutive time under Andy Reid. Reid was definitely a difference maker. After they defeated the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Chicago Bears in the first two rounds of the playoffs, they would advance to the NFC Championship game for the first time in 21 years. However, it would end there short again. They lost in a very close match lost 29-24 to the St. Louis Rams. The Rams made it to the Super Bowl, instead of the Eagles but they ran into their own bad luck. They were unable to stop Bill Belichick's New England Patriots, in Tom Brady's second year as a pro. (20-17).

The 2001 season was the first of five Conference Championship appearances for the Eagles with Donovan McNabb as starting quarterback and Andy Reid as head coach.

On September 9, 2001 the Eagles hosted the St. Louis Rams in the Veteran's Stadium home opener and their NFL season opener. The Eagles lost to the Rams L (17-20) before 66,243. On Sept 23, the Eagles beat the Seattle Seahawks at home W (27-3) before 62,826 At home on Sept 30, Philadelphia overpowered Dallas W 40-18 before 66,621. On Oct 7, at home the Arizona Cardinals beat the Eagles by just one point L (29-21) before 66,360. Week 5 was a bye

In week 6 of the 2001 season, at New York on Monday Night, Oct 22, the Eagles defeated the Giants W (10-9) before 78,821. On Oct 28, at home, the Oakland Raiders defeated the Eagles L (10-20)

before 65,342. At Arizona on Nov 4, 2001, the Eagles beat the Cardinals W (21–7) before 33,430.

Then, at home on Nov 11, the Eagles pounded the Minnesota Vikings W (48–17) before 65,638. At Dallas, on Nov 18, 2001, the Eagles bombed the Cowboys W (36–3) before 63,204. At home on Nov 25, the Eagles lost to the Washington Redskins L (3–13) before 65,666. At Kansas City on Nov 29, the Eagles defeated the Chiefs W (23–10) before 77,087. On Dec 9, at home, the Eagles beat the San Diego Chargers W (24–14) before 65,438.

At Washington on Dec 16, the Eagles beat the 2001 Redskins W (20–6) before 84,036. At San Francisco, on Dec 23, the 49ers beat the Eagles L (3–13) before 68,124. On Dec 30, the day before New Year's Eve, the Eagles got by the New York Giants W (24–2) before 65,885. On Jan 6, in the 2002 at Tampa Bay Buccaneers W 17–13 65,541

Wild Card Playoffs January 12, 2002

At 11-5, the Eagles made the Wild Card tournament. It was a fine game for the Eagles as QB Donovan McNabb threw for 194 yards and two touchdowns, while also rushing for 54 yards. The Eagles dominated the Bucs from the opening whistle. Tampa Bay QB Brad Johnson threw four interceptions. Two were grabbed by Eagles' Damon Moore. This was the second consecutive season in which Philadelphia eliminated Tampa Bay from the playoffs during the wild card round, and two days later, Buccaneers coach Tony Dungy was fired. The Eagles won 31-9

Divisional Playoffs January 19, 2002 Philadelphia 33 Chicago 19

Donovan McNabb scrambled, ducked and used his quick feet to elude the Chicago Bears, turning his homecoming into a celebration for the Philadelphia Eagles as the Eagles whipped the Bears 33 to 19.

NFC Championship January 27, 2002 St. Louis Rams 29, Philadelphia Eagles 24

Philadelphia had gained a 17–13 lead by halftime, and had not allowed more than 21 points per game during the season and the playoffs. But the Rams were not ready to turn in the towel.

They roared back thanks to Kurt Warner completing two-thirds of his passes for 212 yards and Marshall Faulk's 159 yards rushing and two touchdowns to earn their second trip to the Super Bowl in three years. Again, the Eagles had misfired in the clutch. Andy Reid was beginning to get the reputation that he could not bring in the big games.

2002 Andy Reid #20

The 2002 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his fourth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 12-4 record was the best yet for the Eagles. They looked strong and they grabbed a first-place finish in the NFL East. The Eagles made the playoffs but lost the NFC Championship to the Buccaneers, a team they had bullied the past two years.

The Eagles' record tied for the best record in the NFL, and due to tie-breakers, gave them the number-one seed in the NFC, a first-round bye, and home field advantage throughout the NFC playoffs. The Eagles had it all. This would be their year. All they had to do was execute.

The best laid plans of mice and men gang oft aglay. There are pundits who will argue that this loss was the worst loss in franchise history at home. I am talking about the 2002 NFC Championship Game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The Bucs eventually won Super Bowl XXXVII.

The Eagles had defeated the Buccaneers in two prior consecutive seasons in the NFL playoffs in an easy fashion. Many experts

thought that the Conference Championship game would not be any different. The game was the final football game played at Veterans Stadium. The Following year games were at Lincoln Financial Field, aka, according to the locals, the Linc

In the season opener on September 8, 2002 at Tennessee, the Eagles did not have enough steam to defeat the Titans L (24–27) before 68,804. At Washington on Sept 16, the Eagles pummeled the Redskins W (37–7) before a huge crowd of 84,892. On Sept 22, in the home opener, the Eagles pleased the fans by overpowering the Dallas Cowboys W (44–13) before 65,537. At home again on Sept 29, v the Houston Texans, the Eagles prevailed W (35–17) before 64,867.

On Oct 6, at Jacksonville, the Jaguars barely beat the visiting Eagles L (25–28) before 65,005. At home on Oct 20, the Eagles handily beat the Tampa Bay Buccaneers—future Super Bowl Victors—the team that would keep the Eagles from the NFC Championship this year -- W 20–10 before 65,523. On Oct 28, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (17–3) at home before 65,791. On Nov 3, at Chicago, the Eagles got by the Bears W (19–13) before 54,049.

On Nov 10, at home, Philadelphia lost to the Indianapolis Colts L (13–35) before 65,660. At home again on Nov 17, to face the Arizona Cardinals, the Eagles dominated W (38–14) before 64,990. At San Francisco, on Nov 25, the Eagles toppled the 49ers, W (38–17) before 67,919. On Dec 1, at home, the Eagles beat the St. Louis Rams in a close match W (10–3) before 65,552.

The Eagles would win their last three out of four, losing the final game of the season to the Giants. On Dec 8, at Seattle, the Eagles beat the Seahawks by one TD W (27–20) before 59,862. At home, on Dec15, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (34–21) before 65,615. At Dallas, a team that always inspired the Eagles tea to do its best, the Birds blasted the Cowboys W (27–3) before 63,209. Then in one of the hardest battles of the year, the 13-3 Eagles could not muster enough on Dec 28 to beat the rival New York Giants and in the last game of the season before the playoffs, the Eagles were defeated L (7–10) before 78,782. New York fans always packed the stadium when the Eagles were coming to town.

At 12-4, the Eagles were in the favorite's slot and got to play in the NFC Championship game.

NFC Championship Game January 19, 2003

On January 11, the Eagles beat Atlanta in the Divisional Championship 20-6. Nonetheless, The Eagles were dealt a crushing upset 27-10 defeat in the NFC Championship Game by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The Eagles were everybody's favorites to win the conference title and propel themselves into the Super Bowl. Andy Reid had so fore-ordained by training the Birds to be the best in captivity. But they lost anyway.

2003 Andy Reid #20

The 2003 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his fifth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 12-4 record was the best yet for the Eagles and it equaled the stellar performance of the Birds in 2002. The Eagles looked strong and they grabbed a "two-in-a-row" first-place finish in the NFL East. The Eagles won the Divisional Playoffs v the Packers but lost the Conference Championship to the Packers

Overall looking back, the Eagles were doing very well. As a long-time Eagles fans, I have grown a suspicion about the Eagles somehow always being able to capture defeat from what are clearly the jaws of victory. Looking back, however, especially after Ray Rhodes' 3-9 season, the Eagles were really doing well. Maybe the dark cloud if that suspicion got in their way of finishing consistently well.

Here we are in 2003, just four years after the 3-9 season and not only are the Eagles doing very well, the team made the playoffs for the fourth straight year, won its third straight NFC East division title, and had the NFC's top record for the second straight season.

After losing their final game in Veterans Stadium to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the 2002 NFC Championship Game, Philadelphia looked to turn the page with the opening of brand-new Lincoln Financial Field, but the stadium got an ill-omened start when the Eagles dropped their first two games there, including a season-opening loss to Tampa Bay. A crushing loss to the New England Patriots left the Eagles 0–2 and three weeks later clocking in at 2-3, the Eagles were not looking like a Super Bowl contender.

But, there was hope when it looked like it would soon be a 2-4 record. Star running back Brian Westbrook returned a punt for a touchdown to shock the New York Giants in the closing minutes of their sixth game in a week 7 contest (counting the bye). The play turned the Eagles' season around and they won their next nine games, finishing with a 12–4 record.

2003 – 2004 Playoffs

The suspicions all came back when the playoffs came, as the Eagles found themselves needing another miracle to survive the Green Bay Packers on a 4th and 26. Unfortunately, good, consistent play wins games and depending on miracles is an iffy strategy. They got their miracle but the magic had run out by the next week as the team dropped a 14–3 decision to the Carolina Panthers at Lincoln Financial Field in the NFC Championship Game. Another season ended short for the top winner in the NFL. The suspicions were daunting.

In the season and home opener and the first game in Lincoln Financial Field (the Link) on September 8, 2003, after having lost to Tampa Bay in their last game of 2002 in the playoffs, they suffered a similar fate as the Buccaneers shut out the Eagles and ruined opening day L (0–17) before 67,772. On Sept 14, the New England Patriots buzzed right through the Eagles L (10-31) before 67,624 at the Linc. At Buffalo, on Sept 28, after a bye week, the Eagles got back a little bit of their moxie as they beat the Bills W (23–13) before 73,305. The Eagles managed to get their first win at the Linc on Oct 5, at home v the Washington Redskins W (27–25) before 67,792.

Then, at Dallas in Week 6, on October 12, the Eagles lost again, this time to the Cowboys, L (23–21) before 63,648. At New York, in week 7 on Oct 19, the Birds pulled off some magic and beat the Giants W (14-10) before 78,883. The Eagles finally had reached 500. They would win eight more in a row beginning with the New York Jets on Oct 26, W (24–17) at home at the Linc before 67,853. On Nov 2, at the Atlanta Falcons W (23–16) before 70,064.

