



TRAINING CAMP UPDATE

Volume 6, Issue 1 – 8/10/11

Training camps are in full swing and we want you to feel like you have attended every practice and seen every preseason game.

To keep all our Footballguys subscribers on top of everything, we've created our incredibly detailed Training Camp Updates. They're an exhaustive look each week covering every bit of news you need to know to stay completely on top of all 32 teams. Quite simply, they're the key to Dominating Your Draft.

This is the first of five training camp updates from us. We'll break down every team's skill positions and position battles. It's the stuff you'd see if you were there at every camp watching practice yourself. Our own Bob Henry creates the Training Camp Updates with significant contributions from Jason Wood, Mark Wimer, Mike Herman, Jene Bramel, Aaron Rudnicki, Colin Dowling, Sigmund Bloom, Maurile Tremblay, Andrew Garda and Anthony Borbely. Each camp update reflects the most up-to-date information from each of the 32 training camps; the type of information that will help maintain your advantage over the rest of your league mates.

Happy reading and let's have a great 2011 season,

Joe Bryant and David Dodds
Owners, Footballguys.com

Arizona Cardinals

QB: After the Cardinals combined for 10 touchdowns, 18 interceptions, a 51 percent completion rate and five wins last year, Cardinals DE Darnell Dockett said newly acquired QB Kevin Kolb made an immediate impression on his teammates. "It's like **night and day** from last year," Dockett said. "I don't want to disrespect nobody, but I mean, he's good." Beat writer Kent Somers echoed those sentiments following Kolb's first full session on Thursday, noting that he **didn't disappoint**. Kolb shook off the rust, but overall looked as sharp as could be expected with some nice throws to various receivers, including a nicely timed throw to Beanie Wells on a familiar play that he ran often with the Eagles. Head coach Ken Whisenhunt chimed in as well: "I have been impressed with how he has handled himself, his demeanor," said Whiz. "I think he'll quickly adapt and get better as we go, and that is exciting. He

has the right makeup mentally and physically to be successful." After completing 4-of-16 at Seattle last year, Max Hall was working with gloves on in Saturday's morning practice. "I saw Kurt do it, and if I play in another rainy game where I can't hold on to the ball it might be useful," he said. "I'm just testing it out. Coach said it really helped Kurt a lot."

RB: It seems as though Beanie Wells had earned a permanent seat in Whisenhunt's doghouse after struggling in his second season. Beset by a knee injury in the preseason, Wells never regained his form while struggling with fumbles and blocking assignments. The drafting of Ryan Williams early in the second round seemed even more concerning. So it was surprising perhaps when Whisenhunt declared him the team's clear-cut starter entering camp. "To say this is a make or break season is a little premature," said Whiz. "But this is what he wanted. Clearly he's the guy." This comes only months after Arizona Republic columnist Dan Bickley proclaimed that "you can officially declare Wells a bust". Hmmm. To Wells' credit, he reported to camp in pristine condition looking as though he "doesn't have an ounce of body fan on him". Wells then predicted 2011 will be his breakout year: "This is my third year and three strikes and you're out, and I'm definitely not striking out," said Wells. "I am ready to tear it up. It's my time and I am ready to go out and prove that." Wells said he feels more explosive than he did at any time last season. "I applaud him for what he did last year," said RBs coach Tommie Robinson. "He played with a lot of injuries ... a lot of people didn't know that, but Beanie gutted out a lot of plays." Wells won't have any room for error even with Tim Hightower out of the picture. Williams is an even bigger threat and far more talented than Hightower. Williams has shown excellent quickness, toughness in the first few days of practice. Kent Somers noted that he ran with **considerable anger** in goal-line drills in Thursday's practice. Williams also has **great agility**, but (like Wells) his playing time will depend on how well blocks and picks up blitzes. "I am a very instinctive runner," Williams said on Friday. "If I feel it, I'll do it. If it's a cut and I'm running 100 miles an hour, I make that cut at 100 miles an hour." Not to be confused as Tim Hightower, Williams donned the #34 jersey. Keep an eye on this battle. Williams is a very talented back as is Wells, so if either one gets the bulk of the carries then there is real potential for solid RB2 production.

WR: What a difference a year makes. As a rookie last year, Andre Roberts struggled badly with numerous dropped passes and his confidence lagging. After looking like a potential bust in camp, Roberts emerged midway through the season, ultimately starting ahead of Steve Breaston in the team's final games. Roberts reported to camp this year in great shape while adding some muscle to his frame – as did Stephen Williams and Max Komar. Barring any roster moves, Roberts is poised to start opposite Larry Fitzgerald and he'll also be in the mix returning punts with rookie corner Patrick Peterson. "It's not all confidence, but that definitely helps," Roberts said. "When you know what you are doing you can go full speed. I had a whole bunch of things going through my mind (last year) but I got my playbook and the light came on for me in the latter part of the year." Coaches would love to see Early Doucet push him. Meanwhile, Komar, Williams and rookie seventh-round pick DeMarco Sampson have all looked good in the first few days of practice. Owners looking for draft day values should keep a

close eye on Roberts, who will likely see plenty of targets and single coverage playing opposite Fitzgerald. Fitz looks like he's ready to bounce back among the elite fantasy WRs with Kolb behind center. On Saturday, Fitz beat A.J. Jefferson for a nice 39-yard connection with Kolb.

TE: The Cardinals haven't utilized their tight ends much in recent years, but that doesn't mean that there isn't potential value here. The team drafted Rob Housler and signed veteran Todd Heap, after he was surprisingly waived by the Ravens, and former Panther starter Jeff King. The team has more talent at the position than at any time during the Whisenhunt regime. Stephen Spach was re-signed and second-year Jim Dray return, but both could face an uphill battle to make the roster with the influx of talent and competition. The addition of Heap may not have much fantasy implications, conceivably his presence could open up room for Fitzgerald if nothing else.

Defense: The Cardinals defense underwent a bit of a makeover in the off-season. They dealt their top corner Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie to the Eagles for Kevin Kolb, drafted Patrick Peterson with the fifth overall pick and signed free agents ILB Stewart Bradley, FS Kerry Rhodes, corner Richard Marshall and DL Nick Eason among others. Veteran Vonnie Holliday came to the Cardinals in the Tim Hightower trade to add depth and versatility to their line while Joey Porter clung to his roster spot by agreeing to restructure his contract. So far, DE Darnell Dockett has been his usual self – dominating and disrupting plays in the backfield, as he did on Saturday afternoon when he tipped and intercepted a Kolb pass. At nose tackle, Nick Eason and Dan Williams rotated with the first team in Saturday morning's walk through for the Red and White scrimmage. It might be worth monitoring as Whisenhunt could be sending a message, or not. Daryl Washington showed up in great shape with some newfound muscle to his frame as he prepares to take the next step in his second season manning one of the inside linebacker spots. New Defensive Coordinator Ray Horton has **big things planned** for Washington at the weak-side ILB while newly signed Stewart Bradley, if healthy, should ultimately beat Paris Lenon for the strong-side ILB spot next to him. Paris Lenon holds down that spot for now. Kent Somers reported that Bradley was everywhere in practice on Thursday, noting that his tenacity set a nice tempo. Rookie Quan Sturdivant is a name to monitor, but he will have to beat veteran Paris Lenon and Bradley for playing time, so he may have to wait before making much of an impact on the IDP scene. On Saturday, SS Adrian Wilson injured his elbow/bicep prompting an MRI. The early reports indicate at least a partial tear, but for now it looks like Wilson might avoid surgery and potentially be back on the field in a month or two. Matt Ware was signed late Saturday, perhaps as a precaution pending the extent of Wilson's injury. On Sunday, CB Michael Adam underwent arthroscopic knee surgery. He is out indefinitely. Former Panther Richard Marshall will take over as the team's third corner.

Special Teams: The three Cardinals specialists have 27 combined years of NFL experience (plus 12 years of Australian Rules experience in one case), although they head into just their second year working together. Punter Ben Graham (who also serves as the holder) joined the team late in 2008 and long

snapper Mike Leach came on board in 2009. Kicker Jay Feely is the newest, having been signed last offseason. The only one conceivably facing competition for their job is Graham, as the team signed undrafted rookie punter Derek Epperson out of Baylor following the lockout, although that is probably a long shot.

Cardinals Depth Chart

QB: Kevin Kolb, John Skelton, Max Hall, Richard Bartel

RB: Chris Wells, Ryan Williams (3RB), LaRod Stephens-Howling (KR), Alfonso Smith

FB: Justin Green, Anthony Sherman, Charles Ali, Reagan Maui'a

WR: Larry Fitzgerald, Andre Roberts (PR), Early Doucet (RFA), Stephen Williams, Chansi Stuckey, Max Komar, Isaiah Williams, Demarco Sampson, Davieun Curry-Chapman

TE: Todd Heap, Jeff King, Rob Housler, Stephen Spach, Jim Dray

K: Jay Feely

NT: Dan Williams

DE: Darnell Dockett (DT), Calais Campbell, Vonnie Holliday, Nick Eason, David Carter, Jeremy Navarre

ILB: Daryl Washington, Stewart Bradley, Paris Lenon, Quan Sturdivant, Reggie Walker

OLB: Clark Haggans, Joey Porter, O'Brien Schofield, Sam Acho, Will Davis, Cyril Obiozor, Brandon Sharpe, Duke Lemmens

CB: Patrick Peterson, Greg Toler (inj), Michael Adams (inj), Richard Marshall, Jorrick Calvin, A.J. Jefferson, Marshay Green

S: Adrian Wilson (SS) (inj), Kerry Rhodes (FS), Rashad Johnson (SS), Matt Ware, Hamza Abdullah, Andrew Rich

Atlanta Falcons

QB: Matt Ryan said on 7/29/11 that he was sorry to see WRs Michael Jenkins and Brian Finneran go: "It's tough because you love playing with those guys, Fin and Jenk." After the team's Friday Night Lights scrimmage on 8/5/11, Ryan said, "We've had a great first week of practice. Julio [Jones] and Jacquizz [Rodgers], on the offensive side of the ball, have done a great job."

RB: Peter King tweeted about Jacquizz Rodgers on the first day of camp: OreSt RB Jacquizz Rodgers shows power, jukes ... Very few mental errors...He will be a top-20 NFL rookie. "He's small in stature," Michael Turner said on 7/31/11. "It's tough to judge him without many practices in pads, but from watching in college, he packs a punch..." Head coach Mike Smith said of the Falcon's rookies. "They are going to have to catch up. They know they are behind. We know they are behind... We have a different plan in place for the rookies than we do for the veterans." Veteran RB Michael Turner revealed that he has rehabbed an offseason groin surgery. "It went good," Turner said 7/29/11. "I was out there running and stuff. It went pretty good. It feels good to be back playing football." Head coach Mike Smith commented on Turner's surgery: "We feel very confident with the procedure that was done and with

his rehab. He's been back to full speed for a number of weeks." Smith and offensive coordinator Mike Mularkey are reportedly emphasizing more big plays for Turner, who had just one run over 16 yards during the last six games of 2010. "I think that's not just a specific problem or issue with our running back. When we have explosive plays, we're getting blocks at the second level," Smith said (7/31/11). "It's something we analyzed in the offseason. We have to do a better job of blocking downfield to spring us for those explosive plays. It's on everybody." The Falcons have not re-signed Jerious Norwood as of the start of training camp, clearing the way for Rodgers to fill the change-of-pace role. RB Jason Snelling signed a one-year contract with the Falcons on Sunday, August 7 and took part in the team's evening walk-through. Snelling commented: "It was a little bit of a slow market for running backs as well as for other positions. That's just how it is. Those things happen. I'm where I want to be. I'm ready to play football."

When camp opened on the 28th, the offensive line had Sam Baker at left tackle, Mike Johnson at left guard, Todd McClure at center, Garrett Reynolds at right guard and Will Svitek at right tackle. Right tackle Tyson Clabo, who re-signed with the Falcons, couldn't practice until August 4 because he was a free agent. Left guard Justin Blalock reported to the team's facilities early, even though he couldn't practice until August 4. "I wanted to be in the meetings because you get to see things schematically," Blalock said. "It's just a matter of application when you get [on the practice fields.] It's also good to take mental reps with some of the younger guys."

WR: SI's Peter King tweeted on Julio Jones during the first day of training camp: "Julio Jones looks like 5yr vet." After the release of Michael Jenkins, Jones lined up with the first-team offense in the morning walk-through practice on July 28th, and he's been in the starting lineup since then. "This kid Julio Jones is the real deal. He's the best incoming receiver I've ever played with. Come to think of it, it's not even close," TE Tony Gonzalez tweeted on August 2nd. "Things are going great," Jones said on August 5th. "I'm learning the offense a little better. I'm working on my playbook at night. Roddy [White], Matt Ryan and Harry [Douglas] are helping me." Wide receiver's coach Terry Robiskie commented on August 5th "We know what we have to do to have him [Jones] ready [to start] when that whistle blows on Sept. 11th." Wide receiver Kerry Meier has been cleared to return to practice. He missed last season after suffering a right knee injury and landing on IR. Meier took the field during the team's August 5th Friday Night Lights "modified scrimmage" at Norcross High and starred until the event ended early. "Kerry is doing great," coach Robiskie said. "He's going to have to fall in there and play all of the spots. He has to back up Roddy, Harry [Douglas] and Julio. If we go to four wides, I need him. If we go to five wides, I need him." Harry Douglas commented on his long road back to health [after missing 2009 due to an ACL injury] on August 4th, saying: "I feel like I'm 100 percent now. I can play differently. I can come out here and play like I used to play before I got hurt — fast, quick, not thinking, doing what I do best playing with quickness and speed. It was toward the end of last year that I was getting back to the 90th percentile. Over the summer, I felt like I got to 100 percent..."

TE: Starting TE Tony Gonzalez said on August 3rd that he has become a more vocal leader this year. "It's kind of what Warren Moon and Marcus Allen did for me when I first got in the league. These are guys that took time to help guide my career. I think I should give that back [to young players], and I'm going to." Atlanta signed tight end A.J. Simmons on Friday, August 5th, to replace backup TE Robbie Agnone, who suffered a foot injury early in training camp.

Defense: A frenzy of Atlanta roster moves continued Friday 7/29/11 with the signing of free agent DE Ray Edwards in the afternoon and the release of recent first round pick DE Jamaal Anderson. "I think me and [John] Abraham are going to be a great tandem," Edwards said 7/30. "We'll work on playing off each other and causing a lot of havoc." Head coach Mike Smith commented, "He's going to help our pass rush, and he's also a very good run defender. He's an all-around defensive end that is going to line up and play our left defensive end. We just can't wait to get him out here and see what he can do." MLB Mike Peterson will rejoin the team in practices August 4th (he was re-signed by the team but as an unrestricted free agent he had to wait until the 4th due to the rules governing this year's free agency).