At Green Bay on Nov 10, it was the Packers W (17–14) before 70,29. At home on Nov 16, it was the New York Giants W (28–10) before. Then, on Nov 23, at home, it was the New Orleans Saints W (33–20) 67,802. In the last game of November, Nov 30, at Carolina, the Eagles beat the Panthers W (25–16) before 72,977

On Dec 7, at home, the Eagles beat up the Dallas Cowboys W (36–10) before 69,773. At Miami on Dec 15, the Birds defeated the Dolphins W (34–27) 73,780. In a tough OT battle on Dec 21, the Eagles could not pull it out against San Francisco's 49ers L (28–31) before 67,866. In the last game of a fine regular season – the best record in the NFL, on Dec 27 the Eagles played at Washington and thumped the Redskins W (31–7) before 76,766

2004 Andy Reid #20

The 2004 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his sixth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 13-3 record was the best ever for the Eagles and it bettered the stellar 12-4 back-to-back performances of the Birds in 2002 and 2003. The had first place locked as they won their first thirteen games in a row and then sat around waiting for the season to end of some fans seemed to think.

The Eagles should have won it all. Fans such as I believed they should have continued trying to win after they had locked up first place and home field advantage. The decision to lay down for three games sure seemed to take the edge off a team that was steamrolling one opponent after another until they got a huge break in the action.

When the real Eagles finally came back, it was like pre-season again. The Birds were too rested and too complacent. They had lost their fire. For some, it is why Andy Reid had some problems even when the Eagles record was outstanding.

There is no denying that the Eagles had been one of the most successful teams in the league after the Andy Reid and Donovan McNabb era began in 1999, making it to the playoffs for four straight seasons and to the NFC Championship Game in 2001, 2002, and 2003. However, the team could not reach the Super Bowl, despite being favored in the final two NFC title games. This was quite disconcerting to Eagles' fans.

In the offseason, this already championship-level team was reinforced on both sides of the ball by the free agent additions of wide receiver Terrell Owens, defensive end Jevon Kearse, and middle linebacker Jeremiah Trotter, their third round draft pick in 1998.

The Eagles had far and away the best team in the NFC and proved that right from the start. Possessing a high-powered offense which featured McNabb, Owens, and Brian Westbrook, as well as a bruising defense led by Pro Bowlers Trotter, Brian Dawkins, Lito Sheppard, and Michael Lewis, they steamrolled opponents on the way to a 13–1 start to the season. After resting starters for the final two games, the 13–3 Eagles soared past the Minnesota Vikings and the Atlanta Falcons in the playoffs, earning a trip to Super Bowl XXXIX in Jacksonville against the defending champion New England Patriots.

The Super Bowl game was hard fought, but the Eagles fell short at 24–21, ending their magical season one score short of the ultimate goal. This season was considered the franchise's most successful until their Super Bowl LII-winning 2017 season.

There are a number of the suspicious who think that the Eagles had lost just enough of an edge from sitting its starters for the last two games that it could not get a few more points against New England to take home the prize. Having a 15-1 record was a prize in itself that was given up for no prize at all. Just saying.

On September 12, 2004 in the season and home opener at the Linc, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W 31–17 before 67,532. On Sept 20, the Eagles beat the Minnesota Vikings at the Linc, W (27–16) before 67,676. At Detroit on Sept 26, the Eagles beat the Lions W (30–13) before 62,472. On Oct 3, at Chicago, the Eagles beat the Bears W (19–9) before 61,894.

After a bye in week 5, on October 17, the Eagles whooped the Carolina Panthers W (30–8) before 67,707. On Oct 24, at Cleveland, the Birds beat the Browns in OT W (34–31) before 73,394. On Oct 31 at home, the Eagles beat the Baltimore Ravens W (15–10) before 67,715. In the one unintentional loss of the season, on Nov 7, at Pittsburgh, the Steelers overpowered the Eagles L (3–27) before 64,975.

On Nov 15, at Dallas, the Eagles recovered after the Pittsburgh loss and shellacked the Cowboys W (49–21) before 64,190. On Nov 21, at home, the Eagles beat the Washington Redskins W (28–6) before 67,720. At New York, on Nov 28, the Eagles defeated the Giants W (27–6) before 78,830. At home on Dec 5, the Eagles pounded the Green Bay Packers W (47–17) before 67,723.

On Dec 12, at Washington, the Redskins lost to the Eagles W (17–14) before a huge crowd of 90,089. On Dec 19 at home, the Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys W (12–7) before 67,723. The next two games were played with the starters resting. On Dec 27, 2004, at St. Louis, the Rams beat the Eagles L (7–20). On January 2, 2005, one of two teams that beat the New England Patriots this season, the Cincinnati Bengals embarrassed the Eagles L (10–38) and sent them into the playoffs having lost their season finale before 67,074 at the Linc.

Divisional Championship

In the Divisional, Championship, the Eagles were heavy favorites as Minnesota had eeked in with an 8-8 record. The Vikings had lost four of their final five, but they had defeated the Packers in the Wild Card round. The Eagles won the game v Minnesota 27-14.

NFC Championship: vs. Atlanta Falcons

Eagles Greatest Games

The Eagles hoped that the fourth time would get them a path to the “ring,” when they faced Atlanta this year in the NFC Championship game. The Birds had not been known for good results in such encounters, There were no playoffs when the Eagles won any of their three NFL Championship Games in 1948 & 49 with Greasy Neale, and in 1960 with Buck Shaw. After losing three big title games over the years, they were looking for the big win against the Atlanta Falcons in this year’s NFC Championship Game.

The weather was not good, and this game was played in post-blizzard, 17-degree weather. There were swirling frigid winds nearing 30 MPH. Atlanta had gone 11–5 over the year, and were the second-best team in the conference, behind Philadelphia. Their quarterback, who in a few years would be playing for the Eagles was a star player named Michael Vick. He was the Falcons' main hope of upsetting the Eagles.

The Eagles saw Vick run twice on the opening drive, but the defense, used something they called a mush rush, and the stopped Vick both times. Later in the quarter, Brian Westbrook broke loose on a 36-yard run to the right side, followed by a completion to L.J. Smith for 21 yards. Dorsey Levens then pushed forward for a 4-yard touchdown, giving Philadelphia a 7–0 lead.

Atlanta began a long drive, which featured many Warrick Dunn and T. J. Duckett rushes. The Eagles found the Falcons on their two-yard line with a first and goal. They stuffed Duckett on first down, Vick was incomplete on second. He looked to run on third but big Hollis Thomas emerged and leveled Vick at the 3-yard line. The Falcons settled for a field goal, making it 7–3.

The Eagles started another drive that looked like it had a lot of promise. They were almost at the end zone again after McNabb launched the big blow to Greg Lewis, who hauled in the 45-yard pass, setting up first and goal from the Falcons' four-yard line. Two plays later, McNabb passed in the corner of the end zone to veteran

tight end Chad Lewis, with Lewis catching the pass while making a spectacular effort to stay in bounds.

When Atlanta got the ball in the middle of the second quarter, Vick fired deep over the middle for tight end Alge Crumpler, who made the catch but was crushed on the play by safety Brian Dawkins. Dunn went in for the 10-yard score on the next play and it was 14–10 Eagles.

Philadelphia got the third quarter kickoff and drove down the field, setting up a 31-yard field goal by David Akers with the wind. The Eagles D chipped in as Defensive end Derrick Burgess got his first of two sacks on Vick to kill Atlanta's next drive. Later in the third, Vick fired low and it was intercepted by Dawkins, leading to another Akers field goal and the Eagles were up 20–10.

In 4Q, Atlanta could not complete passes. against the Philadelphia secondary, a Super Bowl berth looked more and more likely for the Eagles. After a six-and-a-half-minute drive that ended in another short Chad Lewis touchdown reception , the Eagles began an early celebration. They won the game by a score of 27–10, making them NFC Champions for the first time since 1980.

McNabb's stats were modest but enough as he threw for 180 yards in the windy weather. He collected two touchdowns and had no interceptions. Westbrook came up with 96 yards on the ground, while Chad Lewis made two critical touchdown receptions. It was later learned that Lewis broke his ankle on the second touchdown catch, and he would not be part of the Super Bowl roster.

Meanwhile, the Eagles tough defense held Vick to 136 passing yards and 26 rushing yards, and kept Atlanta off the scoreboard in the second half. It was off to the Super Bowl for the Birds. There was a lot of great expectations.

Super Bowl XXXIX: v New England Patriots

Being in the Super Bowl was not something that was an every-day deal for the Eagles. Their first and last trip had been Super Bowl XV

(15), in 1981 with a loss to Oakland. When the Eagles met more than twenty years later against the New England Patriots on February 6, 2005 at ALLTEL Stadium in Jacksonville, Florida, there was nobody left on the prior team who was in that game.

The Patriots were beginning their Super Bowl dynasty. Led by Tom Brady, they had won two of the past three Super Bowls and a win against the Eagles would likely assure their dynasty status. Like the Eagles at 13-3, the Pats had a great record and the games they played were tough. Brady and company had gotten their 14–2 regular season record, and they had taken down the Indianapolis Colts and the 15–1 Pittsburgh Steelers in the AFC playoffs.



Tedy Brushi gets a big hit on Donovan McNabb in Super Bowl XXIX

Meanwhile, partially because Andy Reid had never gotten this far, ever, the Eagles were considered heavy underdogs. Terrel Owens, who played great football when his head was on right was miraculously going to be available from injury for the game, though it was against doctor's orders, from injury.

As the game fired up, nerves seemed to have attacked the Eagles before the Patriots got their chance. A third-down sack and subsequent fumble by Donovan McNabb on the Eagles' first possession nearly led to a turnover in Eagles' territory, but Andy

Reid saw something and he challenged the play. Instead of being pinned back, the Eagles got to get back some yardage by being able to punt.

Both offenses struggled in general until McNabb hit Owens on a 30-yard catch and run to inside the New England 10-yard line. A little more nerves and Patriot safety Rodney Harrison picked off McNabb's pass to the end zone. New England went no place and after a punt, the Eagles had good field position. However, L. J. Smith was hit hard and he fumbled after a completion, turning the ball over to the Patriots.

The Patriot offense continued to struggle and the Eagles took back over, with McNabb finding wide receiver Todd Pinkston for a 17-yard completion then a spectacular leaping 40-yard catch. On third and goal, McNabb hit Smith in the end zone and the Eagles drew first blood 7–0. This action woke up the Patriots and soon, they were on the move.

Brady drove the Patriots to the Eagles 4-yard line, but he was sacked and fumbled. Darwin Walker recovered for the Eagles and things began to look good for the Birds. But, they could not keep it going and they went three and out, giving New England the ball back at the Eagles' 37-yard line. Brady took advantage of this opportunity, and led the Patriots to a touchdown with 1:21 left in the first half, with David Givens catching a 4-yard scoring strike and celebrating by mocking Owens' wing flap celebration.

The Patriots were feeling good in the second half with Brady connecting with eventual game MVP Deion Branch four times on the opening drive of the third quarter. Mike Vrabel caught the short touchdown pass and New England had its first lead, 14–7. In the middle of the third, the Eagles drove to the New England 10-yard line, before McNabb fired a bullet to Brian Westbrook between two Patriot defenders for a game-tying score.

The Patriots came right back with their own scoring drive topped off by two-yard touchdown rush by Corey Dillon early in the fourth quarter. The Pats were back in the lead 21–14. On their next possession, the Patriots got field position and ended the drive with a

short Adam Vinatieri field goal, pushing the lead to 24–14. This field goal would be the margin of victory.

Teddy Bruschi stole one in the air from McNabb on the next series and it looked like the Eagles might be finished. However, they forced a three-and-out and with 5:40 left Philadelphia had the ball, down by two scores. They moved down the field, despite a patented Andy Reid “alarming lack of urgency with the clock kept ticking.” They finally scored on a sudden 30-yard touchdown pass from McNabb to Greg Lewis. The Eagles had new life, but the Reid-style drive had eaten clock so there was just two minutes remained.

The Eagles tried and failed on an onside kick. Then, with defense confidence, they burned their timeouts on New England's possession. With 96-yards to go, the Eagles got the ball back at their 4-yard line with :46 seconds left. They needed just three points with the game at 24–21, but Rodney Harrison ended all hopes when he stole his second interception from McNabb three plays later and the Philadelphia season was *puff* over. McNabb threw for 357 yards and three touchdowns, but his three nervous interceptions were devastating.

Owens did well with nine catches and 122 yards on his partially healed ankle, while Pinkston hauled in 82 receiving yards. The Eagles had done better than most thought they would and were in the game until the last bell. Unfortunately, they had made too many first half mistakes, when the Patriots were playing poorly, and the team left too many points on the field. Nevertheless, the 2004 Eagles had done better than any Eagles team had ever done since the 1960 NFL Championship.

2005 Andy Reid #20

The 2005 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his seventh of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 6-10 record was a throwback to when the Eagles could not put up winning seasons. It was a terrible showing this year, especially after being in the Super Bowl the prior year.

The Eagles somehow always have blamed injuries when their record slips. This year, they blamed injuries and a new phenomenon called the “Terrell Owens Saga. These combined to wreak havoc upon the Eagles' chances in their season after a great Super Bowl season.

After having made the playoffs since 2000 and winning the prior four NFC East crowns, the Eagles stuttered this year just to win six games along with ten losses. In 2004, the Eagles had swept its division rivals, but they became the first team to reverse that feat in its next season, going 0–6 against the NFC East in 2005. It was pathetic. It verified suspicions, and fans were wondering about Andy's fate, but he survived; and he came back.

After the Super Bowl, a bright future was in front of the team, but the onset of the “Owens controversy” in the summer began to cloud that outlook with negativity. The Eagles got out to a 3–1 record, but there were omens of trouble from the start. Contract disputes with Owens and Brian Westbrook created ugly distractions, and the team was criticized for not replacing departed defensive linemen Derrick Burgess and Corey Simon.

Around the middle of the season, the injuries began to take their toll. Quarterback Donovan McNabb, running back Brian Westbrook, wide receiver Todd Pinkston, offensive tackle Tra Thomas, defensive lineman Jerome McDougle, center Hank Fraley, cornerback Lito Sheppard, and running back Correll Buckhalter were all at some point lost for the season. To make matters worse, kicker David Akers and punter Dirk Johnson were also battling injuries and also missed time during the year.

The “Owens situation” boiled to a head in early November, with the team essentially suspending the outspoken receiver for the rest of the season. He was simply bad for the team. The rash of injuries, meanwhile, revealed a disturbing lack of depth on the team, especially in the quarterback position and defensive line. Depth is an upper management issue as well as one for the head coach. I don't recall Andy Reid complaining publicly.

The Eagles had an OK start but they blew eight of their final ten games, led at quarterback by the athletic, but not too talented, Mike McMahon.

In the seven games Owens did play, he caught six touchdowns with 763 receiving yards. Rookie Reggie Brown showed promise after Owens' suspension, grabbing four touchdowns, as did rookie running back Ryan Moats, who had three late-season touchdowns.

The team's two Pro Bowlers came from the defense – middle linebacker Jeremiah Trotter and safety Brian Dawkins. However, for the most part, the Eagles' pass defense suffered due to a poor pass rush from missing people at key positions.

Eagles fans were glad when the season ended.

On September 12, 2005 in the season opener in Georgia Stadium, the Eagles were defeated by the Atlanta Falcons L (10-14) before 70,806. On Sept 18 in the home opener, the Eagles ripped through the San Francisco 49ers W (42–3) before 67,727 at the Linc. On Sept 25, at home, the Eagles beat the Oakland Raiders W (23–20) before 67,735. At KC, on Oct 2, 2005, the Eagles beat the Kansas City Chiefs W (37–31) before 78,742.

At home on October 9, at Texas Stadium, the Dallas Cowboys pummeled the Eagles L (10-33) before 63,199. At home on 7 Oct 23, the Eagles defeated the Chargers W (20–17) before 67,747. At Denver, on Oct 30, the Broncos shellacked the Eagles L (21–49) before 76,530. At Washington on Nov 6, the Redskins beat the Eagles L (10-17) before 90,298.

On Nov 14, at home, the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles L (20–21) before 67,739. At New York, on Nov 20, the Giants beat the Eagles L (17–27) before 78,626. At home on Nov 27, the Eagles beat the Green Bay Packers W (19–14) before 67,665. At home on December 5, at home, the Seattle Seahawks overwhelmed the Eagles L (0–42) before 67,637.

At home on Dec 11, in OT the New York Giants defeated the Philadelphia Eagles before 67,443, L (23–26). On Dec 18, at St. Louis, the Eagles beat the Rams W (17–16) before 65,382. On Christmas Eve at Arizona, the Cardinals beat the Eagles L (21–27)

before 44,723. In the final game of the season at home, the Washington Redskins beat the Eagles before 67,700

2006 Andy Reid #20

The 2006 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his eighth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 10-6 record brought the Eagles back to pre-Super Bowl form and a first-place finish in the NFC East.

The Eagles won the Wildcard match but were aced out in a Divisional Round playoff loss to the New Orleans Saints. Nonetheless because of the poor prior years and having overcome an injury to McNabb in week 11, the season was viewed as a success by fans and pundits, and the suspicion idea was not as prevalent. Nonetheless, the Eagles did not make it again.

The Birds had been to the playoffs from 2000 to 2004, but in 2005, the team had many issues and finished 6-10. Revved up and ready in 2006, the Eagles won four of their first five games, but they underwent a mid-season downturn that left them 5-6.

Then, without McNabb, they depended on backup QB Jeff Garcia and running back Brian Westbrook. Both stepped up to turn the season around for Philadelphia. It was a scene from the undead as the Eagles came back to life in late-November to win their last five regular season games. Surprisingly, they won the NFC East division title after a three-game December road sweep of all of its division rivals. They beat the New York Giants 23-20 in a home playoff game before finally losing to the Saints.

McNabb was ready from the start with MVP-caliber numbers before he got hurt and had to sit out the rest of the season. Garcia was efficient running the "West Coast offense." He completed eleven touchdown passes with only two interceptions during the period. Westbrook became the focal point of the team's offense after

McNabb's loss. He rushed for 1,217 yards and racked up 699 receiving yards.

Donté Stallworth, who came via a trade, combined with second-year wideout Reggie Brown to catch 15 touchdown passes and amass 1,541 receiving yards. Meanwhile, the offensive line was outstanding, featuring Shawn Andrews. They managed to morph from a quick-strike team under McNabb to a methodical balanced attack under Garcia while finishing No. 2 in yards in the league.

The defense was also much better from the previous season. The early season pass rush could be called, "savage," as the team appeared to be on the way to a sacks record. A season-ending injury to Jevon Kearse and some attrition weakened the defensive line mid-way.

During the team's mid-season slump, the run defense was porous, but then they began to play better, spearheaded by defensive leader and All-Pro Brian Dawkins. Trent Cole had eight of the team's 40 sacks and Lito Sheppard had six interceptions helped get him a Pro Bowl slot. The defense snagged 19 interceptions altogether and returned four of them for TDs.

The Eagles had a productive 2006 Draft, where they used their first pick on Florida State defensive tackle Brodrick Bunkley. Then they used their next pick (acquired from the Tennessee Titans) on Southern California offensive tackle Winston Justice. The rest of their picks included California Polytechnic State defensive end Chris Gocong, Georgia guard Max Jean-Gilles, Michigan wide receiver Jason Avant, Colorado wide receiver Jeremy Bloom, Tennessee linebacker Omar Gaither, and Southern California defensive tackle LaJuan Ramsey.

There was a bad taste for the Eagles at summer training camp. The prior season was demoralizing. Quarterback Donovan McNabb, returned from his sports hernia injury and he announced that he thought the team was capable of reaching the Super Bowl again. Nonetheless, the national pundits saw it much differently, picking the Eagles to finish last in the highly competitive NFC East.

Correll Buckhalter was finally well after two years on injured reserve and the team added depth to both the offensive and the defensive lines. At the end of training camp, the Eagles cut two long-standing players from the team.

There was criticism since the Eagles had not filled the spot in which wide receiver Terrell Owens played. However, before the regular season began, the Eagles corrected that by trading for Donté Stallworth from the New Orleans Saints for linebacker Mark Simoneau and a conditional fourth-round draft pick in 2007. After such a poor 2005, nobody knew what to expect.

In the season opener on September 10, 2006 at Houston, the Eagles defeated the Texans W (24–10) before 70,180. On Sept 17, at home, the Giants beat the Eagles in OT L (24–30) before 69,241. Then, on Sept 24, at San Francisco, the Eagles defeated the 49ers W (38–24) before 68,166. At home v the Green Bay Packers on Oct 2, the Eagles rolled over the Packers W (31–9) before 69,222.

On Oct 8, the Eagles defeated the Dallas Cowboys W (38–24) at the Linc before 69,268. At New Orleans on Oct 15, the Saints squeaked out a three-point win v the Eagles L (24–27) before 68,262. On Oct 22, at Tampa Bay, the Bucs beat Philadelphia L (21–23) before 65,808. Then on October 29, at home, the Eagles lost to the Jacksonville Jaguars L (6–13) before 69,249 The next week, # 9 was a bye

In week 10, on Nov 12, at home, the Eagles whooped the Washington Redskins W (27–3) 69,143. At home on Nov 19, the Tennessee Titans got the best of Philadelphia L (13–31) before 69,232. At Indianapolis on Nov 26, the Colts pounded the Eagles L (21–45) before 57,296. At home on Dec 4, the Eagles beat the Carolina Panthers in a close match W (27–24) before 69,068.