Special Teams: The Falcons enter camp with five specialists on the roster. Only two were with the team last year: long snapper Joe Zelenka and kicker Matt Bryant. Signed for the final five games of 2009 to replace the eventually retiring Jason Elam, would-be free agent Bryant was re-signed following the lockout. Gone via free agency is punter/holder/kickoff-specialist Michael Koenen. Competing to replace him are rookie Matt Boshier, whom the Falcons drafted out of Miami FL, and Ken Parrish, who has impressed in NFL camps in recent years plus has UFL experience. Undrafted rookie snapper Andrew Schulze out of Iowa currently rounds out the quintet.

Falcons Depth Chart

QB: Matt Ryan, Chris Redman, John Parker Wilson, Adam Froman

RB: Michael Turner, Jason Snelling, Jacquizz Rodgers, Gartrell Johnson, Antone Smith (KR), Philip Sylvester

FB: Ovie Mughelli

WR: Roddy White, Julio Jones, Harry Douglas, Eric Weems (PR/KR), Kerry Meier

TE: Tony Gonzalez, Justin Peelle, Michael Palmer, Marquez Branson

K: Matt Bryant

DT: Jonathan Babineaux, Corey Peters, Peria Jerry, Trey Lewis, Vance Walker

DE: John Abraham, Ray Edwards, Kroy Biermann, Lawrence Sidbury, Cliff Matthews, Chauncey Davis, Ryan Winterswyk

MLB: Curtis Lofton, Mike Peterson (M/W), Akeem Dent, Coy Wire (S/M), Matt Hansen

OLB: Sean Weatherspoon (W), Stephen Nicholas (S), Spencer Adkins, Bear Woods

CB: Dunta Robinson (inj), Brent Grimes, Christopher Owens, Dominique Franks, Rafael Priest, Kirk Belgrave

S: Thomas DeCoud (FS), William Moore (SS), Shann Schillinger

Baltimore Ravens

QB: Joe Flacco **added 10 pounds of muscle** during the offseason and came to camp focused. "He's as sharp starting off as I've ever seen him," offensive coordinator Cam Cameron said. Flacco seems poised to take another step forward, although it would've helped if he had Derrick Mason returning or a veteran free agent like Malcom Floyd. With Marc Bulger retiring, the Ravens remain in the market for a veteran backup. Rookie sixth-round pick Tyrod Taylor is holding down that spot for now. Taylor has flashed early in camp while working with the twos, but he's better suited as the No. 3 to develop.

RB: There may not be another back in the league that had a better offseason without having to do a thing. Ray Rice bids farewell to goal-line vulture Willis McGahee and Le'Ron McClain via free agency. It seems reasonable, barring a free agent addition that Rice will pick up a fair amount of those carries now. The Ravens replaced McClain with Vonta Leach, who running backs coach Wilbert Montgomery described as **a lineman** blocking for Rice. With the league's best lead blocker and a potential bump in TDs, Rice stands a chance of becoming one of the elite players in 2011. Jalen Parmele backs him up for now. Last week, the Ravens withdrew their tender to Parmele making him a free agent only to re-sign him soon after. Parmele has plenty of talent, but he'll face competition from rookie seventh round pick Anthony Allen. Damien Barry is also in the mix and competing for a roster.

WR: After Derrick Mason decided to sign with the Jets and Malcom Floyd accepted less money to return to San Diego, the musical chairs of free agent receivers is over and the Ravens are staring at Jerricho Cotchery. No deal is imminent between these two, but has been rumored. Beyond Anquan Boldin, the Ravens are penciling in second-round speedster Torrey Smith. So far, Smith's hands and route running have been fine and the team desperately needs a vertical threat to pair with Boldin and keep defenses honest after losing Todd Heap and Mason. James Hardy sat out four practices last week with a hamstring. He's competing with Smith and trying to make the most of his second chance after a failed stint with the Bills. Mike Preston of the Baltimore Sun reported from camp on Friday that both rookies, Smith and Tandon Doss, **have been impressive**. Smith is showing good acceleration in and out of breaks and not backing down from veteran corners. It's hard to overthrow Smith. Doss's hands have been great, along with his route running, while catching everything thrown near him. "We did draft them because we thought they were guys that would get up to speed quickly," Harbaugh said. "The history is guys can play right out of the gate. We're not going to lower the bar." WR/KR David Reed **underwent offseason surgery** on his wrist to repair a torn ligament.

TE: With Todd Heap's departure, Ed Dickson becomes **the front-runner** to replace him, although he will be competing with fellow second-year TE Dennis Pitta, who wants that job himself. "It's a big deal," Pitta said. "Everyone wants to be a starter in this league. I know that's my goal, and that's

everybody's goal, and I'm working and preparing myself to do so." Blocking isn't either player's strong suit and the team will likely utilize both players in several formations. Ravens receivers coach Jim Hostler said that Pitta is **very similar** to Heap. Both players have been frequently targeted in the first week of camp. The team wants to get them up to speed. Pitta had one of the best catches of the week on the second day of practice when he out-jumped a defender on his back in the end zone. Dickson had an 80-yard touchdown of his own Wednesday. Dickson missed practice on Friday and Saturday, opening the door for Pitta to get more reps.

Defense: The Ravens inserted second year Arthur Jones **at left end**, ahead of Cory Redding. First-round pick CB Jimmy Smith returned to practice Saturday after missing four days with a groin injury. Brandon Pollard signed a two-year contract and he'll join the competition to start at strong safety with Haruki Nakamura and Tom Zbikowski. LB Brendon Ayanbadejo hasn't fully recovered from a staph infection he had in April. Another player struggling out of the gate is CB Dominique Foxworth, who admitted that his right knee "doesn't feel great". "It's frustrating. I don't know. I'm not very happy about it, but I'll just keep working, I guess," said Foxworth. "It hurts, and I don't feel as quick or as fast as I once was." It looks like Smith and Lardarius Webb will start.

Special Teams: The Ravens are set at kicker, where Billy Cundiff emerged as a Pro Bowler last year and was secured to a long term contract. According to beat writer Dan Kolko the other day, "Billy Cundiff nails a 58-yarder with Terrell Suggs talking trash in his ear. Cundiff's been on fire this camp." The Ravens have no question at punter and holder, roles both handled by Sam Koch. Long snapper *Morgan Cox*, who suffered a torn ACL last December, isn't practicing yet and remains on the PUP list, although he has been getting reps after practice. Currently handling the snapping is undrafted rookie Patrick Scales out of Utah State.

Ravens Depth Chart

QB: Joe Flacco, Hunter Cantwell, Tyrod Taylor

RB: Ray Rice (3RB), Ricky Williams, Jalen Parmele, Anthony Allen, Damien Barry, Matt Lawrence, Walter Sander

FB: Vonta Leach

WR: Anquan Boldin, Torrey Smith, James Hardy, Tandon Doss, David Reed (KR) (inj), Marcus Smith, Laquan Williams, Rodney Bradley

TE: Ed Dickson, Dennis Pitta, Kris Wilson, Jonathan Stupar, Davon Drew, Chris Walker

K: Billy Cundiff

DT: Haloti Ngata, Terrence Cody (NT), Brandon McKinney (NT), Terron Sanders

DE: Terrell Suggs (LB), Arthur Jones, Cory Redding, Paul Kruger, Brendon Ayanbadejo, Pernell McPhee

ILB: Ray Lewis (M), Jameel McClain (W) (RFA), Tavares Gooden (M) (RFA), Dannell Ellerbe (W), Prescott Burgess, Jason Phillips (M), Josh Byner

OLB: Jarrett Johnson (S), Sergio Kindle

CB: Lardarius Webb (PR), Chris Carr, Dominique Foxworth (inj), Jimmy Smith, Cary Williams, Chykie Brown

S: Ed Reed (FS), Bernard Pollard (SS), Haruki Nakamura (SS), Tom Zbikowski (FS/PR)

Buffalo Bills

QB: Coming off a solid season in which he threw 23 touchdown passes, Ryan Fitzpatrick enters camp as the clear starting QB. Although he has been a backup for much of his career, Fitzpatrick is an intelligent and mobile passer who appears to be a good fit for Chan Gailey's offense. The Bills also strengthened their depth at the position when they signed Tyler Thigpen at the opening of free agency. Thigpen has a history of success in Chan Gailey's offense from their time together in Kansas City and should see plenty of time in the preseason. Gailey made it clear early on in camp, however, that Thigpen has no chance to unseat Fitzpatrick as the starter. "Ryan is the starter and there's no question about that. You can compete and work and see how close you can get and that'll be good, but Ryan is the starter." As for the third QB spot, the Bills have a couple of options there. Levi Brown is a developmental prospect who served as the team's #3 QB last season while Brad Smith was signed primarily as a free agent WR from the Jets but could also see time under center in a Wildcat-type formation. One of the interesting areas to watch in the preseason is how often the Bills plan to use Smith at QB in a Josh Cribbs-type role.

RB: C.J. Spiller was the first pick of the Buddy Nix era when the Bills took him 9th overall last year, but he had trouble adjusting to the speed of the NFL and only wound up with 98 combined touches. It will be interesting to see whether he can take a big step in his development and emerge as the impact player the Bills were hoping for. Until that happens, we're likely to see Fred Jackson remain as one of the more underrated running backs in the league. Jackson has averaged nearly 4.5 yards per carry over the past three seasons while not missing a single game, and he's also a reliable blocker and pass-catcher which will make it tough for Spiller to carve out a huge role in the offense. The Bills also added a young RB in the draft this year when they selected Johnny White in the 5th round. According to observers, he's been one of the more impressive players early in training camp and he could certainly carve out a role for himself as a goalline and power back. Behind the top-3, it looks like there is quite a dropoff. Quinton Ganther is back but has failed to make an impact on offense during his 5-year NFL career. The Bills initially added a couple of undrafted free agents in Vai Taua and Emmanuel Moody but recently released them and signed Bruce Hall and Anthony Elzy to take their spots. Hall was a member of the Bills practice squad in the past but spent some time with the Broncos last year.

WR: One of the biggest surprises of the 2010 season from around the league was likely the play of Steve Johnson as he broke 1000 yards and caught 10 touchdowns. A lot of people will be watching to see if he can follow that performance up with another strong season and establish himself as one of the league's better fantasy options. "He wants to be a great player" Chan Gailey said. "He thinks he was good last year and his goal is to be great. We are all for that and want to give him every opportunity to be great." On the other side, the Bills need to find a way to get more production out of Lee Evans. Despite getting paid like one of the league's elite WRs, Evans has only

caught 81 passes for 1,190 yards and 11 touchdowns in the past two years combined. While the starters are set going into the season, there should be an interesting battle for the remaining spots on the depth chart in training camp. Roscoe Parrish looked great as the slot receiver early last season before suffering a season-ending wrist injury. Brad Smith brings versatility, size, and experience to the receiver position and figures to see regular playing time based on the \$15 million contract he signed. David Nelson is another bigger receiver who looked impressive after joining the team as an undrafted free agent last year. The Bills also got contributions from undrafted players like Donald Jones and Naaman Roosevelt. Another player to watch is Marcus Easley, who was taken in the 4th round last year but suffered a season-ending injury in training camp. The last wildcard thrown into the mix is Craig "Buster" Davis, a former 1st round pick of the Chargers who has had injury problems in the past but worked hard and may be looking at his last chance at salvaging an NFL career.

TE: This position looks like a bit of an afterthought for the Bills as they did not make any significant moves to address it either in the draft or free agency. The team signed veteran David Martin last year and he scored the only touchdown among the group, but he also finished with just 7 catches on the season. Scott Chandler was signed off the Cowboys practice squad late last year and looks like he could be the best blocker of the bunch, which might give him an edge in the competition. Mike Caussin was signed off the Jaguars practice squad last year and has shown flashes early in camp. Shawn Nelson was supposed to be the TE of the future for this team, but he has had a miserable start to his career with a substance abuse suspension and migraine problems that cut his season short in 2010. Nelson was injured early in camp, which allowed some of the other players like Chandler and Mike Caussin to start to elevate themselves in the eyes of the coaching staff. It's hard to imagine any of these players emerging as a viable fantasy option as the Bills under Gailey prefer to use their tight ends as blockers.

Defense: The Bills struggled to stop the run in 2010 and finished the year ranked 32nd in the league. The hope is that Marcell Dareus, who they took with the 3rd overall pick in the draft, will help address that. The other big addition to the defense this year is Shawne Merriman, who the Bills claimed off waivers last year and signed to an extension. While he hasn't been an impact player for some time, Merriman is reportedly in good health and has looked very quick in camp thus far. If Dareus can help shore up the run defense up front and Merriman can provide a consistent pass rush from the edge, the Bills will likely see a big improvement in their overall defense. Another focal point of the preseason will be the inside linebacker spots. Paul Posluszny signed a huge contract with the Jaguars for a chance to play MLB in a 4-3 again and the Bills signed Nick Barnett to replace him, Barnett has had some injury problems the past couple years, but his wrist injury from 2010 should be a non-issue and he looks ready to take over an everydown role in the center of the defense. Playing next to him will likely be veteran Andra Davis, but the rookie Kelvin Sheppard is probably a future starter so it will be worth watching to see how he does in the preseason. The secondary from last year remains mostly intact, but SS Donte Whitner left to sign a deal in San Francisco. The Bills feel comfortable

replacing him with George Wilson, but also added Da'Norris Searcy in the draft to provide additional depth. CB Drayton Florence was re-signed and Terrence McGee is back healthy, so the Bills now have 3 corners with starting experience and 2nd rounder Aaron Williams who has been earning praise early in camp.

Special Teams: Once again, all three starting specialists are back for the Bills: long snapper Garrison Sanborn, punter/holder Brian Moorman, and kicker Rian Lindell. But in an unusual turn, each role also has an undrafted rookie in camp: long snapper Danny Aiken from Virginia, punter Reid Forrest from Washington State, and kicker Chris Hazley from Virginia Tech. All three are likely just camp legs or wrists, including Reid who nonetheless was typically ranked in the top five among this year's punting prospects and who, like Moorman, get good hang time on his punts.