At Washington on Dec 10, the Eagles barely beat the Redskins W (21–19) before 84,164. At New York on Dec 17, the Eagles whipped the Giants W (36–22) before 78,657. On Christmas Day, at Dallas, the Eagles defeated the Cowboys W (23–7) before 62,839. In the season closer at home, on Dec 31, the Eagles defeated the Atlanta

Falcons W (24–17) before 69,341, giving the Eagles a positive push towards the playoffs.

NFC Wild Card Round: vs. New York Giants

By the time the fourth quarter came around, Philadelphia had built up a 20–10 lead and they pushed back a late Giants comeback attempt. The Eagles won on a 38-yard field goal by David Akers on the last play of the game. Finals score Eagles 23-Giants 20

NFC Divisional Round: at New Orleans Saints

In this Divisional round against the New Orleans Saints, the Eagles were not victorious at the Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana and thus they did not move on in the playoffs nor did they get into another Super Bowl game. NO 27; Philadelphia 24.

2007 Andy Reid #20

The 2007 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his ninth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 8-8 record was very disappointing after 10-6 the prior year. The Eagles finished in fourth place and did not qualify for the playoffs.

Even Andy Reid cannot make all losses go away. This story we tell below will be the precursor to Andy's ninth year under the Philadelphia microscope. God bless him for putting up with us as he is a fine man. My nephew, who has a marketing business was invited into the Reid box one game that he was at the Linc. My nephew had a number of seats for his business and he took the family down a few times in a big limmo to the Vet and then to the Linc.

As noted in the 2007 intro, this Philadelphia Eagles season marked the 75th anniversary of the Eagles franchise. The team compiled an unimpressive 8–8 record and a last-place finish in the NFC East.

The Eagles began poorly but as we have seen they had a propensity to rally and they did in a road game over the Washington Redskins after their poor beginning. Following that they got a win at home against the Miami Dolphins. McNabb had become injury prone. His forte was never passing accuracy, as a big fast man, his prowess was his ability to claw out yardage when nobody else could get it. But, his fragility was unexpected.

In the win over Miami, McNabb went down with another November injury, the fourth time in six seasons that had occurred. The next three games, all against winning clubs, would prove to be the crux of the season for Philadelphia. Backup A. J. Feeley almost pulled off a big upset of the New England Patriots, who would finish the regular season 16–0, but the Eagles surrendered a fourth quarter lead. Think about the word, suspicion.

The losses in 2007 wiped out any chances of making the playoffs. The team finished the season with three straight wins, including a 10–6 win over the Cowboys, who were 12–1 entering the game. Somehow, Reid could lead the team to comebacks when there were no expectations but if the team got off to a good start, there were no guarantees. I don't know how to explain it. I just do not know.

Despite missing two games in 2007, McNabb still threw for a whopping 3324 yards, 19 touchdowns, and seven interceptions. Westbrook had one of the top seasons of any running back in the league, rushing for 1333 yards and seven touchdowns, and catching 90 passes for 771 yards and 5 touchdowns.

New acquisition Kevin Curtis led the team with 1110 receiving yards and six touchdown receptions (half of them coming against Detroit). Third-year receiver Reggie Brown had a slow start, but finished with 780 receiving yards. On defense, Trent Cole's 12.5 sacks earned him a Pro Bowl spot and second-year linebacker Omar Gaither led the team with 103 tackles. As a unit, the defense came up with several

important goal-line stands throughout the season. So, why again were the Eagles thwarted?

In the season opener for Philadelphia on September 9, 2007 at Green Bay, the Packers won the tough game L (13–16). On Sept 17, 2007 the Washington Redskins spoiled the Eagles home opener L (12–20). Then, at home, on Sept 23, the Eagles shellacked the Detroit Lions W (56–21). In the fourth game of the 2007 season. At New York, the Eagles could not make a win happen and bit the Giant's dust L (3–16). The fifth week was a bye.

On Oct 14, 2007 at New York, the Eagles defeated the Jets W (16–9). Then at home on Oct 21, the Eagles were beaten in a close game by the Chicago Bears L (16–19). At Minnesota on Oct 28, the Eagles got another win W (23–6). At home on Nov 4, the Dallas Cowboys wumped the Eagles L (17–38).

At Washington on Nov 11, the Redskins were beaten by the Eagles W (33–25). At home again, the Eagles pounded Miami in a low-scoring match W (17–7). Then at New England, the Eagles put on a great show but lost despite the effort on Nov 25, L (28–31). At home on December 2, the Seattle Seahawks won the match against the Eagles L (24–28).

At home on Dec 9, the Giants has a tough time with the Eagles but won regardless L (13–16) at Dallas, on Dec 16, the Eagles beat the Cowboys W (10–6). In the cold season, the Eagles got a warm date on Dec 23, at New Orleans. The Eagles showed its appreciation for playing in warm weather by overpowering the Saints W (38–23). Back to cold country on Dec, the Eagles invited Buffalo to another cold spot besides Buffalo in the USA, at the Philadelphia Linc and they beat the Bills in the final game of the 2007 season W (17–9)

2008 Andy Reid #20

The 2008 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-sixth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his tenth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 9-6-1 record was much

better than the 8-8 record the prior year. The team earned the 6th seed in the NFC Playoffs. They lost in the Conference Championship game.

Despite their low-seeding in the NFC playoffs, Football Outsiders calculated that this year's Eagles were the best team in the league, play-for-play.

The 2006 Eagles were mentioned in the novel, while the 2008 team was in the film adaptation of *Silver Linings Playbook*.

Andy Reid and company were always preparing for a better year. Long before preseason, the Eagles were bolstering their lineup. They signed cornerback Asante Samuel from New England Patriots in February when his contract became available. He inked six-year, \$57 million contract, as the top player in the free agency pool.

The Eagles also signed defensive end Chris Clemons, and gave him a sizable signing bonus. Unfortunately, Clemons struggled with injuries in the preseason, and barely made the team. Defensive lineman Jevon Kearse returned to the Tennessee Titans and Takeo Spikes was released, with a young corps of linebackers ready to replace him.

The Eagles traded away draft picks this year so they could have two first round choices in 2009. Additionally, Brian Westbrook had contract problems which were not resolved until the Eagles forked over a three-year, \$21 million extension. Philadelphia needed to address its weak receiving corps. They were unsuccessful in acquiring a big name receiver, and things got worse when then #1 receiver Kevin Curtis went down with a sports hernia in preseason, while #2 receiver Reggie Brown was nursing a sore hamstring. No moves were made to fix the problem, and many experts considered the Eagles too weak at the position to go deep into the playoffs.

However, 5'10 second round draft pick DeSean Jackson was about ready to make the pundits regret that forecast. He had a great preseason and was named as a Week 1 starter for the Eagles at receiver. QB Donovan McNabb also had a strong preseason, and finally looked fully recovered from his 2006 knee surgery. Special teams were also rebuilt and looked good in the preseason. Draft

picks Jackson and Quintin Demps each returned a punt and a kick respectively for touchdowns in an exhibition win over the Patriots.

On the offensive side, for the most part, things looked really good. Westbrook was in his prime while a rebuilt McNabb was ready to let them have it. However, even with Jackson, the receiving corps still looked feeble, and the offensive line had a big question mark. Aging tackles Jon Runyan and Tra Thomas still anchored the O unit. And Shawn Andrews did not get playing time until the mid-pre-season.

The defense was jam packed with talent featuring the deepest secondary in the NFL with Samuel, Brown, Sheppard, and veteran safety Brian Dawkins. The linebackers looked young and quick, and Trent Cole was ready to be the clear star on the defensive line. The key improvement from 2007 was in the special teams, which had been a consistent weakness the previous season.

Finally, the Eagles shined in a home and season opener. At the Linc on Sept 7, 2008, Philadelphia destroyed the St. Louis Rams in a shutout. At Dallas, on Sept 15, the Eagles lost to the Cowboys by just four points in a shootout. L (37–41). At home on Sept 21, the Eagles defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers W (15–6) On Sept 28, at Chicago, the Bears beat the Eagles L (20–24).

At home on Oct 5, Washington defeated Philadelphia L (17–23). At San Francisco on Oct 12, the Eagles defeated the 49ers W (40–26) Week 7 was a bye. In week 8, at home on Oct 26, 2008 the Eagles dominated the Atlanta Falcons W (27–14). At Seattle on Nov 2, the Eagles subdued the Seahawks W (26–7).

On Nov 9, at home, the Eagles lost to the NY Giants L (31–36). Then at Cincinnati on Nov 16, the Bengals and Eagles played to a tie T (13–13). On Nov 23, at Baltimore, the Ravens smothered the Eagles L (7–36) . At home v the Arizona Cardinals on Nov 8, the Eagles humbled the Cardinals W (48–20)

At New York, the Eagles beat the Giants on Dec 7, W (20–14_ At home on Dec 15, v the Cleveland Browns the Eagles gained a nice victory W (30–10). At Washington on Dec 21, the Redskins managed a win against Philadelphia L (3-10). In the final regular game of the 2008 season, at home, on Dec 28, the Eagles mauled the

Cowboys W (44-6). With the win over the Cowboys, the Eagles were ready for the NFL playoffs.

NFC Wild Card: Eagles at Minnesota Vikings

This game was played at the at Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, Minneapolis. It began on January 4, 2008 at 4:30 PM. The attendance was 61,746. The TV Announcers were (Fox): Joe Buck, Troy Aikman, Pam Oliver, & Chris Myers



Brian Westbrook's Epic 71-YD TD in Wild Card Game

The Eagles entered this postseason tournament as the NFC's sixth seed. Our Eagles began this playoff run at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome against the #3 seeded Minnesota Vikings. The Vikings, were coached by Andy Reid protege Brad Childress, had finished their season at 10–6 and had gained the NFC North title. The Eagles won the game 26-14.

NFC Divisional Round: Eagles at New York Giants

This game was played at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. It was played on January 11, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. EST. The game was played in partly cloudy weather, about 20° with 79,193 in

attendance. The TV announcers were (Fox): Joe Buck (play-by-play), Troy Aikman (color commentator), Pam Oliver, and Chris Myers (sideline reporters). The Eagles won 23-11.

The Eagles were ready. They had just beaten the Vikings on the road in the Wild Card game. After a week of prep when they got home from Minnesota, they took a bus up the NJ Turnpike to Giants Stadium for their NFC Divisional duel with their NFC East rival, the top-seeded/defending champion New York Giants.

NFC Championship: Eagles at Arizona Cardinals



Action at the Scrimmage Line Eagles v Cardinals NFC Championship

This game was played at the University of Phoenix Stadium, in Glendale, Arizona. The game was played January 18, at 3:00 PM in a weather-resistant Domed Stadium. . The game attendance: was 70,650. The TV announcers were (Fox): Joe Buck, Troy Aikman, Pam Oliver, & Chris Myers.

The Eagles were winning in the playoffs and even the fans were in disbelief. The Birds were coming off their divisional road win over

the top-seeded Giants, and so they flew to the University of Phoenix Stadium for the NFC Championship Game against the Arizona Cardinals. They lost 32-25 and left the season disappointed under Andy again!

2009 Andy Reid #20

The 2009 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-seventh season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his eleventh of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 11-5-0 record was much better than the 9-5-1 record the prior year. The team earned 2nd place in the NFC. They lost in the Conference Championship game.

Despite their low-seeding in the NFC playoffs, Football Outsiders calculated that this year's Eagles were the best team in the league, play-for-play. After losing twice to the Cowboys in the Regular Season the Eagles did not compete well against them in the Wild Card game and were defeated 14-34.

This season marked the end of the Donovan McNabb era in Philadelphia as he was traded to the rival Washington Redskins in the 2010 off-season.

On September 13 the Eagles played in their season opener at Carolina and crushed the Panthers W (38–10). At home on Sept 20, the New Orleans Saints walloped the Eagles L (22–48) On Sept 27, at home, the Eagles came back and whipped Kansas City W (34–14). In week 4, the Eagles drew a bye. On Oct 11, at home, the Eagles got the best of Tampa Bay W (33–14)

At Oakland on Oct 18 the Raiders defeated the Eagles L (9–13) On Oct 26 (Monday) at Washington the Eagles beat the Redskins W 27–17. On Nov 1 at home, the Eagles overpowered the Giants (40–17). At home on Nov 8 the Dallas Cowboys defeated the Eagles L (16–20)

Then on Nov 15, at San Diego, the Chargers got the best of the Eagles L (23–31). The next week at Chicago, , the Eagles won W (24–20). Washington lost to Philadelphia on Nov 29 , W (27-24) Washington Redskins W 27–24 . At Atlanta on Dec 6, the Falcons lost to the Eagles W (34–7).

On Dec 13 at New York, the Eagles beat the Giants W (45–38). At home on Dec 20, the Eagles defeated San Francisco's 49ers W (27–13) On Dec 27, at home, the Eagles barely beat the Denver Broncos W (30–27). Finishing up a good season in a bad way, the Eagles were thumped and shut-out by Dallas on Jan 3, 2010 L (0–24). The Eagles would lose a third time this season to the Cowboys – next time was the playoffs.

Wild Card Game Eagles v Cowboys

On January 9, 2010, the Eagles Wild Card game was played at Cowboys Stadium, Arlington, Texas at 8:00 p.m. EST. The Roof was closed for the game. The TV announcers (NBC) were Al Michaels, Cris Collinsworth, and Andrea Kramer.



Vick struggling in the pass game

The Eagles entered the playoff at 6th seed, barely making it. This game was the third meeting against their “hated” rival, the #3 seeded Dallas Cowboys. It was an opportunity for the Eagles to amend for their Week 17 defeat. But, it would not happen. Instead, the Cowboys extracted more pain and pounded the Eagles 34-14.

2010 Andy Reid #20

The 2010 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-eighth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his twelfth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 10-6-0 record was very respectable and good enough to gain first place in the NFC East. Reid really did know how to win but, according to some fans, sometimes he seemed to forget. They lost the Wild Card playoffs v the Packers L (16-21).

Yes, all that distance and no ticket to the dance. The Eagles lost again to the eventual Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers in the Wild Card playoffs. The Eagles played all of their home games at Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia, an, enjoyable, and comfortable venue.

Before the season began there were some key departures including as Donovan McNabb and Brian Westbrook, two of the franchise's top players over the Andy Reid era. The Eagles had trouble all the time keeping QB's healthy. This year, Kevin Kolb was intended to be the Eagles' new franchise QB, however he was injured during Week 1 of the season.

After a stint in the Big House, which we will not discuss, Michael Vick, thanks to some help from Tony Dungy, found his way into the Eagles lineup. When Kolb was injured, he was ready to go and did surprisingly well. Vick started in 11 of 16 games (Kolb started in Weeks 4–6 when he was injured, as well as week 17 with Vick and the starters resting for the playoffs.)

With Vick at QB, the Eagles set franchise records, including a 59–28 win in Washington. Despite the losses of McNabb and Westbrook,

Football Outsiders calculates that the 2010 Eagles had the third-best rushing attack of any single-season team from 1993–2010.

Individuals Eagles were honored for their performance by making the Pro Bowl. These included: QB Michael Vick, WR DeSean Jackson, OT Jason Peters, CB Asante Samuel, and K David Akers

In the season and home opener at the Linc, on September 12, 2010, the Green Bay Packers spoiled the start for the Eagles L(20–27). At Detroit on Sept 19, the Eagles beat the Lions W (35–32). On Sept 26, at Jacksonville, Philadelphia overpowered the Jaguars W (28–3) At home on Oct 3 the Redskins beat the Eagles L (12–17).

At San Francisco, on Oct 10, the Eagles beat the 49ers W(27–24) At home, on October 17, Philadelphia defeated Atlanta W (31–17) On Oct 24 at Tennessee the Titans outplayed the Eagles L (19–37). On Week 8, the Eagles drew a bye. On Nov 7 at home , the Eagles managed to beat the Colts in a tight match W (26–24)

On Nov 15, at Washington, in a shootout, The Eagles destroyed the Redskins W (59–28). On Nov 21, at home, the Eagles beat the New York Giants W (27–17). Then, on Nov 28 at Chicago, the Eagles were edged out by the Bears L 26–31. At home, the Eagles neutralized the Houston Texans on Dec 2 W (34–24).

At Dallas on Dec 12, the Eagles nosed out the Cowboys W (30-27) in a shootout W (30–27). At New York, the Eagles beat the Giants W (38–31) At home on Dec 28, the Minnesota Vikings defeated the Birds L (14–24). Wrapping up the season on January 2, 2011, the Dallas Cowboys squeaked out a win L (13–14) over the Eagles. Though he had two seasons to go with the Eagles, this would be the last winning season for Andy Reid.

NFC Wild Card: Eagles v Green Bay Packers

On a 30 degree sunny day, before 69,144 fans, at 4:30 PM on January 9, 2010, at Lincoln Financial Field, in Philadelphia, the Green Bay Packers defeated the Philadelphia Eagles 21-16 in the NFC Wild Card Tournament. The Packers went on to win the Super Bowl.

2011 Andy Reid #20

The 2011 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their seventy-ninth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his thirteenth of fourteen seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 8-8 record was atypical of the great years that Andy Reid had delivered for the Eagles. The team finished second in the NFC East but did not qualify for the playoffs.

The Eagles had stocked the team well with several notable offseason player acquisitions. This was another year in which the Eagles had high hopes of competing for a Super Bowl. However, they had some problems with winning during the season and they ultimately failed to make the playoffs for the first time since 2007. They had a miserable start and things would have been much worse if they had not won their last 4 games.

They were hoping for a miracle playoff berth, but at 8–8, they were 1 win short of being equal to the divisional winners and eventual Super Bowl champions, the New York Giants. They swept the Dallas Cowboys and Washington Redskins for the first time since 2006 and 2009, respectively but like they still did not make it to the big dance.

On September 11, 2011, in the season opener at St. Louis, the Rams were completely skunked by the Eagles W (31–13). At Atlanta on Sept 18. The Falcons nosed out the Eagles L (31-35). At home on Sept 25, the Giants slammed the Eagles L (16–29) On Oct 2, in a one-point battle, the San Francisco 49ers defeated the Eagles L (23–24)

On Oct 9 at Buffalo, the Bills got the better of the Eagles L (24–31). At Washington on Oct 16, the Eagles defeated the Washington Redskins W (20–13). Week seven was a bye. Week 8, the Eagles slugged the Dallas Cowboys at home on Oct 30, W (34-7). On Nov 7, the Chicago Bears beat the Eagles L (24–30)

The Arizona Cardinals beat the Eagles on Nov 13 at home L (17–21). Then, on Nov 20 at New York, the Eagles defeated the Giants

W (17–10). At home on Nov 27, the New England Patriots smothered the Eagles L (20–38). At Seattle on Dec 1, The Seahawks pounded the Eagles L (14–31).

At Miami on December 11 at the Eagles belted the Dolphins W (26–10). Then on Dec 18, the Eagles pummeled the New York Jets W (45–19). At Dallas on Dec 24, the Eagles smashed the Cowboys W (20–7) On January 1, 2012, in the season finale, Philadelphia lambasted Washington W (34–10) to end the season on a positive note.

2012 Andy Reid #20

The 2012 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eightieth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Andy Reid in his last of fourteen mostly excellent seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 4-12 record was the final straw for Andy Reid who did a great job at Philadelphia but had a tough time with the big games. This year's team finished last in the NFC East and did not qualify for the playoffs.

Despite having started the 2012 season with a respectable, 3-1 record, and having won all four of their pre-season games, the Eagles had a jump start on a great season. But, they fell apart after beating the Giants on September 30, and they lost eight in a row. That's a half season of losses. At that point, only a quarter of the season was left, and the Eagles were out of contention.

After a win on Dec 9 against the Buccaneers, they lost their last three games finishing with a very "blittin" 4-12-0 record. Philadelphia suffered their worst season since 1998 when they won only three games Andy Reid was fired on December 31, after fourteen seasons at the helm.

The Eagles had an uncanny knack of picking the Super Bowl winner, but it was never them. It was the fourth consecutive season, that the team, which the Eagles played in their home opener, went on to win the Super Bowl. This year, after toying with their draft

selections for a bit, the Eagles selected defensive tackle Fletcher Cox. Even Cox could not put Humpty Dumpty together again.

In the season opener, on Sept 9 at Cleveland, the Browns were beaten by one point by an Eagles team that had won their fifth in a row, counting pre-season. W (17–16). The Eagles picked up #6 in a row on September v the Baltimore Ravens at the Linc in the home opener W (24–23). At Arizona, on Sept 23, the Eagles sustained their first loss of the season against the Cardinals at Arizona L (6–27). Winning again on Sept 30 at home v the New York Giants, it was a close game for the Eagles W (19–17).

Count off eight losses in a row quickly so it does not make you think of how it could have been lots better. Start with Oct 7 at Pittsburgh Steelers L (14–16). This was followed by Oct 14 at home v Detroit's Lions L (23–26) in OT. Then, Oct 28 Atlanta L (17–30), Nov 5, at New Orleans L (13–28), Nov 11, Dallas at home L (23–38); Nov 18 at Washington's Redskins L (6–31) Nov 26 at home v Carolina's Panthers L (22–30). Dec 2 at Dallas L (33–38)

Then came the rare 2012 Philadelphia win at Tampa Bay on Dec 9 W (23–21). The Eagles then lost three in a row first on Dec 13 to the Cincinnati Bengals in a walloping, L (13–34). Next a L (20–27) drubbing on Dec 23, from the Washington Redskin. In just one more game, the pain for Eagles fans and players and coaches and management would be over after the season closer on Dec 30, December 30 at New York in a hammering from the Giants L (7–42). The very next day, Andy Reid was released from his burden.