Bills Depth Chart

QB: Ryan Fitzpatrick, Tyler Thigpen, Brad Smith (KR/WR), Levi Brown

RB: Fred Jackson (SD), C.J. Spiller (3RB), Johnny White, Quinton Ganther

FB: Corey McIntyre, Jehuu Caulcrick

WR: Steve Johnson, Lee Evans (inj), Roscoe Parrish, Marcus Easley (inj), Craig "Buster" Davis, David Nelson, Donald Jones, Naaman Roosevelt

TE: David Martin, Scott Chandler (RFA), Shawn Nelson, Zach Pinalto

K: Rian Lindell

NT: Kyle Williams, Torell Troup, Kellen Heard, Michael Jasper

DE: Dwan Edwards, Marcell Dareus, Alex Carrington, Spencer Johnson, Lionel Dotson, Luther Davis

ILB: Nick Barnett, Andra Davis, Reggie Torbor, Kelvin Sheppard, Dan Batten, Chris White, Brian Duncan

OLB: Chris Kelsay (S), Shawn Merriman, Arthur Moats, Antonio Coleman, Aaron Maybin

CB: Terrence McGee, Leodis McKelvin (PR/KR), Drayton Florence, Reggie Corner, Aaron Williams (CB/FS), Justin Rogers

S: Jairus Byrd (FS), George Wilson (SS), Da'Norris Searcy (SS), Bryan Scott (SS), Jon Corto, Dominic Cook, Sidney Glover

Carolina Panthers

Camp Opened July 29th. Asked to assess the first week of Carolina's practices, head coach Ron Rivera said Saturday, August sixth that, "I'm pleased where we are in terms of understanding what we have to do to get better. Practicing at a specific tempo, understanding what's expected of them."

QB: Cam Newton came into Panthers' training camp as it opened on Friday, July 29th with a new \$22 million contract (all the money is guaranteed). He will compete with Jimmy Clausen and Tony Pike (both second-year players) but Newton is the presumptive favorite to be the Panthers' starter during

2011. Head coach Ron Rivera stated at the open of camp that the quarterbacks are on level ground. "All of our quarterbacks are competing for a starting job. We're not giving anything to anybody," he said. "I know we spent a lot of money on a lot of guys. But we're going to play the guys that when they're ready to play." Clausen reportedly worked with the first-team offense Saturday night 7/30; Newton was on the field with the second team. Newton struggled to hit receivers at times early in camp. After practice on Saturday 7/30, Newton said of being a rookie, "I don't have this attitude that I'm above the law, because I have to understand that I have to pay homage and pay dues." Unlike earlier during the first week of training camp where he dazzled with his feet, Newton reportedly stuck to the pocket for the most part Saturday (Panthers' FanFest inter-team scrimmage) and showed good arm strength and accuracy. "He's on his back foot throwing 50-yard passes. I mean, c'mon," Steve Smith said after the scrimmage. "He didn't win the Heisman Trophy because there was bad counting on the ballot. He won because he's good." Offensive coordinator Rob Chudzinski, who coached under Norv Turner in San Diego and is using many aspects of the Chargers offense in Carolina, has reportedly installed some zone-read-option plays, something Newton excelled at last year at Auburn. "That means a lot to me personally," Newton said 8/6/11. "... He's always willing to put in things that make everybody excited. Not only me, but everybody. He's willing to capitalize on my strong points of the game." Veterans Derek Anderson and Tony Pike (still nursing a sore shoulder) haven't led a single team drill during the first week of training camp - it's been all about Newton and Clausen so far - and Newton is far in the lead after one week of practices.

RB: DeAngelo Williams re-signed with the Panthers given his five-year, \$43 million deal, with \$21 million guaranteed. "I honestly and truly want to stay a Carolina Panther and they're doing their part to keep me a Carolina Panther," Williams said on Monday, July 25th. Williams will team up with Jonathan Stewart to form one of the best 1A/1B tandems in the NFL heading into regular season. Stewart participated fully in practice 7/30, the first time he's ever been healthy enough to practice fully on the first day of training camp with the Panthers. RT Jeff Otah is back on the field as of 7/30 after he missed all of last season and the final three games of 2009 with a knee injury. Otah appeared to be in great shape and was firing off the ball with authority - he appeared fully recovered, which is great news for the Panthers' offensive line.

WR: Steve Smith has had a change of heart and been persuaded to stay in Carolina, so he'll lead the WR corps. "For me, I'm always going to be a Panther," Smith told ESPN's Adam Schefter on 7/28/11. "They took a shot on me when I was coming from nowhere and now I'm going into my 11th year in the league. This will be where I retire..." Brandon LaFell and David Gettis will fight it out to start on the opposite side (right now Footballguys.com has Gettis penciled in as the #2 wide receiver in Carolina). Armanti Edwards and David Clowney will also be in the mix for receptions - some reports indicate that Edwards will get more chances to show what he can do now that ex-head-coach John Fox is in Denver. Edwards was a star in the night practice on 7/30, catching everything thrown his way including a circus catch in the end zone. Smith commented on the new Rob Chudzinski offense on August 6th

"The quarterbacks are doing what has not been done around here in a long time. The philosophy in years past has been not to screw it up," Smith said. "And here it's put your foot down on the gas pedal and go hard." Coach Rivera said he liked what he saw from free-agent addition Legedu Naanee, who practiced for the first time 8/6/11. "He picked up right where he left off in San Diego."

TE: Ex-Chicago TE Greg Olsen was traded to Carolina for a 2012 third-round pick - he'll compete with fellow veteran Jeremy Shockey for the starting job in training camp, and they both may be used in 2-TE formations. "You look out in San Diego, what the tight ends were able to do out there, it's pretty well documented," Olsen said on July 30th referring to OC Rob Chudzinski's tutelage of Antonio Gates. "So we hope that can be us as a unit. We've got a great group of guys that they brought into camp." Gary Barnidge is still on the roster as of the opening of training camp, and the team has also added blocking-specialist Ben Hartsock.

Defense: DE Tyler Brayton was released by Carolina on 7/29/11, as was DE Hilee Taylor. DT Ed Johnson and LB Nic Harris saw their offers withdrawn on the same day. DE Charles Johnson commented on his new \$72 million contract - when asked what he was thinking, he replied "That's a lot of money. That's what I was thinking." MLB Jon Beason also cashed in on 7/29/11 with a five-year, \$50 million contract extension that includes \$25 million guaranteed, according to local reports. Unfortunately, Beason missed the FanFest scrimmage due to a sore Achilles. The Panthers lost unrestricted free agent CB Richard Marshall to the Arizona Cardinals, leaving the team with a hole at that position as of 7/30. The Panthers claimed cornerback Chevis Jackson off waivers and he was on the field Saturday 8/6/11 with his new team after being released by the Denver Broncos last week. Head coach Ron Rivera said it's too early to know how much time DT Ron Edwards will miss due to a torn triceps he suffered in practice 8/4/11. He hopes to have an answer about Edwards by Monday, August 8th.

Special Teams: Since the beginning of time, John Kasay was the Panthers kicker. But that changes this year, as the team no longer wanted to carry a second kicker to handle kickoffs, as they had done in recent years with Rhys Lloyd. They splurged in free agency on a kicker who has done well in both roles - Olindo Mare. The other two specialist jobs for the Panthers will remain the same as the last few years: J.J. Jansen will again be the long snapper and Jason Baker the punter and holder. Two undrafted rookies are serving as camp legs: kicker Adi Kunalic from Nebraska and punter Anthony Santella from Illinois.

Panthers Depth Chart

QB: Cam Newton, Jimmy Clausen, Derek Anderson, Tony Pike

RB: DeAngelo Williams, Jonathan Stewart, Mike Goodson (3RB/KR), Tyrell Sutton

FB: Tony Fiammetta, Richie Brockel

WR: Steve Smith, David Gettis, Brandon LaFell, Armanti Edwards (KR), David Clowney, Legedu Naanee, Kealoha Pilaes, Wallace Wright, Darvin Adams, Jamorris Warren

TE: Greg Olsen, Jeremy Shockey, Ben Hartsock, Gary Barnidge

K: Olindo Mare, Adi Kunalic

DT: Nick Hayden, Sione Fua (NT), Terrell McClain, Corey Irvin (NT), Andre Neblett, Louis Ellis, Ron Edwards (inj)

DE: Charles Johnson, Greg Hardy, Everette Brown, Ugo Chinasa

MLB: Jon Beason (W), Dan Connor

OLB: Thomas Davis (W), James Anderson (S), Omar Gaither, Jordan Senn (S/W) (RFA), Jason Williams (W) (inj), Eric Norwood (S), Lawrence Wilson

CB: Chris Gamble (inj), Captain Munnerlyn (PR), Robert McClain, Brandon Hogan (inj), Cletis Gordon, Chevi Jackson, R.J. Sanford, Kedric Burney

S: Charles Godfrey (SS), Sherrod Martin (FS), Kevin Payne, Sean Considine, Michael Greco, Jordan Pugh (inj)

Chicago Bears

QB: While Jay Cutler hasn't been the elite QB Bears fans were hoping for when they traded for him, he has still averaged 25 touchdowns per season and helped get the team to host the NFC Championship game last year. He enters camp fully recovered from the sprained MCL that knocked him out of that game and will look to build on a solid season under Mike Martz. The backup Caleb Hanie impressed a lot of observers with his play in that game and should have a solid grasp on the #2 job. The #3 job is most likely going to be held by Nathan Enderle, a 5th round pick out of Idaho who Martz seems to think highly of. Matt Gutierrez is also in camp after having served as a backup on three different NFL teams. If Enderle isn't ready to serve as the #3, they could try to put him on the practice squad and keep Gutierrez around. The main area to watch in the preseason here is probably the quality of protection that Cutler gets from his offensive line, which is likely going to be weakened thanks to the loss of Olin Kreutz. The Bears also traded away one of his favorite targets in Greg Olsen.

RB: Matt Forte rebounded to have another strong season in 2010 and now may be considering holding out of any preseason games to try and get a contract extension from the Bears. GM Jerry Angelo said the team has every intention of keeping him around so there is reason for optimism that a deal could get done quickly. The Bears added some quality depth to this position with the addition of Marion Barber in free agency. Barber is a power back who should complement Forte well and it will be interesting to see if he's given the goalline duties in the preseason. Chester Taylor is also back to compete for the #2 job, but he did not perform very well in 2010 and may need a strong camp to hold off Barber. Another interesting player to watch in camp is Harvey Unga, who was added in the supplemental draft last year but suffered a season-ending injury in training camp.

WR: This is a group that should have plenty of competition in the preseason. The team's leading receiver last year was Johnny Knox, but he was lining up with the backups in practice this week. The newcomer to the group, Roy Williams, has experience in the Martz system from his time with Detroit and

appears to have already passed Knox on the depth chart. "You don't bring a Roy Williams in here to sit on the bench," said receivers coach Darryl Drake. "Johnny did some real good things last year. He had some nice numbers. But he still has a long ways to go." It will be worth watching to see what type of chemistry Williams and Cutler have together and whether he can start to live up to some of the high expectations that people have had for him since he was taken with a top-10 draft pick. Devin Hester seemed to regress last year when you look at his numbers, but the coaches think it was primarily due to them not finding ways to take full advantage of his abilities. According to head coach Lovie Smith and Mike Martz, he'll be a much bigger part of the offense this year and Jay Cutler has already been singling him out for having an unbelievable camp. The 4th key player in the mix for significant playing time is Earl Bennett who became the primary possession target last year and figures to take on a similar role this year, especially now that Greg Olsen has been traded to Carolina. Sam Hurd looks like a safe bet for the #5 WR job thanks to his experience, size, and strong play on special teams.

TE: Greg Olsen hauled in 101 receptions and 13 touchdowns over the past two seasons but was traded to Carolina this summer so training camp will be used to find his replacement. The Bears have been developing Kellen Davis for the past three years and he should be ready to take on a bigger role in the offense. He's a strong blocker, but fantasy owners will likely want to pay attention to him in the preseason to see whether he's likely to be anything more than a red zone threat who catches a ball or two per game. Matt Spaeth also looks like a potential starter based on the 3-year, \$7 million contract he signed, but he has primarily been used as a blocker during his time in Pittsburgh. Desmond Clark is also back after signing a 1-year deal, and although he was barely used last year, he is probably the player most similar to Olsen among the three options.

Defense: There hasn't been a whole lot of change on this side of the ball so it should be mostly business as usual. The addition of Julius Peppers last year had a huge impact on the Bears defense and helped Israel Idonije to a breakout 8-sack season on the other side of the line. One significant change was the release of Tommie Harris, and it looks like there will be some competition to replace him among a group of players that includes Amobi Okoye, Henry Melton, and Matt Toeaina. Brian Urlacher and Lance Briggs form one of the best linebacker tandems in the league and it looks like Nick Roach will get a chance to start on the strongside, but there is very little depth behind them. In the secondary, the top-5 corners all return while the team will try to get by without Danieal Manning at safety. Major Wright looks like the favorite to replace him in the starting lineup, but rookie Christopher Conte also could compete for playing time right away.

Special Teams: Two of the three Bears starting specialists remain the same - long snapper Patrick Mannelly and kicker Robbie Gould. The change is at punter/holder where the team parted ways with Brad Maynard and snagged Adam Podlesh from the Jaguars via free agency. ST Coordinator Dave Toub noted, "[Podlesh] was always our No. 1 guy. As soon as we were able to call him, we tried to recruit him. He fits us. He's

very athletic, he runs a 4.4, he's got great hands, and he's a directional punter. He's a young Maynard is what he is. He's reaching his prime right now." Undrafted rookie Spencer Lanning out of South Carolina is the camp leg for both kicking and punting.

Bears Depth Chart

QB: Jay Cutler, Caleb Hanie, Matt Gutierrez, Nathan Enderle
RB: Matt Forte, Marion Barber, Chester Taylor, Kahlil Bell, Harvey Unga
FB: Will Ta'ufou
WR: Devin Hester (PR), Johnny Knox (KR), Roy Williams, Earl Bennett, Sam Hurd, Dane Sanzenbacher, Onrea Jones, Jimmy Young
TE: Kellen Davis, Matt Spaeth, Desmond Clark
K: Robbie Gould
DT: Anthony Adams (NT), Matt Toeaina, Henry Melton, Stephen Paea, Marcus Harrison (NT), Amobi Okoye, Averell Spicer, Tank Tyler
DE: Julius Peppers, Israel Idonije, Corey Wootton, Vernon Gholston, Corbin Bryant
MLB: Brian Urlacher
OLB: Lance Briggs (W), Nick Roach (S), Hunter Hillenmeyer (S), Brian Iwuh, J.T. Thomas, Chris Johnson, Patrick Trahan
CB: Charles Tillman, Tim Jennings, Corey Graham, D.J. Moore, Zackary Bowman (inj), Joshua Moore
S: Chris Harris (FS), Major Wright (SS), Craig Steltz (SS/FS), Christopher Conte (FS), Dom DeCicco (SS), Anthony Walters (FS), Winston Venable (SS)

Cincinnati Bengals

QB: Though Marvin Lewis returns as the head coach, the Bengals are undergoing significant changes on the offensive side of the ball. As expected, Carson Palmer will not return to the Bengals and Mike Brown won't trade him. New offensive coordinator Jay Gruden brings his own flavor of the West Coast offense to Cincinnati. With him are two new quarterbacks, rookie Andy Dalton and veteran Bruce Gradkowski, who knows Gruden's offense well. The Bengals will give Dalton every opportunity to win the starting job in camp and are giving him over 50% of the offensive reps early. Gradkowski, who has been plagued by injury, would serve as a transitional body if Dalton isn't ready for opening weekend. Early reports on Dalton have been mixed. Though he's seemed to have some chemistry with fellow rookie A.J. Green, he's also been lost at times against the varied fronts and blitzes that defensive coordinator Mike Zimmer is installing on defense. Dan LeFevour and Jordan Palmer will compete for the third quarterback job.