Chapter 12 Coach Chip Kelly 2013 to 2015

Coach Chip Kelly # 21

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Record</u>
2013	Chip Kelly	NFC	East	1st	10-6-0
	•	Lost Wild Card Playoffs(Saints) 24–26			
2014	Chip Kelly	NFC	East	2nd	10-6-0
2015	Chip Kelly	NFC	East	2nd	7-9-0
<u>2013-2015 Chip Kelly final record (26-22-0)</u>					



Coach Chip Kelly on the Eagles' sidelines

2013 Chip Kelly #21

The 2013 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighty-first season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Chip Kelly in his first of three seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. This year's 10-6 looked like one of the great Andy Reid's seasons of the 1990's. This year's team finished first in the NFC East with a 10-6 record and qualified

for the playoffs. The world, including Eagles fans thought the old Eagles were back.

Like many new coaches, Chip Kelly's arrival came at a time when anybody who came across the Schuylkill River to address a throng of awaiting fans could have talked about walking across the turbid waters hoping not to be late for the intros. We all know only one deity walked across the water but when Kelly arrived, since Andy had promised big, delivered much but became unreliable, a little walk on top of the water surely would have helped the shroud of uncertainty about the future of the franchise.

Chip Kelly did a fine job in this, his first year for the Eagles and my family and I were quite pleased. Controversy would come but not this year.

With Kelly as coach, the Eagles improved on their 4–12 record from 2012, clinching the NFC East division title and the playoffs for the first time since 2010, but after a close game, they lost to the New Orleans Saints in the Wild Card round of the playoffs, by a score of 26–24. Chip Kelly made it seem like Andy Reid was directing the playoffs.

The season gained honors for LeSean McCoy winning the NFL rushing title. Nick Foles, who everybody knows now in 2018, engineered the success in this season producing 27 touchdowns to only 2 interceptions. Foles somehow did not get to hang around the Eagles to continue his success. He was later brought back.

Foles did tie a record in 2014 when he threw 7 touchdowns against the Oakland Raiders. This was the NFL record for most touchdowns in a single game. Foles now holds part of this record.

Who do you make your QB? This was Chip Kelly's dilemma as the Eagles had two other quarterback competing with Nick Foles-- Michael Vick and Matt Barkley. Somehow Vick won the job. After Vick got injured, however, Foles took over as quarterback and was eventually named the new starting quarterback even after Vick returned.

In Chip Kelly's first season opener on September 9 at Washington, the Eagles beat the Redskins W (33–27) At home on Sept 15, San Diego nosed out Philadelphia L (30–33) At home on Sept 19, Kansas City defeated Philadelphia L (16–26). Then, on Sept 29 at Denver, the Broncos scorched the Eagles L (20–52).

At New York on Oct 6 the Eagles checkmated the Giants W (36–21). At Tampa Bay on Oct 13, the Eagles belted the Buccaneers W (31–20) On Oct 20, at home, the Cowboys gave the Eagles a smack on the chin L (3–17). At home on Oct 27, the New York Giants beat the Philadelphia Eagles L 7–15

At Oakland on Nov 3, the Eagles trounced the Raiders W (49–20). At Green Bay on Nov 10, the Eagles socked the Packers W (27–13). On Nov 17, at home, the Eagles whacked the Washington Redskins W (24–16) On Nov 24, the Eagles drew a bye. On Dec 1, at home, the Eagles got by the Arizona Cardinals W (24–21)

At home on Dec 8, the Eagles defeated the Detroit Lions W (34–20) At Minnesota on Dec 15, the Vikings hammered the Eagles L (30–48). At home, on Dec 22, the Eagles crushed the Chicago Bears W 54–11.

In the season closer at Dallas, on December 29, Chip Kelly's Eagles wrapped up the season by edging out the Cowboys W (24–22). This game would end when Kyle Orton threw an interception late in the fourth quarter. With the win, the Eagles improved to 10–6 and sealed NFC East Championship and 3rd seed in the playoffs. They would also be the third team in a row to defeat the Cowboys in the last game of the regular season (Sunday Night Football: Week 17, Dec 22).

NFC Wild Card: Eagles v New Orleans Saints

This Wild Card game was played at 8:10 PM EST on January 4, 2014 at Lincoln Financial Field, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania against the New Orleans Saints before 69144—a packed house at the Linc. The TV announcers were (NBC): Al Michaels, Cris Collinsworth and Michele Tafoya. The Birds lost the game in a tight match L (24-26)

2014 Chip Kelly #21

The 2014 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighty-second season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Chip Kelly in his second of three seasons as head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. Last year 10-6 was good enough for the playoffs. This year's 10-6 brought the Eagles a second place NFC finish but not good enough for the playoffs.

The same Nick Foles who was recently the big hero in the 2018 Super Bowl, led the Eagles to a 6-2 start of what looked like it would be a great season. Even during the first eight games, however, the team struggled with turnovers more so than in 2013. For example, Foles threw just 2 interceptions and lost 1 fumble in 2013. In 2014, Foles was injured in week 9, and that was the end. This brought former USC star Mark Sanchez off the bench to take over as starting quarterback.

Under Sanchez, the Eagles were 4-4. They continued to lead the NFC East until week 15, when they lost to their rivals, the Dallas Cowboys. With a loss to the 3-11 Washington Redskins in Week 16, and the Cowboys defeating the Indianapolis Colts, the Eagles were eliminated from playoff contention a week after they lost control of their division. The Eagles suffered one of the worst collapses in NFL history starting the season 9-3 before going 1-3 in the last four games with two losses against their division rivals, the Cowboys and Redskins.

Clearly the QB spot made the difference. Despite missing the playoffs, they had 9 selections for the 2015 Pro Bowl, second only to the Denver Broncos, who had 11.

On September 7, 2014, in the home and season opener, the Eagles defeated the Jacksonville Jaguars W 34–17. At Indianapolis, on Sept 15, the Eagles edged out the Colts W (30–27). At home on Sept 21, the Eagles got by the Washington Redskins W (37–34). At San Francisco on Sept 28 at San Francisco, the 49ers beat the Eagles L (21–26

At home on October 5, the Eagles whipped the St. Louis Rams W (34–28). On Oct 12, at home, Philadelphia shut out the New York Giants W (27–0). Week 7 was a bye. On week 8 at Arizona, the Cardinals defeated the Eagles L (20-24) on Nov 2, at Houston, the Eagles defeated the Texans W (31–21) Nick Foles was out at this point for the rest of the year.

On Nov 10, the Eagles buried the Carolina Panthers W (45–21). Then, on Nov 16 at Green Bay, the Packers smothered the Eagles L (20–53). On Nov 23, the Eagles beat the Tennessee Titans W (43–24). At Dallas on Nov 27, the Eagles spanked the Cowboys W 33–10.

At home on Dec 7 the Seattle Seahawks defeated the Philadelphia Eagles L (14–24) At home on Dec 14, the Dallas Cowboys won the NFC East Championship with this win over the Eagles L (27–38). In this nail-biter on Dec 20 at Washington, the Redskins took the Eagles out of playoff contention L (24–27). In the closing game of the 2014 season, the Eagles came back from a miserable season to finish with a win on Dec 28 against the New York Giants W (34–26). There would be no playoffs to get upset with in 2014. The season simply ended.

2015 Chip Kelly #21

The 2015 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighty-third season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Chip Kelly in his last of three seasons as

head coach. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. The team had an unexpected losing year at 7-9, but they managed to snag second place in the NFC East. Kelly had masterminded a number of trades. Kelly was fired after the season

Many fans did not understand why Chip Kelly needed all that power at Philadelphia when what the fans wanted was a great coach who would consistently win games. Nonetheless, Kelly got his way and became the de facto General Manager. Eagles fans did not find a problem with Kelly's coaching but were very upset when he cut or traded several prominent and well-liked starters.

Hard as it was to believe at the time but the names on Kelly's hatchet list were key starters such as Nick Foles, Evan Mathis, Trent Cole, and even the 2013 rushing champion LeSean McCoy. He also left the Eagles leading receiver Jeremy Maclin left in free agency. He brought in new players like Sam Bradford, Byron Maxwell, Kiko Alonso, and 2014 rushing champion DeMarco Murray, who he thought fit his system of coaching.

The Eagles did poorly, and Kelly's manipulation of the team took a lot of the blame for the poor results. The new guys were not exceptional. Some are not willing to go so far as to blame Kelly and they suggest that the NFC East as a whole had a terrible season, meaning that the Eagles were in playoff contention for most of the year.

However, no matter how you shake it, they did not perform well. The Eagles hung on until week 16 with fans thinking they would get in the playoffs. But, in almost a mirror image of 2014, the Eagles were eliminated from playoff contention in a Week 16 in a Saturday Night Football loss to the Washington Redskins. It did not take long for the Eagles to take action.

On December 29, 2015, Chip Kelly was abruptly fired by the Eagles. Eagles' offensive coordinator Pat Shurmur would take over as interim head coach for the final week of the 2015. Chip Kelly went from favorite to goat almost overnight.

In the season opener at Atlanta on September 14, 2015, the Atlanta Falcons nosed out the Philadelphia Eagles at the Georgia Dome L

(24–26). At home on Sept 20 , the Dallas Cowboys defeated the Eagles L (10–20). At the New York Jets in Met Life Stadium on Sept 27 the Eagles prevailed for their first win of the season W (24–17) After all the toying around with the team, the fans were frothing. At Washington, on Oct 4 , the Redskins edged out the Eagles L (20–23).

At home against New Orleans on Oct 11, the Eagles drubbed the Saints W (39–17). Then, on Oct 25 at home, Philadelphia whacked the New York Giants W (27–7). At Carolina on Oct 25, the Panthers beat the Eagles L (16–27). In the 8th week, the Eagles had their bye. . On Nov 8, at Dallas the Cowboys were beaten by the Eagles in OT W (33–27).

At home on Nov 15, Miami pulled off a one-point win against the Eagles L (19–20). On Nov 22 Tampa Bay’s Buccaneers whipped the Philadelphia Eagles L (17–45). At Detroit on Nov 26, the Eagles were overpowered by the Lions L (14–45) At New England on Dec 6, the Eagles defeated the Patriots W (35–28)

At home on Dec 13, the Eagles won against the Buffalo Bills W (23–20) The Arizona Cardinals came to the Linc on Dec 20 and smothered the Eagles (17–40). On the day after Christmas, Canadian Boxer Day, the Washington Redskins took back all the Eagles presents and got the best of Philadelphia L (24–38). In the season finale, the Eagles came back to win on January 3, 2016 at New York against the Giants W (35–30)

Chapter 13 Coach Doug Pederson From 2016...