RB: Cedric Benson will be back as the team's featured back this year. The Bengals were likely Benson's best option in free agency from the beginning, but a misdemeanor assault charge shortly before free agency began likely limited any other possible landing spots. Though Lewis has again said that the team needs to find ways to use Bernard Scott, expect Benson to

get the majority of the work on early downs. In Gruden's offense, which should feature more screen plays and check down passes, Benson's reception count could see a small, but significant increase. Scott will wait in the wings again as an electric change of pace option with upside. Brian Leonard was brought back and should again be the team's primary back on passing downs. Cedric Peerman and Jay Finley will compete for one roster spot.

WR: The Bengals overhauled the wide receiver group this offseason. Out are Terrell Owens, the team's most consistent receiver last year, and Chad Ochocinco, who was traded for a pair of late round draft picks. In are first round draft pick A.J. Green and former second round pick Jerome Simpson, who flashed at the end of 2010. Green has already drawn high praise in camp for his hands and ability to beat close coverage. He's a lock to start and should lead the team in targets by a comfortable margin. Simpson will get the first chance to play opposite Green. Jordan Shipley will return as the team's slot receiver and should be kept busy as a security blanket of sorts in Gruden's offense. Andre Caldwell will see time in spread sets and would be the first option to move up the depth chart if Simpson struggles.

TE: Jermaine Gresham had a solid, though inconsistent, rookie season. The new offense should fit his skills well and he'll likely be frequently targeted down the seam and in the red zone. The Bengals do not have much depth behind Gresham. Chase Coffman has been a major disappointment thus far, but he'll get another chance to prove himself as a pass-catching TE in this offense. The team signed Bo Scaife as camp began, but he'll be a significant downgrade from Reggie Kelly as a blocker.

Defense: The Bengals will be without two key pieces of their 2010 defense. Corner Johnathan Joseph signed with Houston in free agency, a move that surprised and disappointed Mike Zimmer. Adam Jones, who again struggled with off-field troubles this summer, will be counted upon to replace Joseph. The team has also chosen to move on from veteran Dhani Jones at MLB. It's hoped that Rey Mauluga can play disciplined and anchor the huddle in his place. The Bengals are stocked with young talent along the front seven, with Carlos Dunlap and Michael Johnson expected to build on the pass rushing presence they provided in the second half of 2010.

Special Teams: Kevin Huber heads into his third season as the Bengals punter and holder. Clark Harris was brought in part way through 2009 and remains the long snapper. At kicker, although Mike Nugent is coming off a season ending torn ACL it doesn't appear to be an issue. Through the first week of camp he had not missed a single field goal. ST coordinator Darrin Simmons noted, "I like his mental state more than anything. It's important for him to have success early on but right now his confidence has to be as high as its been." Undrafted rookie kicker Thomas Weber from Arizona State is the camp leg.

Bengals Depth Chart

QB: Andy Dalton, Bruce Gradkowski, Jordan Palmer (RFA), Dan LeFevour

RB: Cedric Benson, Bernard Scott (KR), Cedric Peerman, Jay

Finley

FB: Brian Leonard, Chris Pressley, Steve Johnson

WR: A.J. Green, Jerome Simpson, Jordan Shipley, Andre Caldwell, Ryan Whalen, Quan Cosby (PR), Andrew Hawkins

TE: Jermaine Gresham, Bo Scaife, Chase Coffman, John Nalbone, Colin Cochart

K: Mike Nugent, Thomas Weber

DT: Domata Peko (NT), Tank Johnson, Pat Sims, Geno Atkins (NT), Clinton McDonald

DE: Robert Geathers, Michael Johnson (S/DE), Carlos Dunlap, Frostee Rucker, Victor Adeyanju

MLB: Rey Mauluga, Roddrick Muckelroy (inj)

OLB: Keith Rivers (W) (inj), Manny Lawson (S), Dan Scuta (S), Thomas Howard (W), Dontay Moch (S), Brandon Johnson, Vincent Rey, DeQuin Evans

CB: Leon Hall, Nate Clements, Jonathan Wade, Adam Jones, Morgan Trent, Fred Bennett, Corey Lindsey, Brandon Ghee, Rico Murray

S: Reggie Nelson (FS/CB), Chris Crocker (SS), Gibril Wilson (SS), Tom Nelson (FS), Robert Sands, Jeromy Miles, Brian Lainhart

Cleveland Browns

QB: For the first time in the past three years, the Browns enter camp with an established starter at quarterback. Colt McCoy, who spent the offseason recovering from shoulder and ankle injuries, will be behind center as the team transitions to Pat Shurmur's West Coast offense. The new philosophy should be a better fit for McCoy, who doesn't have the arm strength to be successful in a downfield passing attack. Shurmur praised McCoy for making significant progress in the new offense during the first week of camp, but acknowledged that there was a "lot of work" yet to be done. Seneca Wallace will be the backup. Both McCoy and Wallace were able to throw two touchdown passes during the team's weekend scrimmage, but have noted that they need more reps to improve the timing with the receivers.

RB: Peyton Hillis wore down late last season after breaking out as the team's primary ball carrier. The team had hoped to spell him more frequently with Montario Hardesty, who missed all of last season with a torn ACL, this year. Despite favorable reports about his recovery leading up to camp, Hardesty was unable to take many snaps as camp began. Team observers have openly wondered whether he may have had a setback in his recovery or already suffered another injury. Hardesty didn't participate in the team's scrimmage and isn't expected back until late this week at the earliest. With Hardesty struggling, the team signed former Green Bay back Brandon Jackson. Jackson is already taking reps with the second team and is capable enough as a receiver and pass blocker to allow the Browns to rest Hillis on third downs.

WR: Rookie Greg Little has the most talent on the wide receiver depth chart and is getting lots of reps with the first team as the Browns put him through a crash course to get him ready to start by opening weekend. Little had an up and down

first week of camp, struggling through drops at times but also showing good strength and body control in red zone drills and during the team's scrimmage. He's likely to be the Browns' best fantasy option at WR. Mohamed Massaquoi is expected to start alongside Little, but hasn't yet been able to practice after coming to camp with an ankle injury. Brian Robiskie and Josh Cribbs will compete for time in spread sets. Cribbs will need to transition quickly in the new offense, which won't feature the Wildcat and has few downfield routes. Cribbs was aligned in the backfield at times and put in motion as a receiver. Carlton Mitchell remains a favorite of the Cleveland front office, but isn't likely to see the field much until he proves himself as a more consistent route runner underneath.

TE: Ben Watson returns as the team's primary tight end. He built good chemistry with McCoy last year. Evan Moore will again see the bulk of his snaps in spread sets split off the line as a receiver. If the receivers cannot stay healthy or separate on underneath routes in the West Coast offense, Moore could see many snaps out of the slot. Rookie Jordan Cameron may be the most talented pass catcher on the roster, and was impressive early in camp while taking first team reps in place of Watson (who missed time with a concussion) and Moore (unable to practice due to free agency rules and the CBA). Cameron missed the scrimmage with a hamstring injury, however, and may not be able to return to practice until later this week.

Defense: The Browns will transition back to a 4-3 defense under new coordinator Dick Jauron. The defensive line will be a work in progress outside. Rookie Jabaal Sheard and former rotational players Marcus Benard, Jayme Mitchell and Brian Schaefering will compete for snaps. The team likes the pass rush upside of Benard and Mitchell, but the group may be susceptible against the run. Ahtyba Rubin and Phil Taylor will be a solid defensive tackle duo. D'Qwell Jackson will anchor the defense at MLB. Joe Haden and T.J. Ward both played well as rookies last year and will be expected to continue their playmaking ways this year.

Special Teams: Long snapper Ryan Pontbriand is back, with no questions or concerns. But the other two specialist positions have already been in the spotlight during camp. When the lockout ended, amidst concerns that quietly disgruntled Phil Dawson might not sign his franchise tag tender, the team signed Jeff Wolfert – the second most accurate kicker in NCAA history and most recently having kicked in the UFL. Dawson has however since signed his contract and rejoined the team. At punter/holder, Reggie Hodges won't be able to duplicate his breakthrough 2010 season after tearing his Achilles in practice the other day. Richmond McGee, most recently with the Bears, was subsequently signed after beating out Rob Long and Scott Crough in a tryout.

Browns Depth Chart

QB: Colt McCoy, Seneca Wallace, Troy Weatherhead
RB: Peyton Hillis, Montario Hardesty (inj), Brandon Jackson
FB: Owen Marecic, Jed Collins
WR: Greg Little, Brian Robiskie, Mohamed Massaquoi (inj), Carlton Mitchell, Josh Cribbs (KR/PR), Demetrius Williams, Jordan Norwood, Chris Mathews
TE: Ben Watson, Evan Moore, Jordan Cameron, Alex Smith

K: Phil Dawson
DT: Ahtyba Rubin (NT), Phil Taylor (NT), Derreck Robinson, Travis Ivey
DE: Brian Schaefering, Jabaal Sheard, Marcus Benard, Jayme Mitchell, Kyle Anderson
MLB: D'Qwell Jackson, Titus Brown
OLB: Chris Gocong (W), Scott Fujita (S), Kaluka Maiava, Matt McCoy, Steve Octavien, Brian Smith, Sidney Tarver
CB: Sheldon Brown, Joe Haden, Dimitri Patterson, Quincy Butler, Buster Skrine, Chris Roberson, Carl Gettis
S: T.J. Ward (SS), Usama Young (FS), Mike Adams (FS), Ray Ventrone (SS), Eric Hagg

Dallas Cowboys

QB: Tony Romo is off to a blistering start in training camp, showing no ill effects from last year's broken collarbone. The annual Blue-White intrasquad scrimmage showcased Romo's abilities – he completed 16-of-20 passes for 150 yards with three touchdown passes. He followed that up with an 18-for-21 performance in Monday's practices. Jon Kitna has also looked sharp, which should be no surprise given how well he played last year in Romo's stead. 3rd stringer Stephen McGee hasn't looked as sharp as he did a year ago, and needs to turn up the dial if he's to be assured a roster spot. The Cowboys did claim Tom Brandstater off waivers, but he's a long shot to stick beyond the first round of camp cuts. The offensive line remains in flux, as Kyle Kosier was moved to right guard, swapping positions with rookie David Arkin. Once Montrae Holland returns (back), Kosier will move back to the left side. Most impressively, rookie RT Tyron Smith has looked like the real deal – showing good lateral movement and the ability to hold up at the point of attack. Head coach Jason Garrett was particularly impressed with how well Smith handled OLB Anthony Spencer during the Blue-White scrimmage: "It seemed like he didn't seem in awe of the situation in any way. He's been blocking these guys throughout camp, so it seemed like he responded fairly well to it."

RB: Dallas is hoping to rectify the RB situation in 2011 by injecting some new blood in the form of rookie DeMarco Murray, in place of the departed Marion Barber. Unfortunately, Murray has been sidelined with a hamstring injury that is all too evocative of the nicks and bruises that kept him from being optimally effective as a collage tailback. Making matters worse, Tashard Choice is set to miss several weeks after hurting his calf. Dallas beat writer Tim MacMahon **thinks Choice could be in danger of losing his roster spot**, in favor of 2nd year tailback Lonyae Miller. That would be a mild surprise, as many fantasy owners are targeting Choice as an end game sleeper pickup. Miller starred in the Blue-White scrimmage, as both a receiver and inside runner. "When we first got Lonyae it was hard not to like his physical ability," Coach Garrett said. "He's a big kid, can run, he's physically tough, and we knew all of that. As he's progressed in our system, he's really grown a lot, particularly from the middle of last year on." At the top of the depth chart (and most important to fantasy owners) is Felix Jones – who so far has been healthy,

explosive and productive. If he can maintain the same level of intensity he's shown through 12 days of practice, he may finally live up to his potential and deliver valuable fantasy production in return.

WR: Starter Miles Austin re-worked his contract in order to help Dallas get under the salary cap, but otherwise has had a quiet start to camp. It's business as usual, with Austin looking every bit the Cowboys best receiver, as he's been in each of the last two years. That's not to sell Dez Bryant short. Bryant's offseason soap opera notwithstanding, he has been productive and controversy free thus far in training camp. There's absolutely no question that Austin and Bryant are going to be on the field the majority of the time once we get to the regular season – which is why we can expect both to see very limited work during the preseason slate. Dallas may be in the market for a veteran backup, because right now the 3rd stringer is Kevin Ogletree and there's not much beyond that. Ogletree has shown flashes thus far, and may be living up to his reputation as a "gamer." If you track the Cowboys practice reports, Ogletree hasn't been consistently sharp, but in the Blue-White scrimmage, he looked pitch perfect.

TE: Jason Witten is one of the Cowboys veteran leaders, and the first week-plus of camp haven't been very eventful for him. He's healthy, in shape, and clearly happy to have Tony Romo back at the helm. We know what to expect from Witten once the bell rings, so these next few weeks are just about keeping him healthy. Martellus Bennett has been maddening, flashing over-the-top athleticism at times yet showing lapses in judgment (on and off the field) far too often. Coach Garrett spoke to the issue, "The thing for guys is to be a consistent, dependable player. Do it play in and play out. Game in and game out. Day in and day out...He's clearly shown he's doing that better and better, and more and more. I thought he made great strides last year during the season in the role he was given and hopefully he can continue to expand that role." John Phillips all but displaced Bennett last year before hurting his knee, and could easily overtake him this year unless Bennett maintains focus.