Coach Doug Pederson # 22

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coach</u>	<u>Conf</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Record</u>
2016	Doug Pederson	NFC	East	4 th	7-9-0
2017	Doug Pederson	NFC,	East	1 st	13-3-0
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Won Divisional Playoffs(Falcons) 15–10 • Won NFC Championship(Vikings) 38–7 • Won Super Bowl LII (vs. Patriots) 41–33 • Nick Foles (SB MVP)
<u>2016-2017 Doug Pederson record through 2017 season (20-12-0)</u>					



Coach Pederson & the Eagles Super Bowl Champions

2016 Doug Pederson #22

As much as Eagles fans were pleased when Chip Kelly, a different kind of thinker came in to become Andy Reid's replacement, by the time year three came, even though his last name was Kelly, he was not only not doing the job for the Eagles he was hurting the longevity of the team.

There have been many Chip Kelly autopsies since he was fired but the best one I heard was written by NFL.com

It was titled, on *The 3 main ways Chip Kelly failed the Eagles* By NBCS Philadelphia December 30, 2015 at 10:30 AM. Here is the beginning with no editing:

Doug Pederson is a coach who is a young man and an unexpected and refreshing hero. If you like the Eagles, you like Doug Pederson as he delivered the goods for a fan base that was looking for the best for years. We got it in 2018. Thank you, Doug Pederson.

The 2016 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighty-fourth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Doug Pederson in his first year as head coach of the Eagles. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. The team had a losing year at 7-9, the same record as in Chip Kelly's last year. They finished fourth in the NFC East and did not qualify for the playoffs.

Doug Pederson was born in Bellingham, Washington, in 1968. He is forty years old as of 2018. Pederson was a Ferndale High School graduate from nearby Ferndale, Washington. Pederson and his wife, Jeannie, have three sons: Drew, Josh and Joel. Jeannie played basketball at Louisiana College.

He was an athlete in high school and starred (All-starred) as an All-State selection in football, basketball, and baseball. After high school he graduated from Northeast Louisiana University. He was the QB from 1987 through 1990. Pederson still holds multiple passing records at the school.

He was good enough as a QB to make the Eagles as a player. He signed a three-year, \$4.5 million contract with the Philadelphia Eagles on February 18, 1999, to become the team's starting QB under new head coach Andy Reid, who was Pederson's quarterbacks coach at Green Bay from 1997–1998. Andy Reid is a good teacher.

He had some pretty good games as QB for the Eagles, but Donovan McNabb was earmarked for the position by Andy Reid. Pederson was to be the starting QB after he was asked to take the team while

McNabb was getting accustomed to the pros. Pederson later went on to play for the Browns and he got a lot of playing time at Green Bay before he retired. He also played for the Miami Dolphins at quarterback. Like many great players, where he was when hurt his opportunities to grab a starting QB job in the NFL.

Pederson could handle big games when called upon as a QB. In a 1993 contest against the Eagles, for example, Pederson was pressed into duty when Dolphins starter Scott Mitchell left the game with a shoulder injury. In the second half, he helped guide Miami to a 19-14 win that marked Don Shula's 325th career victory.

Doug Pederson was coached by three of the most successful coaches in NFL history: Don Shula, Mike Holmgren and Andy Reid. Additionally, Pederson played alongside Pro Bowl quarterbacks Brett Favre, Dan Marino, Donovan McNabb and Jim McMahon. No wonder he is so good a coach himself.

Pederson began his coaching career at Calvary Baptist Academy, a private Christian high school in Shreveport, Louisiana. He had a great record there and brought them to the State playoffs each year.

On January 29, 2009, Pederson was back at the Eagles, hired as the offensive quality control coach. Andy Reid was still head coach. He was promoted to quarterbacks' coach on February 8, 2011. Andy Reid then asked him to go to KC with him on January 11, 2013, and Pederson had the great skills to serve as offensive coordinator for the Chiefs.

During Pederson's first season as an NFL coach (2009), the Eagles offense recorded the fifth-most passing yards in team history (4,089), which at the time ranked second in club annals.

Pederson had a great record as QB coach for the Eagles. For example, in his first season as the Eagles quarterbacks coach, Pederson helped QB Michael Vick become the second quarterback in NFL history to top the 3,000-yard passing and 500-yard rushing plateaus in consecutive seasons. That year, under Pederson's direction, Vick set career highs in completions (253) and passing

yards (3,303) while throwing the third-most touchdowns of his career (18).

Vick's yards through the air, combined with his 589 rushing yards, helped Philadelphia's offense record a then-franchise-record 6,386 net yards (now the second-highest total) and notch a team-record 356 first downs. Additionally, the 2011 Eagles offense ranked second in the league in plays of 10-plus yards (258) and tied for second in plays of 20-plus yards (84).

After a three-year run with the Chiefs under his mentor, Andy Reid, Doug Pederson got the job as head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles on January 18, 2016. Pederson is nothing less than a phenomenon. In just his second season as an NFL head coach, he led Philadelphia to a 13-3 regular-season record, an NFC East title, the No. 1 seed in the NFC playoffs and a berth in Super Bowl LII as an underdog. After all that, he finally coached the Eagles to become Super Bowl Champions. Not a bad record for a forty-year-old or a man of any age.

In 2016 with the Eagles, Coach Pederson helped develop rookie quarterback Carson Wentz, his # 2-overall pick in the 2016 NFL Draft, and he prepared Carson to start the regular-season opener vs. the Cleveland Browns. Wentz was a great find and surprised Eagle fans with his first three victories in 2016. Eagles' fans had gotten accustomed to bad luck at times when good luck was expected.

Under Pederson's tutelage, Wentz went on to set a team and all-time NFL rookie record with 379 completions, while posting franchise rookie records in pass attempts (607), passing yards (3,782), passing touchdowns (16) and completion percentage (62.4%). Wentz also produced the 4th-most passing yards (3,782) in single-season team history and NFL rookie history. Carson Wentz started all 16 games in his rookie season, becoming the first Eagles quarterback to start all 16 regular-season games since Donovan McNabb in 2008.

Carson Wentz, who was the 2nd overall draft pick for the Eagles was selected by coach Pederson to be the Eagles starting quarterback for Week 1 against the Cleveland Browns. The Eagles looked invincible with their new rookie quarterback as they got off to a 3-0 start

including a 34–3 blowout win over the vaunted and always contenders, Pittsburgh Steelers.

The bye in week 4 somehow changed the Eagles but nobody knows why. Following their bye week, the Eagles lost nine of their final 13 games, including a 2–4 record against their divisional rivals. After losing to the Ravens, they were eliminated from playoff contention for the third consecutive season and fourth time in five seasons. But...

Regular Season Games 2016

In the home and season opener, on September 11, 2016, Philadelphia defeated the Cleveland Browns W (29–10). At Chicago on Sept 19, the Eagles belted the Bears W (29–14). Then, at home on Sept 25, Philadelphia hammered Pittsburgh W (34–3) for a 3-0 start before the bye week. On Oct 9 at Detroit, the Eagles suffered their first loss by one point against the Lions L (23–24)

In a one TD game on Oct 16 at Washington, the Redskins prevailed L (20–27). At home, on Oct 23, the Eagles came back from their two-game spell and beat the Minnesota Vikings W (21–10). At Dallas, on Oct 30, the Cowboys beat the Eagles in OT L (23–29).

At New York on Nov 6, the Giants edged out the Eagles L (23–28). On Nov 13, Philadelphia defeated Atlanta W (24–15). Then, on Nov 20 at Seattle, the Seahawks smothered the Eagles L (15–26). At home v Green Bay, the Packers rolled over the Eagles on Nov 28, L (13–27) At Cincinnati on Dec 4, the Bengals slammed the Eagles L (14–32) .

At home, on Dec 11, the Washington Redskins defeated the Philadelphia Eagles L (22–27). At Baltimore on Dec 18, in a one-point match, the Ravens bested the Eagles L (26–27) The New York Giants were defeated by the Eagles on Dec 22 W (24–19) On New Year Day, 2017, the Eagles slugged the Dallas Cowboys W (27–13) to wrap up the 2016 season. The next season there would be a whole lot of winning going on for the Eagles.

2017 Doug Pederson #22

The 2017 Philadelphia Eagles football team competed in their eighty-fifth season of Professional National Football League (NFL) football. They were led by Doug Pederson in his second year as head coach of the Eagles. Jeffrey Lurie was the owner. The team had a great winning record in the regular season of 13-3, the best since Andy Reid's great 2004 season.

Nick Foles came back to the Eagles this year to be Carson Wentz's understudy but was needed more than anybody ever imagined. He came through big time. The Birds finished first in the NFC East then won it all, including their first ever Super Bowl victory

- Won Divisional Playoffs(Falcons) 15–10
- Won NFC Championship(Vikings) 38–7
- Won Super Bowl LII (vs. Patriots) 41–33

For all his great work, Nick Foles was announced as the Super Bowl MVP)

The Eagles tied their 2004 season for the highest winning percentage in franchise history. Their win in week 14 against the Los Angeles Rams won the team the division title for the first time since 2013, but it came with the loss of Carson Wentz who was injured with a torn ACL.

A close win against the New York Giants in Week 15 helped the Eagles clinch a first-round bye for the first time in 13 years, and a Christmas Night home win over the Oakland Raiders gave the Birds the home-field advantage throughout the playoffs for the first time since 2004.

The Eagles were on key all year. They defeated the Atlanta Falcons 15–10 in the Divisional Round and routed the Minnesota Vikings 38–7 in the NFC Championship. The win against the Falcons in the divisional round was their first playoff win since 2008.

Philadelphia was the first #1 seed in the playoffs since 1980 to be an underdog in the Divisional Round, as well as in the Conference Championship. In total, six Eagles players were selected for the Pro

Bowl, including four first-time recipients. However, none of them participated due to preparations for Super Bowl LII.

What a Super Bowl! The Eagles surprised the New England Patriots by a score of 41–33 in Super Bowl LII for their first Super Bowl victory in franchise history. The win came with a trick play right before halftime. It was also their fourth NFL Championship, and their first league title since 1960.

It was the second time the Eagles and Patriots went at each other in a Super Bowl. The last time they met in Super Bowl XXXIX, and the Patriots won 24–21. Backup quarterback Nick Foles was named Super Bowl MVP. He is the first backup to receive this award since his opponent, Tom Brady received the honor in Super Bowl XXXVI. The Eagles also faced and defeated both Super Bowl teams from the previous NFL season (the New England Patriots and the Atlanta Falcons) in the playoffs. It was a great year indeed for the Eagles.