Defense: The new-look Rob Ryan defense didn't impress in the Blue-White scrimmage, as Tony Romo dissected the starting unit for 3 TDs and 150 yards on 20 attempts. Ryan – the Cowboys new defensive coordinator – put all the blame on himself: "We don't like giving up points," Ryan said. "Sometimes it happens. That is the way it is. But put it on me. I dusted off a couple of calls we hadn't worked on. Put it on me, it's my fault. The players will be fine." In spite of struggling in the scrimmage, some of the Cowboys new additions have looked good. Safety Abram Elam – who played for Ryan in Cleveland – has been making plays, including shutting down of Jason Witten in a series of red zone drills this week. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the cornerback position – where starter Terence Newman is out at least four to six weeks with a groin injury. Sean Lissmore, a rotational defensive lineman, was a bright spot during the scrimmage – notching two sacks and a pass defense. LB Bradie James is going to be the quarterback of the defense, and he'll be the one calling plays and hearing input from Ryan through the earpiece helmet.

Special Teams: The Cowboys head into August with a league high seven specialists. At long snapper is veteran starter L.P. Ladouceur along with camp wrist rookie Corey Adams from Kansas State. At punter/holder is veteran starter Mat McBriar along with camp leg rookie Chris Jones from Carson Newman. The kicker position holds all the intrigue and competition. Incumbent David Buehler is back, looking good on kickoffs but struggling on field goals. Undrafted rookie Dan Bailey, the 2010 Lou Groza Award winner, from Oklahoma State has started camp very strong on field goals but not as well on kickoffs. That prompted owner Jerry Jones to state they could carry two kickers, although coach Jason Garrett said such talk is very premature. Further clouding the picture is the recent signing of injured undrafted rookie kicker Kai Forbath, the 2009 Lou Groza Award winner, from UCLA.

Cowboys Depth Chart

QB: Tony Romo, Jon Kitna, Stephen McGee

RB: Felix Jones, Tashard Choice (inj), Demarco Murray, Lonyae Miller

FB: Chris Gronkowski, Jason Pociask, Shaun Chapas

WR: Miles Austin, Dez Bryant, Kevin Ogletree, Dwayne Harris, Manny Johnson, Jesse Holley, Teddy Williams, Lyle Leong

TE: Jason Witten, Martellus Bennett, John Phillips, Martin Rucker

K: David Buehler, Dan Bailey, Kai Forbath

NT: Jay Ratliff, Josh Brent

DE: Marcus Spears, Igor Olshansky, Jason Hatcher, Kenyon Coleman, Jeremy Clark, Clifton Geathers, Sean Lissemore, Jimmy Saddler-McQueen

ILB: Bradie James, Keith Brooking, Sean Lee, Bruce Carter, Kenwin Cummings, Stephen Hodge

OLB: DeMarcus Ware (W), Anthony Spencer (S), Victor Butler (S), Brandon Williams (S), Mike Balogun (S)

CB: Terance Newman, Mike Jenkins, Orlando Scandrick (FS/CB), Bryan McCann (KR), Joshua Thomas, Mario Butler, Chris Randle

S: Gerald Sensabaugh (SS), Abram Elam (SS), Alan Ball (FS/CB) (RFA), Barry Church, Danny McCray, Akwasi Owusu-Ansah, Justin Taplin-Ross

Denver Broncos

QB: During the first week of camp, the "Tebow thing" was the dominant story as the Broncos failed to work out a deal to send Kyle Orton to the Dolphins. Any potential deal is dead for now leaving Orton as the team's starting QB and Tebow competing with Brady Quinn for the backup job. While the fans may want to see Tebow, those attending the practices like our own Cecil Lammey were quick to point out the clear difference between Orton and Tebow in practice. It looks like the Broncos will move forward with Orton as their starter. All three players had highlights during drills and scrimmaging. On Monday, Orton connected with Julius Thomas on the first play in the red zone for a TD. On Thursday, Tebow demonstrated his running ability on some designed run plays including a shotgun option play with Moreno trailing him for the pitch. In 7-on-7s, Orton hit Eddie Royal over the middle for a nice catch in traffic.

Quinn found Eron Riley for a big play on a deep post that created a stir on the sidelines. On Friday, Orton went deep to Royal for a 50-yarder on the first play of individual drills. In red zone action, Tebow found Moreno on a swing pass where he turned the corner and leapt into the end zone for a score. Tebow even had a chance to run his famous jump pass during the drills. Quinn connected with Thomas for a 60-yard catch and run as he split the safeties for a score. Newcomer David Anderson caught several short passes and was a popular target throughout the day. Orton completed all of his passes during 7-on-7s. Tebow did the same – his last throw a long pass to Matt Will over the middle.

RB: It didn't take long for the Broncos and Willis McGahee to find each other when free agency started. Thursday was the first practice for McGahee and all of the new free agents who signed. McGahee's first run fired up the crowd when he made a nice cut, found a hole and went for a big gain. Knowshon Moreno remains the starter with McGahee cleaning up at the goal line. Jeremiah Johnson is finally healthy and competing with Lendale White and Lance Ball for roster spots. Johnson has been among the best looking backs on the team. Johnson drew praise from RB coach Eric Studesville after a couple nice back-to-back runs in 9-on-7s. Johnson could surprise if an opportunity presents itself. Mario Fannin was carted off the field after spraining his knee during 9-on-7s and waived the next day. The Broncos filled his spot by claiming C.J. Gable off waivers from the Saints.

WR: Brandon Lloyd is picking up where he left off last year as a consistent play making presence. Lloyd showed no signs of falling back to Earth after finishing 2010 as the No. 1 WR. In Saturday's scrimmage, Lloyd had a nice catch over his head with Orton at QB. Shortly after that, they connected for a 40-yard score down the sideline with Andre' Goodman covering. On Friday, there was a slew of one-handed catches beginning with Lloyd on a fade route to the corner of the end zone from Orton. TE Dante Rosario had one during the team portion, a 20-yarder from Tebow that he tipped in the air to himself. Lloyd also had several other impressive catches on the day. Matt Willis and Britt Davis worked briefly with the first team. Willis had a pair of scores in red zone work, one from Orton and the other from Quinn. Royal's 50-yard bomb drew a big response from the crowd. Eric Decker first got everyone's attention rocking a Fu Manchu mustache, then later with a scooping catch over the middle. Orton found Royal on a quick post for a score as he beat the defense to the pylon, but moments later MLB Joe Mays jumped a pass to Royal for a pick. After Tebow was picked off by Syd'Quan Thompson, Quinn helped the offense rebound finding D'Andre Goodwin in the back of the end zone. On Thursday morning, Orton and Royal once again connected for a long score on a deep post. Tebow found Goodwin on a curl and he broke free for another long TD. Orton later rolled out and found Decker across the middle. Undrafted rookie Mark Dell had a nice grab on a go route from Tebow that made the crowd happy.

TE: Our own Cecil Lammey has been raving about rookie Julius Thomas, aka Orange Julius, noting he has **gone from a fourth rounder to running with the 1s to drawing double coverage in 5 days of camp**. He is still a raw rookie, who

needs to work on his blocking and route running, but his basketball background, size, athleticism, speed and awareness are spurring Antonio Gates v2 comparisons. Daniel Fells and Thomas are working with the first team, Dante Rosario with the second team. On Thursday, Fells made a nice sliding one-handed catch. On another play, Orton executed a play-action fake and found Thomas wide-open in the end zone for a 20-yard score.

Defense: The rookies made an early statement in the first few practices as safety Rahim Moore and MLB Nate Irving laid the wood. Moore stoned Knowshon Moreno at full-speed on one play while Irving got the best of Britt Davis over the middle during a seven-on-seven drill. LB Von Miller was immediately inserted on the strong side with the first team and quickly made his impression felt. He blew by RT Orlando Franklin into the backfield where he met Elvis Dumervil for a "sack". Miller flashed his speed and ability throughout practices. Darcel McBath popped Jamel Hamler as he went up for a catch during the team's scrimmage, while CB Syd'Quan Thompson had several picks, including one from Tim Tebow that he tipped to himself during one-on-one drills. Newly signed Ty Warren and Derrick Harvey ran with the second team defensive line in the first week of camp as Dumervil, Kevin Vickerson, Brodrick Bunkley and Robert Ayers ran with the ones.

Special Teams: Heading into 2011, the Broncos still have Lonie Paxton as their long snapper and Britton Colquitt as their punter/holder. They enter camp with two kickers on the roster – starter Matt Prater, whose 2010 ended on IR with a groin injury, and Steven Hauschka, his injury replacement. Prater, a restricted free agent, couldn't practice with team right away after resigning due to the post lockout rules, "I'd like to get as many reps as I can before we start playing games. Guess I'll get some work done outside the facility on my own." He has since rejoined the team and does not appear to be hampered by any lingering injury effects.

Broncos Depth Chart

QB: Kyle Orton, Tim Tebow, Brady Quinn, Adam Weber

RB: Knowshon Moreno (3RB), Willis McGahee (SD), Jeremiah Johnson, Lendale White, Lance Ball, Brandon Minor, C.J. Gable

FB: Spencer Larsen (LB), Kyle Eckel, Patrick Hill

WR: Brandon Lloyd, Eddie Royal (PR/KR), Eric Decker, Demaryius Thomas (inj), David Anderson, Britt Davis, Matthew Willis, Mark Dell, Jamel Hamler, D'Andre Goodwin, Eron Riley

TE: Daniel Fells, Julius Thomas, Dante Rosario, Virgil Green, Richard Quinn, Dan Gronkowski

K: Matt Prater, Steven Hauschka

DT: Ty Warren, Brodrick Bunkley, Kevin Vickerson, Louis Leonard, Ryan McBean, Marcus Thomas, Colby Whitlock, Ben Garland (res)

DE: Elvis Dumervil, Robert Ayers, Derrick Harvey, Jason Hunter, Jeremy Jarmon, David Veikune, Jeremy Beal

MLB: Joe Mays, Mario Haggan (M/S), Nate Irving, Mike Mohamed, Braxton Kelly

OLB: D.J. Williams (W), Von Miller (S), Wesley Woodyard (W), Lee Robinson (S), Deron Mayo

CB: Champ Bailey, Andre' Goodman (inj), Perrish Cox

(KR), Nathan Jones, Syd'quan Thompson, Cassius Vaughn, Brandon Bing
S: Brian Dawkins (SS), Rahim Moore (FS), David Bruton (SS), Darcel McBath (FS), Quinton Carter (FS), Kyle McCarthy

Detroit Lions

QB: The Lions opened camp last week and the biggest question they face is whether Matthew Stafford can stay healthy. Stafford, the first overall pick in the 2009 draft, had shoulder surgery after the season and the Lions are hopeful that his injuries will be a thing of the past. Stafford has high expectations for himself and his teammates. "I just want to get back into it and hopefully hit the ground running as fast as I can," Stafford said. "I won't alter my playing style at all. Injuries happen, that's part of the game. I think if I can stay healthy, I don't have to make any predictions. I feel my play will do the talking for me." Shaun Hill returns as Stafford's backup this season. Hill underwent minor back surgery in the off-season, but is fully healthy now. He played in 11 games last year, throwing for over 2600 yards with 16 TD passes. Drew Stanton returns as the third-string QB after signing a one-year contract with the Lions.

RB: The Lions received devastating news Monday when rookie Mikel Leshoure suffered a season-ending torn Achilles tendon. By all accounts, Leshoure was having an outstanding camp. "He was doing very well," Schwartz said. "Not only doing well running the football, but in the passing game, as a protector, special teams. He really made a good impression." Jahvid Best scored five TDs in his first two games last year and showed why the Lions traded up into the late first round to draft him. However, that success came screeching to a halt when Best suffered turf toe injuries on both feet, limited his quickness and cutting ability. "I definitely think it affected me," Best said. "There were a lot of cuts where I'm taking four or five steps to change direction." Best is fully healthy now and is showing the burst and quickness that he displayed in the first two games of last year. Maurice Morris has not yet practiced due to an injury. Unless the Lions acquire another RB, Morris is likely to back up Best. Aaron Brown will battle for a backup RB spot and contribute on special teams. Jerome Felton returns as the starting fullback.

WR: Calvin Johnson's combination of size, strength, and speed makes him extremely difficult to defend. To make matters worse for defenders, Johnson is adding bulk to generate even more power. "My trainer is trying to add some weight to my shoulders and my legs, just to generate more power, more explosion. I think it's going to pay off." Johnson said he added 5 pounds during the off-season. Nate Burleson returns for his second season with the Lions. Burleson, who signed a five-year contract prior to last season, caught 55 passes for 625 yards and 6 TDs. Rookie Titus Young adds an element of speed to the receiver corps. Young has not practiced since the first day of camp due to a leg injury. He is expected back in a few days. The Lions signed free agent Rashied Davis and he is expected to battle Derrick Williams for the final wide receiver spot. The

Lions signed veteran Maurice Stovall to a contract last week. Stefan Logan, the Lions primary kick and punt returner, rounds out the receiver group.

TE: Brandon Pettigrew suffered a torn ACL in his rookie season of 2009 and there were questions whether he would be ready to play at the beginning of last season. Pettigrew responded in a big way, catching 71 passes for 722 yards and four TDs. He is also a devastating run blocker. Tony Scheffler returns for his second season with the Lions. Scheffler gives the Lions flexibility because he can shift wide and create some matchup problems. Will Heller, a very good blocker, is the third TE.

Defense: Nick Fairley, the Lions first round draft pick, suffered a broken bone in his left foot. Fairley had surgery and the Lions said he would miss "a significant portion of training camp". Ndamukong Suh returns after a spectacular rookie season. Suh was named the NFL defensive rookie of the year and was a first-team All-Pro selection. Cliff Avril signed his one-year tender and joined the Lions in camp. Avril hopes to sign a long-term deal before the end of the season. The Lions signed free agent linebackers Stephen Tulloch and Justin Durant. They will join DeAndre Levy in what should be a much improved linebacker group. After playing on the right side the first two days of practice, Tulloch made his debut Saturday at middle linebacker. "It feels good," he said. "Obviously I've been playing it for a long time and that's my comfort zone. But I'm open to whatever the coaches want us to do. The Lions also shored up their secondary by signing free agent cornerback Eric Wright. He will start opposite Chris Houston, who resigned with the Lions last week. Safety Amari Spivey has been very impressive in camp. "He's looked great. He's in excellent shape, said Jim Schwartz. "His knowledge of the scheme is very good. I don't think he's made any mental errors. His technique is much better." Louis Delmas missed his second straight practice Saturday after having a screw removed from a finger on his right hand. He is expected to miss a few days.

Special Teams: Veteran long snapper Don Muhlbach does not have any competition in camp. Veteran kicker Jason Hanson and veteran punter/holder Nick Harris do. Hanson can certainly still kick, but he'll need to show no lingering effects from injuries that caused him to miss games each of the last two years. If his health is still questionable that could open the door for last year's injury replacement, journeyman Dave Rayner, to retain the job. Harris faces undrafted rookie challenger Ryan Donahue out of Iowa, one of the top rated punters in this year's class. Early results in camp have Harris keeping his job.

Lions Depth Chart

QB: Matthew Stafford, Shaun Hill, Drew Stanton, Zac Robinson

RB: Jahvid Best, Jerome Harrison, Maurice Morris (inj), Aaron Brown, Mike Bell, Ian Johnson, Mikel LeShoure (IR)

FB: Jerome Felton (RFA), Matt Clapp

WR: Calvin Johnson, Nate Burleson (PR), Titus Young, Rashied Davis, Maurice Stovall, Stefan Logan (KR/PR), Derrick Williams, Demario Ballard, Nate Hughes, Tim Toone, Marcus Harris, Dominique Barnes

TE: Brandon Pettigrew, Tony Scheffler, Will Heller, Richard

Dickson, Joe Jon Finley
K: Jason Hanson, Dave Rayner
DT: Ndamukong Suh, Corey Williams, Nick Fairley (inj), Sammie Lee Hill, Andre Fluellen (RFA), Quinn Pitcock, Montavious Stanley
DE: Kyle Vanden Bosch, Cliff Avril, Lawrence Jackson, Willie Young, Barry Turner, Keyunta Dawson, Greg Banks
MLB: Deandre Levy (W/M), Cobrani Mixon
OLB: Stephen Tulloch (M/W), Justin Durant (S), Ashlee Palmer (S), Bobby Carpenter (S/W), Douglas Hogue (W), Cody Brown, Isaiah Ekejiuba (W), DeJuan Fulghum, Quentin Davie
CB: Chris Houston, Eric Wright, Alphonso Smith (inj), Aaron Berry, Nathan Vasher, Brandon McDonald, Prince Miller, Paul Pratt, Marquise Liverpool
S: Louis Delmas (FS), Amari Spivey (SS), Erik Coleman (SS), Randy Phillips, John Wendling, Ricardo Silva

Green Bay Packers

QB: The Packers might have one of the hottest potential free agents on the market next year. Matt Flynn's value has improved considerably since his **impressive cameo** against the Patriots last year. Backing up Aaron Rodgers, Flynn remains focused on one thing: "I need to show that I'm continuing to grow as a quarterback, that I'm improving and playing better than I did the last preseason and playing better than I did against New England last year," Flynn said. "I'm looking to show that I'm not just staying the same." Vic Ketchman had some **superfluous praise** for Aaron Rodgers, saying he has "one of the best arms I have ever seen." Ketchman continued, "I knew he was good, but I didn't know he was this good. Up close, his physical skills are eye-popping. I haven't covered a quarterback that can throw a football with the skill I saw tonight since I covered Terry Bradshaw. I was also impressed by how powerfully built he is, especially in his lower body. He's got it all."

RB: If you're wondering if Ryan Grant will return to being the workhorse, as he was before breaking his ankle, then look no further than Head Coach Mike McCarthy. When asked if he hopes to use a tandem backfield, he said: "I hope so. It's a long season, 16 games, carrying the ball 20 to 25 times a game, that's a lot for one individual to go through. I hope to be spreading the ball around at every position, that's my goal." Consider that same philosophy to be applied to the receivers and, yes, Jermichael Finley. Most likely, McCarthy will ride the hot hand. Grant has been running first-string, but James Starks and Alex Green along with FB John Kuhn are looking for touches, too. 'You have a lot of backs to do it with. So if somebody's not doing what they're supposed to, I'm sure (McCarthy) will be able to count on any one of us,' said Starks, who went on a gluten-free diet to add 10-15 pounds of muscle in the offseason. "You saw James Starks at 100 percent in the playoffs. He is a little bigger," said McCarthy. "I think he looks more powerful than he did last year. He puts his foot down and gets to that second level. He's had a very good camp. He came in great shape." His expectations have grown, too. "They're a

lot higher," Starks said. "I've seen everything now having gone to the big show. I've played in some of the toughest games. I've been hit by some of the biggest players. My expectations are high now. I've gotten stronger. I want to lay some hits now." Starks is running with a lower center of gravity and finishing his run off with fervor. In one practice, he cracked safety Nick Collins instead of running out of bounds. On another run, he steam-rolled Anthony Bratton. FB Quinn Johnson reported overweight. Former Packers great and all-time leading rusher Ahman Green announced his retirement on Friday.

WR: Hip flexors were a prevalent theme in the opening week of camp. Greg Jennings, CB Tramon Williams along with TEs Andrew Quarless and Tom Crabtree all miss practices with hip injuries. With Jennings sidelined for a bit, Randall Cobb earned some extra reps. Cobb is working as all three receiver positions plus returns, but his ideal position may be in the slot. "I don't really see myself just being a slot guy," he said. "I can go outside too. All it is is making sure I understand the plays." Cobb **dazzled** onlookers with his speed, hands, and athleticism throughout the first week. Donald Driver has looked good. Jordy Nelson had the longest catch on Friday during 11-on-11 drills. He beat CB Josh Gordy and Chuck Woodson for a long completion from quarterback Aaron Rodgers. With Jennings out, Donald Driver made several grabs. Recently re-signed James Jones **is determined** to get his drops under control. When asked what he needs to improve on, Jones replied, "Just drops... I make no excuses for it. If he threw it to me again, I'd catch it. But last year was one of those years I let a couple go. This year I plan on not doing that."

TE: Jermichael Finley reported to camp at 240 pound and in good shape. The coaches weren't concerned noting that he'll add some weight when camp is over. Finley is anxious to play a 16-game slate, but if he breaks down again, the Packers have rookie D.J. Williams for depth now. Williams isn't much of a blocker, but he catches everything with his 10 3/8" hands. Tom Crabtree is also moving better than he did last summer. Williams, Crabtree and Andrew Quarless are competing for what is likely to be three spot. Quarless is the top backup for now having played extensively following Finley's season-ending injury last year, but Williams is more athletic, more capable of filling Finley's role should Finley succumb to injury again this season.

Defense: Charles Woodson is fully healthy after breaking his collarbone in the Super Bowl. He has fully practiced and barely missed a snap during Friday's 11-on-11 drills. Woodson helped filled the void created by injuries to Tramon Williams and Davon House, or he just wanted the extra reps. Woodson **has forced more turnovers** than any player in the league since 2006. House got off to a good start on Wednesday when he shot the gap and broke up a pass from Rodgers intended for Jennings in the end zone. He added an interception on Thursday and has done a nice job shedding blockers. "I'm out there playing fast," House said. On Wednesday, Morgan Burnett rejoined the first team at strong safety. He didn't take long to make a play either as he established position in press man against Finley near the sideline to break up a fade in the end zone. The Packers signed reserve, special teams LB K.C. Asiodu on Wednesday. Erik Walden, Frank Zombo and Brad

Jones are competing for the ROLB job opposite Clay Matthews. Walden looks to have the early edge after wreaking havoc against the team's left tackles and consistently showing well by gaining leverage at the point of attack and holding his own. On another play, Walden showed some coverage skills against FB John Kuhn on a third-down play at the end of Friday's practice. Linebackers coach Kevin Greene has been visibly excited following many of his plays.

Special Teams: The Packers enter camp with three specialists, all the same starters as last year. Brett Goode is back at long snapper and punter/holder Tim Masthay is coming off a 2010 season where he finished strong during the playoffs. Kicker Mason Crosby became a free agent under the new CBA; however the team quickly re-signed him to a new 5-year deal. ST coordinator Shawn Slocum said of Crosby, "Mason's been very solid. The one quality I think is really good is he rarely misses two in a row.... He needs to take the next step in his future making walk-off field goals. I would like our kicker to be 90%.... We have a difficult place to kick in Lambeau."

Packers Depth Chart

QB: Aaron Rodgers, Matt Flynn, Graham Harrell

RB: Ryan Grant, James Starks, Alex Green, Dimitri Nance, Brandon Saine

FB: John Kuhn, Quinn Johnson, Jon Hoese

WR: Greg Jennings, Donald Driver, James Jones, Jordy Nelson (KR), Randall Cobb (KR), Brett Swain, Tori Gurley, Antonio Robinson, Shaky Smithson, Kerry Taylor, Diondre Borel, Chastin West

TE: Jermichael Finley, Andrew Quarless, D.J. Williams, Tom Crabtree, Spencer Havner, Ryan Taylor

K: Mason Crosby

NT: B.J. Raji, Howard Green (NT/DE), Jay Ross

DE: Ryan Pickett (DE/NT), C.J. Wilson, Jarius Wynn, Mike Neal, Lawrence Guy, Eli Joseph, Chris Donaldson, Johnny Jolly (susp)

ILB: Desmond Bishop (R), A.J. Hawk (L), Rob Francois, K.C. Asiodu

OLB: Clay Matthews (L), Frank Zombo (R), Erik Walden (L), Brad Jones, Diyral Briggs (R), D.J. Smith, Rick Elmore, Jamari Lattimore, Vic So'oto

CB: Charles Woodson, Tramon Williams (PR), Sam Shields, Pat Lee (inj), Brandon Underwood, Davon House, Jarrett Bush, Josh Gordy, Josh Bell (RFA)

S: Nick Collins (FS), Morgan Burnett (SS), Charlie Peprah (SS), Anthony Bratton, M.D. Jennings, Anthony Levine

Houston Texans

QB: In a lockout-shortened season, teams like the Texans have a decided advantage returning all of their skilled offensive players and coaching staff. For Matt Schaub, not much changes except the competition behind him for the backup spots. Dan Orlovsky was released last week when the team re-signed Matt Leinart after adding T.J. Yates in the fifth round out of North Carolina. Until Leinart was allowed to practice, Yates was the only QB behind Schaub, meaning the practice reps were

plentiful. "I tell you what, if you want to pick out a guy that's made the most improvement from practice one to two, it was him," said Head Coach Gary Kubiak after Tuesday's morning practice. "It was a tough situation, asking a rookie quarterback to run the second and the third group the first day of camp and he's never had a rep. He had a tough day yesterday, but I told him this morning when we walked on the field, 'You're a second-year pro today, so you better be better,' and he was better. Yates was a four-year starter at UNC, where he set 37 records playing in an offense partially based on the Texans. "T.J. has been down here since the draft working out with us, so being together and just talking through things, I feel like he really grabbed on to the offense really well," Schaub said. "He had a lot of similar things from North Carolina that we do here, but he gets a ton of reps – more than I think most rookie quarterbacks in his position get; I know a whole lot more than I got when I was in Atlanta. But he's doing really well."

RB: Arian Foster took the league by storm last year as the second undrafted back to lead the league in rushing with 1,616 yards. It didn't take him long to make an impact in camp either. Unfortunately, it was short-lived. On his first carry in 11-on-11 drills, Foster **blew through a hole** and sprinted 35 yards to the end zone. "They're supposed to finish everything," RBs coach Chic Harris said. "We expect them to finish hard on every play." The only problem was that Foster finished the run by grabbing his left hamstring. "He looked dang good this morning in the 40 minutes he practiced," Kubiak said. "I know he's had a good offseason. I know he worked really hard, and I think he'll be fine. Hopefully it's just a strain and we're OK." Foster said he just needs rest and that there is no reason to be concerned. His leg was heavily wrapped as he watched the team's second practice and Kubiak expects him to miss a few days. "Knee injuries are frightening," said Foster. "I think anytime you have a hamstring injury, you have to rest it. Hamstrings are part of the business." The injury highlights a potentially important battle to see who will be his primary backup. Veteran Derrick Ward is in the catbird seat working with the starters during Foster's absence with Steve Slaton third and Ben Tate fourth on the depth chart. Ward's versatility is a plus, although Tate is healthy again and hoping to move his way back up the depth chart. "He's **mended well**," said Harris. "You can see his speed and quickness. He hasn't lost it. It seems like Ben has been doing good work in the offseason because he is in good shape." Tate switched to No. 44, the number worn by former FB Vonta Leach. Foster will miss the league's best blocking fullback, but the Texans signed Lawrence Vickers, who grew up 13 miles from Reliant Stadium, and they're giving TE James Casey the first shot at the job.

WR: The top three spots are secure with Andre Johnson, Kevin Walter and Jacoby Jones, but the competition for the remaining spots is wide open. The team released David Anderson last week and Jones wasn't allowed to practice most of the week due to the free agency rules. Johnson also missed two days with a dislocated finger (his bone actually broke the skin), so the young receivers in camp all got more reps. Rookie Jeff Maehl is one of those players who caught Kubiak's attention. "He reminds me of David (Anderson) a little bit in college," Kubiak said. "He plays in the slot, makes a lot of plays. That's probably where his concentration is going to be with us doing

some of those types of things inside. He's a guy that a lot of things say no, but when you cut the film on him and start working 11-on-11, he just tends to make plays. We'll give him an opportunity. He's going to have to do some things for (special teams coordinator) Joe (Marciano) also." Maehl knows that specials teams play will be what butters his bread, too. "You have to be on special teams first and foremost, something that I was fortunate enough to do a lot of at Oregon, so they know I can do that," said Maehl, a first-team All-Pac-10 selection last year. During the lockout, second-year WR Dorin Dickerson spent time working with Larry Fitzgerald, a fellow former Pitt Panther. "I was just working on my routes and trying to become a better receiver every day and just working hard," Dickerson said. His **weight is up to 225** at the moment, but he expects to lose that quickly. Rookie Terrence Toliver is hard to miss. The Hempstead, TX native is an imposing 6'5, 203 pounds and a former five-star recruit who has some extra incentive after going undrafted out of LSU. "It made me more hungry," he said. "I feel like I have a lot to prove. I'm learning from the best, Andre Johnson, and I'm ready to practice tomorrow."

TE: The flu bug struck the team last week as Owen Daniels, (Andre) Johnson and rookie LB Steven Friday were sent home to rest and recuperate. Daniels missed Friday's practice with the stomach virus, but got off to a strong start earlier in the week. After recovering from knee surgery in camp last year, Daniels is fully healthy again and looking to regain his prominent role as the second target behind Johnson in the Texans offense. "He's had a **great first few days**," Schaub said. "Last year he was mainly working with the trainers, trying to come back, then during the season he was in and out of the lineup with that hamstring (pull). It was hard to get in a rhythm with him. So it's just huge to have him out here with a full offseason under his belt. Working with him on our own (during the lockout), I know he's ready to go."