Before the Eagles could compete for the Super Bowl and all of the playoffs between the regular season and those playoffs, they first had to play the regular season in 2017. Let's take a look at that in summary. Enjoy. This is the season that got the Eagles their Super Bowl dance and their big win.

Games of the 2017 Season

In the season opener on September 10, 2017, at Washington, the Eagles defeated the Redskins W (30–17). Playing Andy Reid's KC Chiefs in week 2, the Eagles were surprised with a loss at Kansas City L (20–27) At home on Sept 24, the Eagles got by the Giants with a field goal W (27–24) The game was a lot more exciting than that.

The Eagles defense was playing great the whole game and the Eagles were ahead by two touchdowns. But, for whatever reason, the D broke down in the fourth quarter and the Giants score 21 unanswered points to start the fourth quarter, as quarterback Eli Manning found his all pro wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. twice for

touchdowns, and second year wide receiver Sterling Shepard once for a 77-yard touchdown. It was getting dicey out there.

Fletcher Cox had to leave the game with a calf injury. Eagles rookie running back Corey Clement ran for a 15-yard touchdown to tie the score at 21. After exchanging field goals, and time was wearing thin, Wentz and the Eagles offense took over, looking to move into field goal range. It was tougher to do than plan and the Eagles were faced with a fourth down.

Wentz had connected with Alshon Jeffery for a 17-yard pass, but on fourth they were not really in field goal range. They decided to try anyway. They gave rookie Jake Elliott a 61 yard shot hoping to not need OT. In his NFL debut the prior week against the Chiefs, Elliott, a rookie out of Memphis, missed a 30-yard chip shot. The Eagles knew he had a big toe. Against the Giants he hit a kick twice as long as the one he had missed, nailing a 61-yard, setting the Eagles up to win the game with 1 second remaining... game-winning field goal

Rookie Jake Elliott converted on the 61-yard attempt, the longest in Eagles franchise history as time expired. Wentz was quietly efficient in the game, completing 21 of 31 attempts for 176 yards and one touchdown despite playing behind a struggling offensive line.



Jake Elliott drills 61-yarder

The win came with a high injury expense, as dynamic running back Darren Sproles was ruled out for the remainder of the season with a broken arm and torn ACL, both of which occurred on the same play. Despite this injury, the Eagles ran the ball efficiently through most of the game.

With this close win, the Birds moved ahead to 2–1 tying the Cowboys and the Redskins for first place in the NFC East while the Giants fell to 0–3 in the basement of the division.

On Oct 1 at Los Angeles, the Eagles squeaked by the chargers W (26–24) On Oct 8 at home, the Eagles squashed Arizona W (34-7). At Carolina on Oct 12, the Eagles got by the Panthers W (28-23). At home on Oct 23, the Birds beat the Redskins W (34–24). At home on oct 29 at San Francisco, the Eagles slugged the 49ers W (33–10). Then, on Nov 5 at home, the Eagles pummeled the Denver Broncos W (51–23) In week 10, the Eagles took a bye.

In week 11, at Dallas, the Eagles manhandled the Cowboys W (37–9) At home against Chicago, the Eagles shellacked the Bears, W (31–3). On Dec 3, at Seattle. The Eagles, on their way to glory, took a heartbreaking loss to the Seahawks L (10–24). Om Dec 10 at Los Angeles, the Birds clinched the title in a tough match against the Rama W (43–35). On Dec 17 at New York, the Eagles barely escaped the Giants (W 34–29). On Christmas Day Dec 25, Santa was with the Eagles on both sides of the line at the Linc as he helped them power over the Raiders W (19–10).

In the final game of the season with all that could be gained having been gained, on Dec 31, the Eagles sat out some starters and lost to the Dallas Cowboys L (0-6)

2017–18 NFL playoffs

This was a big year for the Eagles in that other than the first round, in which they got a bye for having such a fine record, they played in

every round right up to the Super Bowl, and then top off the season they played in the Super Bowl, and they won that game too.

Here is a snapshot of the Eagles 2018 playoff picture:

- Wild Card First-round bye
- Divisional January 13, 2018 4:35 p.m. EST Atlanta Falcons
Lincoln Financial Field W (15-10)
- NFC Championship January 21, 2018 6:40 p.m. EST
Minnesota Vikings Lincoln Financial Field W (38-7)
- Super Bowl LII February 4, 2018 6:30 p.m. EST v New
England Patriots U.S. Bank Stadium W (41-33)

On January 13, 2018, The Philadelphia Eagles took the stage for the first time in a playoff game since 2013, Chip Kelly's first year. The Game was at the Linc in Philadelphia. The Eagles were not favored. They were the first ever # one seed underdog in the divisional round. Following a theme set in the last two games of the regular season, the Eagles relied heavily on their defense, surrendering just 10 points to a strong Falcons offense.



Enjoying being an underdog

The definitive moment of this game came up on the Falcons' final drive when the Eagles defense stopped four Falcons scoring attempts.

On 4th & Goal for example, from the two-yard line, Matt Ryan threw an incomplete pass to Julio Jones, This sealed a 15-10 win for the Eagles. Against many pundit predictions, the top seeded Philadelphia Eagles advanced to the NFC Championship game.

NFC Championship: Eagles v Minnesota Vikings

Underdogs once again, the Eagles out did the pundits. This game was against #2 seeded Minnesota . The Eagles had a bit of drought in this fabled playoff game. It was Andy Reid's team in 2008 when the Eagles broke the Championship glass last. This time the Birds would fare much better.



Foles in action, humbly winning one for the Eagles and Eagles' fans

The Eagles permitted a Vikings touchdown on the opening drive. It served as Philadelphia's wake-up call. There would be no more sleeping. The rest of the game demonstrated total domination from Nick Foles and the Eagles' offense. After 38 unanswered points against one of the league's top defenses, the Eagles accepted their invitation to their 3rd ever Super Bowl berth, and an opportunity to avenge their Super Bowl XXXIX defeat to the New England Patriots. The Eagles could not wait for game day two weeks later. Nor could Eagles' fans.

Super Bowl LII: Eagles vs. New England Patriots

This game was held at U.S. Bank Stadium, in Minneapolis, Minnesota at 6:30 PM on February 4, 2018 before 67, 612 excited fans. With a dome stadium with freezing outdoor weather, this game was played inside the dome. The foes were the perennial Super Bowl contenders, the New England Patriots. The Pats claimed to be ready for anything that former starter, now backup QB, now starter, Nick Foles could throw at them.

I don't think the Pats were expecting the Kitchen Sink—but, they got it and more. It did not bother the Eagles one iota to be 5.5-point underdogs for they knew the pundit's game and the Super Bowl were not being played on the same field. The Eagles beat the Patriots despite the spot. Philadelphia celebrated all week and some of us are still celebrating.

The Eagles got on the board first when Jake Elliott kicked a 25-yard field goal to make the score 3–0. However, the Pats tied it up when Stephen Gostkowski kicked a 26-yarder not too long afterwards.

The Eagles grabbed the lead again when Nick Foles found Alshon Jeffery on a 34-yard pass. The PAT failed but the Eagles held the lead at 9-3 to close out the quarter. The Birds increased their lead in the second quarter when LeGarrette Blount ran for a 21-yard touchdown (with a failed 2-point conversion), making it 15–3.

The Patriots however managed to score twice when Gotskowski kicked a 45-yard field goal and then James White ran for a 26-yard touchdown, making it 15–6 and then 15–12.



The Trick Play book was opened, and Nick Foles scored a receiving touchdown that was thrown by tight End Trey Burton. Everybody was surprised but the one-yard play went off without a hitch. This made the game 22–12 at halftime.



Andy Lyons/Getty Images Malcolm Jenkins of the Philadelphia Eagles tackles Brandin Cooks of the New England Patriots during the second quarter in Super Bowl ...

In the third quarter, New England drew closer when Brady found Gronkowski on a 5-yard pass, making the score 22–19. However, the Eagles pulled away again as Foles found Corey Clement on a 22-yard pass giving a ten-point cushion at 29–19. The Patriots got closer again near the end of the third, when Brady found Chris Hogan on a 26-yard pass to make the score 29–26.

Into the fourth quarter, Philadelphia increased their lead when Elliott kicked a 42-yard field goal (32–26.) The Pats would eventually grab the lead for the first time when Brady found Gronkowski again on a 5-yard pass. The score was then 32–33.

The Eagles put together a patented 14-play, 75-yard drive which was topped with Foles finding Zach Ertz on an 11-yard pass for the TD. Ahead by 5, at 38-33, New England would need a touchdown to go ahead and to win.



Eagles strip sack on Tom Brady still haunts All-Everything QB

With 2:16 to play. on the Patriots following possession, Brandon Graham drew cheers from Eagles fans as he sacked Tom Brady, who fumbled the ball. The ball was recovered by Eagles' Derek Barnett at the Patriots 31-yard line.

Philadelphia would soon increase its lead after Elliott's 46-yard field goal, making the game score 41–33.

With seconds left, the Patriots were able to move the ball down to midfield. With just under 10 seconds remaining, Tom Brady gave it his best shot with a huge Hail Mary pass that would have sent the game into OT with a touchdown plus 2. However, the Eagles swarmed Gronkowski and the human blanket in the end zone caused a pass with a chance to fall incomplete. This sealed the game and prompted a lot of happy sounds from Eagles and Eagles fans in the stadium and across the world.

The Philadelphia Eagles defeated the 5-time Super Bowl champions by a score of 41–33. Nick Foles also was named Super Bowl MVP after the game. With this win, the Eagles finally won their first Super Bowl, and their first NFL title since 1960. Go Eagles!



Other books by Brian Kelly: (amazon.com, & Kindle)

[Great Moments in Syracuse Football](#) The great moments, coaches & players in Syracuse Football

[Boost Social Security Now! Hey Buddy Can You Spare a Dime?](#)

[The Birth of American Football.](#) From the first college game in 1869 to the last Super Bowl

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[Great Players in Army Football](#) Great Army Football played by great players..

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[The Constitution Companion.](#) A Guide to Reading and Comprehending the Constitution

[The Constitution by Hamilton, Jefferson, & Madison](#) – Big type and in English

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[Wilkes-Barre, PA: Return to Glory](#) Wilkes-Barre City's return to glory

[Geoffrey Parsons' Epoch... The Land of Fair Play](#) Better than the original.

[The Bill of Rights 4 Dummies!](#) This is the best book to learn about your rights.

[Sol Bloom's Epoch ...Story of the Constitution](#) The best book to learn the Constitution

[America 4 Dummies!](#) All Americans should read to learn about this great country.

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[The All-Everything Machine](#) Story about IBM's finest computer server.

[Thank You IBM!](#) This book explains how IBM was beaten in the computer marketplace by neophytes

Brian has written 153 books in total. Other books can be found at amazon.com/author/brianwkelly