Defense: Star ILB Brian Cushing is **on the mend** after undergoing knee surgery in January (patella tendon). To aid his recovery, Cushing lost 10 pounds. "I feel great," he said. "I'm quicker and faster. I'm almost ready to go. It was a six-month (rehab) process." Kubiak likes what he has seen so far, but also expressed some caution: "He's come a long way this past week. I don't think you're going to see him in the next couple days, but I don't think he's very far away. I don't want to put a timetable on it. He's definitely a few days away." First-round pick J.J. Watt made his presence felt immediately. The sculpted 6-6, 290 pounder was inserted at left end with the first team in the team's first practice and wasted no time doing what he does best – disrupting plays, knocking down passes. "The thing I noticed is in college is he just made a lot of plays, knocked balls down," Kubiak said. "When they needed a big play, he made the play – a big sack, blocked field goals. He comes out here and today I think he knocked two balls down in a drill. He's an effort player... He's been asked to do a lot, but that's why we brought him here." The Texans added depth later in the week with the signing of ILB Tim Dobbins, who also played under Wade Phillips in San Diego as a rookie in 2006.

Special Teams: Veteran punter Matt Turk is gone via free agency to the Jaguars. Competing to fill that role are veteran

fee agent Brad Maynard from the Bears and undrafted rookie Brett Hartman from Central Michigan. Whoever wins the job will work as the holder with kicker Neil Rackers and long snapper Jon Weeks. Rackers is working on welcoming the newcomers with food as he had been taught by Doug Pelfrey, "Doug took me out to eat a lot. We did things together. He was a stellar guy, just phenomenal. If you make someone feel comfortable, it will be easier for him to do his job, so that's what I'm trying to do."

Texans Depth Chart

QB: Matt Schaub, Matt Leinart, T.J. Yates

RB: Arian Foster, Derrick Ward, Ben Tate, Steve Slaton (KR), Chris Ogbonnaya

FB: James Casey (TE), Lawrence Vickers, Zac Puga

WR: Andre Johnson, Kevin Walter, Jacoby Jones, Dorin Dickerson, Terrence Tolliver, Jeff Maehl, Paul Williams, Derrick Townsel, Lestar Jean, Trindon Holliday (KR)

TE: Owen Daniels, Joel Dreessen, Garrett Graham (inj), Anthony Hill

K: Neil Rackers

NT: Earl Mitchell, Shaun Cody

DE: J.J. Watt, Antonio Smith, Tim Jamison, Damione Lewis

ILB: DeMeco Ryans, Brian Cushing, Darryl Sharpton, Tim Dobbins, Xavier Adibi

OLB: Mario Williams (inj), Connor Barwin, Brooks Reed, Stanford Kegl, Jesse Nading, Cheta Ozougwu, Bryan Braman

CB: Johnathan Joseph, Kareem Jackson, Jason Allen, Brice McCain, Brandon Harris, Rashad Carmichael, Sherrick McManis, Antwaun Molden

S: Danieal Manning (FS), Glover Quin (SS), Troy Nolan (SS), Quintin Demps (FS), Dominique Barber (SS), Shilo Keo, Torri Williams

Indianapolis Colts

QB: Peyton Manning (neck) opened camp on the physically unable to perform list along with WR Blair White (back). Manning worked on the side and according to the Indianapolis Star, he was running and throwing with good velocity. The Colts have not provided a clear timetable for his return, but the common belief is that he will certainly be ready before the regular season. Of course, Manning recently inked a new contact that reduced his 2011 cap hit from \$23m as the team's franchise player to a cool \$16m allowing the team to get under the cap and ostensibly re-sign Joseph Addai. Manning made it clear to management that he was willing to provide the team relief and that bringing Addai back was a priority. The total deal is for five years and worth \$90 million. Curtis Painter, Nate Davis and recently signed Dan Orlovsky are all getting extra work while Manning continues to work his way back. Unofficially, Painter was 16-of-22 for 163 yards while Orlovsky was 16-of-25 for 158 yards and an interception in Saturday's mock game.

RB: Injuries have been nagging at Joseph Addai limiting him to 34 starts over the last few seasons. It's understandable for the fantasy community to look towards the next big thing in the Colts backfield. Addai is 28 and was a free agent, so the drafting of Delone Carter has piqued the interest of all opportunistic fantasy owners, especially with Donald Brown on the verge of becoming a complete bust. Not so fast, though. Manning didn't pine for Addai's return without good reason. Manning trusts Addai. As much as the Colts QB calls audibles at the line of scrimmage and drops back to throw, Manning knows Addai will always be where he is supposed to be, and he is an excellent blocker, too. Once Manning re-signed, Addai quickly re-upped with a three-year, \$14m deal. "He's a superb competitor and one that I think without question has an impact on our team because he knows his craft to a 'T,'" Coach Jim Caldwell said. "He is an expert at it. He is a difference maker." In Friday's practice, Addai got the crowd going with a 20-yard burst and later explained how excited he is to be back. "I thought about that my rookie year: 'When my contract is up, I probably won't be here,'" Addai said. "But it worked out for me." In the afternoon, Carter showed his physical style of play with some big collisions in goal line work, although the defense won several of those, Carter's ability to pound the rock should help the Colts improve in short-yardage situations this season. On one play, undrafted rookie Chad Spann made his mark at the goal line as he got low, disappeared into the defensive pile and fought his way into the end zone. Spann has been told he will compete for the kickoff return job. One of Matt Waldman's favorite rookie sleepers, the MAC MVP is competing with Virginia Tech's Darren Evans, Devin Moore and Javarris James for possibly one spot. Spann is at his best after initial contact and he is looking forward to competing with Evans, in particular: "We've been friends since high school, so we're going to use that to push each other throughout camp." Spann (North Central) and Evans (Warren Central) were local prep standouts and Evans was named Mr. Football for Indiana in 2006.

WR: It's not surprising that Reggie Wayne looked good as camp opened. In Thursday night's practice, Wayne was **exceptionally smooth** beating Justin Tyron with an over-the-shoulder catch for 40 yards. He came right back with corner route for a TD where he burned a young corner who was noticeably out of position. Anthony Gonzalez also caught a TD on another corner route while doing a nice job to get his feet down in bounds. Gonzalez knows that this camp is likely his last shot after struggling to stay healthy the past few years. Gonzalez never missed a game at Ohio State so he **went back to the training methods he used in college** to help him climb back up the depth chart. So far, so good for Austin Collie, too. The former BYU standout is a huge risk/reward player for fantasy owners. The successive (and severe) concussions he suffered last year leave owners plenty of reason to be concerned, but Collie insists he's fine and that he has no lasting effects. The medical effects of concussions are cumulative but the chances of incurring another are not. In Saturday's mock game, Collie led all receivers with seven catches for 73 yards. Wayne had 3-27, Garcon 3-40 and Gonzalez 3-27. Kole Heckendorf couldn't reel in an Orlovsky pass in the back of the end zone as time expired.

TE: Like Gonzalez and Collie, Dallas Clark has been fully cleared to practice as the team's practices kicked off last Sunday. Jacob Tamme goes back to being a backup, although he certainly proved capable of producing in a pinch if Clark happens to get hurt again. Fellow backup Brody Eldridge has a knee problem and he was held out of Saturday's mock game.

Defense: The Colts defense showed up in Saturday's mock game as Melvin Bullitt picked off a pass that was first deflected by Ernie Sims then tipped by Justin Tyron and raced 95 yards for the scrimmage's only touchdown, giving the defense a 27-20 win over the offense. "Just continuing to run to the ball," Bullitt said. "That's what coach (DC Larry) Coyer insists we do . . . run to the ball, finish every play, and that is just what happened. It just showed what type of defense we play." The defense forced six punts, had two sacks and limited the offense to a pair of field goals. SLB Pat Angerer was one of the driving forces against the run as he broke into the backfield to disrupt at least two plays. DT Fili Moala was convicted in his 2010 DUI on Thursday. Fili returns as the Colts' top inside defensive lineman. He'll be subject to the league's conduct policy, but he was able to avoid jail time.

Special Teams: The Colts kept free agent kicker Adam Vinatieri in the fold, re-signing him to a three-year deal. As always, Justin Snow is long snapper. Pat McAfee enters his second third as the Colts punter, holder, and kickoff specialist. He's also been practicing his placekicking (something he had done in college), including from extra-long range (up to 75 yards), "I was working hard on field goals this offseason because Vinatieri's contract was up and I didn't know what was going to happen there. We re-signed him. Obviously, he's one the greatest of all time, and I would never want to compete with him. He's one of my close friends. But I'm ready to do it whenever I have to." Undrafted rookie punter Travis Baltz from Maryland is the camp leg.

Colts Depth Chart

QB: Peyton Manning (inj), Curtis Painter, Dan Orlovsky, Nate Davis

RB: Joseph Addai, Delone Carter, Donald Brown, Javarris James, Devin Moore, Chad Spann, Darren Evans

WR: Reggie Wayne, Pierre Garcon, Austin Collie, Anthony Gonzalez, Blair White, Kole Heckendorf, Taj Smith, Joe Horn, David Gilreath

TE: Dallas Clark (inj), Jacob Tamme, Brody Eldridge, Mike McNeill, Tyson DeVree

K: Adam Vinatieri, Travis Baltz

DT: Fili Moala, Tommie Harris, Eric Foster, Antonio Johnson, Ricardo Mathews, Drake Nevis, Ollie Ogbu

DE: Dwight Freeney, Robert Mathis, Jerry Hughes, Jamaal Anderson

MLB: Gary Brackett (W/M), Philip Wheeler, Cody Glenn, Chris Colasanti

OLB: Pat Angerer (S/M), Kavell Conner (S), Ernie Sims (W), Nate Triplett (W), Adrian Moten

CB: Jerraud Powers, Jacob Lacey, Justin Tryon (KR), Kevin Thomas, Chris L. Rucker, Cornelius Brown, David Pender
S: Antoine Bethea (FS), Melvin Bullitt (SS), Brandon King (FS), Al Afalava (FS) (inj), Jamie Silva (SS) (RFA), Chip

Vaughn (SS), Mike Newton (SS) (inj), David Caldwell(SS), Joe Lefeged

Jacksonville Jaguars

QB: While David Garrard enters camp and the season as the team's starter, it remains to be seen how long he will keep that distinction. Garrard is already sidelined in camp with a bad back. Garrard's absence has given rookie first-round pick Blaine Gabbert a big opportunity to make an early impression. Garrard didn't play in Saturday evening's scrimmage while Garrard is "day to day" after an MRI revealed no serious problems. On Friday, CBSSports.com's Pete Prisco took in a Jaguars practice and came away glowing with praise for Gabbert, saying that he hasn't witnessed anything like that in 16 years of watching the Jags. Prisco pointed out Gabbert's size, arm, vision and improvisational skills. "He does some of the things that Ben Roethlisberger does... He's a playmaker." In Saturday's scrimmage, Gabbert had a solid outing, but Del Rio cautioned that he's still a half step slower than he was in practice. Del Rio also intentionally sabotaged Gabbert by turning off the headset to see how Gabbert would respond. "I thought he was pretty sharp," Del Rio said. "My first impression is he handled himself well... I wanted to see how he handled himself... He handled himself with poise. No real issues there. That was good for me to see." Gabbert finished 12-of-27 for 76 yards with a TD to fullback Brock Bolen, but he was also victimized by four drops. Luke McCown ran with the twos and completed 13-of-18 for 136 yards including a 15-yard touchdown to WR Jamar Newsome. Safety Mike Hamlin intercepted a McCown pass near the goal line to prevent the offense from scoring again. Overall, Del Rio was pleased. "I'd like Luke not to make that mistake over the middle when we drove down there. He's got to see coverage there. He can't make that mistake, but other than that one particular deal there, I thought they were sharp throughout the night." Del Rio said, while adding that he doesn't know if Garrard will be available for Thursday's opener against the Patriots. "He was better today," Del Rio said of Garrard. "Initially, there was probably a little concern on his part. I think that subsided once he got the MRI and got good news. He felt a little better today."

RB: Maurice Jones-Drew reported to camp Wednesday with an assurance that his surgically repaired knee is fine. A month ago, he said he was less than 100%, but he has healed since and believes that he's good to go. "Last year I played on one leg," he said. "I have two now." The Jags may limit his reps early in camp, especially with talented and capable backups Rashad Jennings and Deji Karim ready to go. With all of the attention going to Gabbert and Garrard, the focus on Jones-Drew's knee has flown under the radar thus far, but it remains a story to watch. A border-line first round pick, MJD needs to demonstrate that his knee isn't too big a risk to undertake that early in drafts.

WR: Mike Thomas breaks camp as the team's newly anointed No. 1 receiver, even if fans and some media openly wonder if they are going into a gunfight with knives this season. While

there is concern, Thomas is having none of it. It's definitely motivation," Thomas said. "But at the same time, people are going to be just that and the media is going to be just that. Guys who get paid to make analysis, they're going to do that. It doesn't bother me. I take it all as motivation. I come out here and approach my work. "I have fun with it. I don't let the outside stuff get to me." With the release of Mike Sims-Walker, Thomas and Jason Hill are projected starters with rookie Cecil Shorts competing with Jarrett Dillard to be the team's slot receiver. "Jason's OK," Del Rio said. "I think he's come in in decent shape. I don't know that he's come in in mid-season form or anything. I think Mike Thomas has come in and been the guy who has been the most dependable and been the guy who has had the best start of that group." Del Rio added that Dillard "looked sharp" and Short is "off to a good start". As for Hill, Del Rio continued, "We're going to need him to play well. We'll see. He'll get the opportunity. I think you saw in the games last year, he had the ability to separate and he had good hands and he could run... What we saw you saw, and now we just need to continue to see it." In the first week, Shorts made a good impression catching almost everything thrown at him. Dillard knows he must stay healthy to win the job, and so far so good on that front. He has his work cut out considering that Shorts has already developed a good rapport with Gabbert, but he also missed Saturday's scrimmage with a sore groin.

TE: Mercedes Lewis joined his teammates after signing a long-term deal after having the franchise tag slapped on him. In the deal, Lewis will earn almost \$18m in guaranteed money and nearly \$35m in total. The Jags have talked about using more formations featuring both Lewis and Zach Miller this year, noting that they are less concerned with their receivers than the fans or media. The coaches talk about their tight ends and backs as being part of the overall passing game, providing balance and depth to the offense. In Saturday's scrimmage, Miller had a pair of first-down grabs on the team's fourth series from Luke McCown. If Miller is finally over his foot problems, he could emerge as a viable, if not, deep sleeper in PPR leagues. A converted quarterback with excellent running skills, Miller gives the team a versatile chess piece as a move TE who is capable of executing the rarely seen TE reverse.

Defense: DE Aaron Kampman is moving back to the left side this season, where he played in his breakout season in Green Bay. Jeremy Mincey is penciled in at right end, but the team has also said the two can be interchanged if needed. The Jags desperately need to improve one of the league's worst pass rushes, but they'll need to do so without having added any impact players along the front four. Of concern, DT Terrance Knighton earned the nickname "Pot roast" after **reporting to camp out of shape**. The team isn't letting him practice until he works his way back into shape. Del Rio said, "He's getting closer. He knows where he has to be and he's working to get there." Courtney Green is battling rookie Chris Prosinski for the starting strong safety job. Green has the early upper hand as an in-the-box safety, while the addition of former Ravens Dawan Landry improves the Jags coverage as a roaming free safety. The Jags are hoping the additions of SLB Clint Session and MLB Paul Posluszny will improve their run defense. In Saturday's scrimmage, Austen Lane and Aaron Morgan were

rotating with the first defense at DE with Tyson Alualu and Mincey manning the inside spots.

Special Teams: With punter Adam Podlesh gone via free agency to Chicago, the team has signed two punters – the younger Durant Brooks and the elder Matt Turk, who was with the Texans the last four years. Whoever wins the job will also serve as holder, joining long snapper Jeremy Cain and kicker Josh Scobee on placekicking plays. HC Jack Del Rio's goal for Scobee is 90% on FGs, "We're looking for him to sustain what he did in the first half, when he was [at a] Pro Bowl level, one of the dominant players at his position. We think he's a talent... I'm taking away those 59-yarders unless we have to have it to win a game."

Jaguars Depth Chart

QB: David Garrard, Blaine Gabbert, Luke McCown, Scott Riddle

RB: Maurice Jones-Drew (inj), Rashad Jennings (3RB), Deji Karim (KR), DuJuan Harris, Richard Murphy

FB: Greg Jones, Montell Owens, Brock Bolen

WR: Mike Thomas (PR), Jason Hill, Jarett Dillard, Cecil Shorts, Kassim Osgood, Tiquan Underwood (KR), John Matthews, Armon Binns, Greg Ellingson, Jamar Newsome

TE: Mercedes Lewis, Zach Miller, Zach Potter, Kyle Miller, Tommy Gallarda

K: Josh Scobee

DT: Terrance Knighton, Tyson Alualu, Leger Douzable, C.J. Mosley, D'Anthony Smith

DE: Aaron Kampman, Jeremy Mincey, Austen Lane, Larry Hart, Bryan Smith (RFA), Aaron Morgan, Marc Schiechl

MLB: Paul Posluszny, Russell Allen (W/M), Michael Lockley, JoJo Dickson

OLB: Daryl Smith (S), Clint Session (W), Jacob Cutrera, Scott Lutrus, Eric Gordon

CB: Rashean Mathis, Derek Cox, Drew Coleman, David Jones, William Middleton, Roderick Issac, Terrence Wheatley, Scotty McGee, TJ Heath, Kevin Rutland

S: Dawan Landry (FS), Christopher Prosinski (SS), Courtney Greene (SS), Don Carey (FS), Michael Hamlin (SS), Matt Estrada (FS)

Kansas City Chiefs

QB: Last year, Matt Cassel improved considerably in his second season with the Chiefs. After adding Steve Breaston via free agency and drafting Jonathan Baldwin, Cassel is naturally expected to continue building on a season that featured a 27 to 7 TD:INT ratio, a 93 passer rating and a Pro Bowl appearance. New Chiefs quarterback coach Jim Zorn was asked about his first impressions working with Cassel and rookie fifth-round draft pick Ricky Stanzi. On Cassel, Zorn observed, "He's really enthusiastic, he's very vocal, he really takes charge in the huddle... I really like how he's trying to work all the new drills. You know he's doing some new things he's never done before and I think he's enthusiastic about them and I think the special thing about Matt right now that I see is he's got the ability to make his body change into what I'm looking for in a

particular drill or rhythm on a throw so he's quite an athlete and good athletes can do that." Zorn noted that Cassel needs to work on his footwork and efficiency. On he thinks of Stanzi so far, Zorn noted, "I'm just really excited about him I think he's on his way you know he's working on improving the speed of his release but he's real smart, he's picking it up really fast. I think you all can be excited about him, he's a ways away it's not like I'm all excited and he's going to be competing for the starting position, but he's a good young prospect and we're glad that he's here." In Saturday afternoon's **first padded practice**, Stanzi and Jeremy Horne provided the only TD during 11-v-11 work. The two connected on back-to-back plays for a 30-yard score and then a two-point conversion. Horne's catch on the 2-pointer was the catch of the day. LB Demorrio Williams picked off Tyler Palko during the second team 11-on-11s.

RB: Despite the team's offseason moves to shore up their receiving corps, HC Todd Haley made it clear that the offense's focus will remain on the ground game where they led the NFL with almost 35 attempts per game. "We want to be a running team first and build from there. That part of it is not going to change," Haley said. Jamaal Charles and Thomas Jones return along with reserve Jackie Battle. Le'Ron McClain was added via free agency to give the team a proven blocker at full back along with a guy who has made it perfectly clear that he wants the football, too. That being said, Haley quickly dispelled any notion that McClain would eat into the touches for Charles or Jones. Haley said he **will be a fullback first** in Thursday's presser. "I'm glad he's on our side," Haley said. "I think he's a big, physical fullback, who's obviously in the past has shown really good run ability in the year when he had a chance to carry the ball when they had an injury. With that being said, he's very clear, we're very clear, he's coming in to be our fullback, first and foremost." Meanwhile, Dexter McCluster has been practicing with the running backs after being developed as slot receiver. McCluster's primary contributions figure to come returning kicks and punts.

WR: Highly touted rookie Jonathan Baldwin had mixed reviews after his first week of camp. On Wednesday night, Baldwin made a nice adjustment on a ball thrown by Palko during one-on-one drills with the DBs. Baldwin ran a go route looking back over his inside shoulder before adjusting to the ball and making the catch over his other shoulder. Baldwin then sat out of practices on Thursday afternoon and Friday with as slight hamstring tweak. Jerheme Urban had one impressive catch along with a number of first-down grabs on Friday. His best reception came while fighting through a defensive pass interference near the left sideline. Jeremy Horne and Zeke Markshausen also made several impressive grabs. Earlier in the week, on Monday, Dwayne Bowe made several nice catches on crossing route as the team worked on their play-action. Also getting into the action were Urban and Verran Tucker with nice catches. As for how many will players the Chiefs **will keep?** Last year, it was five although they dressed only four most games. McCluster counts more as a running back now, so that leaves Urban, Tucker, Horne, Terrance Copper (a strong special teamer) and veteran Kevin Curtis. Urban probably has the edge on the No. 4 spot after missing last year with a season-ending hand injury in the last preseason game, but don't

discount Horne, who made the team initially last year, or Tucker and Copper because of their special teams ability.

TE: Tony Moeaki is on the PUP list to start camp after having off-season arthroscopic surgery on his right knee. Moeaki was very solid as a rookie, but he came into the league with checkered history of injuries at Iowa. As such, Moeaki did not practice but rode a bike throughout practices. Cody Slate was the only player with multiple TD receptions during 7-on-7s. Slate had two and dropped a third. Jake O'Connell had the best catch on the first day of practice on a diving grab where he adjusted his body mid-air to reel in the football. In the same session, Slate tipped a pass forward to Chandler Williams resulting in a long touchdown reminiscent of the Broncos play with Brandon Stokley against the Bengals.

Defense: The Chiefs secured OLB Tamba Hali to a long-term, five-year, \$60 million deal that includes \$35m guaranteed. Hali led the AFC with 14.5 sacks last year and was the Chiefs defensive MVP. The Chiefs also signed RFA Brandon Carr to a one-year, \$2.61 million deal. Carr returns opposite Brandon Flowers to give the team a pair of young, solid corners. Rookie LB Justin Houston missed the first six practices before finally arriving to camp after signing his deal. Haley said he gets a clean slate, but that he "got his work cut out for him. And so do we, because we've got to give him a chance to succeed." In Saturday's padded practice, Houston drew a response from the crowd with a nice inside move to beat Barry Richardson in one-on-one drills. The Chiefs added a pair of veteran free agents for depth over the weekend signing DL Amon Gordon and S Sabby Piscitelli.

Special Teams: The Chiefs do not have any competition at the specialist spots. The returning starters will spend camp getting in their reps and honing their synchronization under the tutelage of special teams coordinator (and kicking guru) Steve Hoffman. Long snapper Thomas Gafford is back for his fourth year. The veteran of the trio, punter and holder Dustin Colquitt is entering his seventh year. Kicker Ryan Succop enters his third year. HC Todd Haley is hoping to utilize Succop's high hang time kickoffs under the new rules, "We're excited about Ryan's skills and how they'll potentially play into that one way or another, whatever philosophy you take as a kickoff team."

Chiefs Depth Chart

QB: Matt Cassel, Tyler Palko, Ricky Stanzi

RB: Thomas Jones, Jamaal Charles (3RB), Jackie Battle (RFA), Shane Bannon

FB: Le'Ron McClain

WR: Dwayne Bowe, Jonathan Baldwin, Steve Breaston, Dexter McCluster (PR), Jerheme Urban, Terrance Copper, Verran Tucker, Jeremy Horne, Kevin Curtis, Josue Paul

TE: Tony Moeaki, Jake O'Connell, Cody Slate

K: Ryan Succop

NT: Kelly Gregg, Anthony Toribio, Jerrell Powe

DE: Glenn Dorsey, Tyson Jackson, Wallace Gilberry, Allen Bailey, Amon Gordon, Brandon Bair

ILB: Derrick Johnson, Jovan Belcher, Brandon Siler, Demorrio Williams, Cory Greenwood

OLB: Tamba Hali, Andy Studebaker, Justin Houston, Cameron

Sheffield, Gabe Miller

CB: Brandon Flowers, Brandon Carr, Javier Arenas (PR/KR), Travis Daniels, Jalil Brown, Jackie Bates, Desmond Washington

S: Eric Berry (SS), Kendrick Lewis (FS), Jon McGraw, Donald Washington (FS/CB) (inj), Reshard Langford (FS), Sabby Piscitelli, Ricky Price

Miami Dolphins

QB: Much has been made about the deal that hasn't happened with Denver to acquire Kyle Orton. As of now, there is no deal and it's unlikely that there will be as long as Orton is going into the season as the Broncos starter. After news broke that the deal was off, the fans watching practice chanted "We want Orton," which led to reports that Henne was upset by the seeming lack of support. Coach Sparano was quick to get his QB's back, prompting Henne to say, "Yeah, I mean as a player you definitely appreciate your coach coming out, standing up for you – but that's how this team works. He's got our back and we've got his back. And you know, it goes [for] every position out there. I've got Jeremiah's back, he's got my back. So this is a full-blown team and we definitely appreciate our coach standing up for us because we stand up for him." The first week of camp was mixed for Henne. After a slow start, he picked it up on Friday with a pair of TDs to backup TE Jeron Mastrud. Later, Henne found rookie TE/FB Charles Clay for a 20-yard TD pass. Matt Moore had some highlights, too. He found Clay for a 20-yards TD on his first play, then Clyde Gates for a 20-yard score in the back of the end zone on his third play. Newly signed Kevin O'Connell got into the action with a 15-yard TD to Patrick Carter. Henne later completed passes to Davone Bess and Reggie Bush only to have Brandon Marshall drop a TD pass. Minutes later, off play action, Henne overthrew Marshall on a post in the end zone after he had Sean Smith beaten. On Saturday, Henne had another solid practice and was particularly effective in the red zone 7-on-7 drill. Once again, Charles Clay stood out. He caught two TDs and was a popular target for all three QBs. Moore has looked solid, but the Fins remain hopeful that Henne can take the next step and still develop into a solid, capable starter. The Dolphins waived Tom Brandstater and replaced him with O'Connell. Undrafted rookie Pat Devlin has had some moments but he faces an uphill battle behind those three and he may ultimately wind up on the practice squad.

RB: Many of you are anxious to hear how Daniel Thomas is doing given his seemingly clear path to a starting job and immediate fantasy impact. His first week, however, was largely uneventful. Sparano was also anxious to see him scrimmage after watching him in earlier practices. "I've seen this kid come to life carrying the ball," Sparano said. "When you put him in that environment, he's flashed at me." In Monday night's practice at the stadium last week, he looked good, but the rest of the time Omar Kelly and other beat writers summed up his work as just ok. Armando Salguero wondered if he's a guy that "turns it up when things feel more important". Thomas is being pushed by veteran holdover Lex Hilliard and he'll potentially lose some touchdowns and plenty of third down work to

Reggie Bush. Case in point? On Saturday, Bush was fired up after he powered past Sean Smith to get into the end zone. "That's good," Sparano said. "We talked [Friday] about not being a stranger to celebrating when the ball gets into the end zone." Kory Sheets also had some nice runs on Friday while the team worked on inside running drills. He took one run outside after he cut back on a hole opened by the guard. Also making waves was the free agent visit last Tuesday by Tiki Barber, who "looked good" but left without a contract offer.

WR: Surprisingly, Brandon Marshall wasn't the biggest newsmaker during the first week of camp even though he was diagnosed with "borderline personality disorder" over the summer. According to the report, Marshall struggled with "difficulties with relationships and self-image and controlling moods and emotions." He has already undergone three months of therapy and treatment, but he remains mum on the 'stabbing' incident involving his wife during the offseason. The player that made the most noise was rookie Edmond "Clyde" Gates, who ran a 4.37 in the 40-yard sprint at the NFL Combine. The Dolphins hope to use Gates' **speed to make him into a stretch-the-field receiver** similar to how the Steelers use Mike Wallace, but first Gates has to learn a couple important things: the playbook and how to read defenses. "He's catching on a lot better. He's raw, but the kid is really, really gifted," said Davone Bess, who helped tutor the rookie during the lockout. "It's a lot of learning," said Gates. "I'm trying to take as many mental reps as possible watching the veteran guys. It's different playing receiver on this level. Everything is a little faster. I've got to stay in my books." All of the talk about Gates is reminiscent of Ted Ginn's potential a few years ago, but his teammates say there is one big difference between the two. Gates gets up to full speed in a hurry, while Glenn needed a few steps. The Dolphins hope the fastest WR at the Combine pays dividends early. In Sunday's scrimmage, Gates quickly made his mark on a 70-yard TD from Chad Henne.

TE: The player to watch so far has been hybrid rookie TE/FB Charles Clay, who was frequently targeted throughout practices, drills and in the team's scrimmage. He and Jeron Mastrud caught touchdowns in Friday's practice. Clay has the potential to be a mismatch for defenses considering his versatility. On Saturday, Clay once again was impressive with his best day yet. He caught a pair of TDs while prompting Sparano to comment that he has been most pleased by the mental part of Clay's game. The compliment speaks volumes about his potential to get on the field as a rookie whether it's lining up in the backfield, as an H-back or as a tight end.

Defense: By all accounts, the team's strength heading into the season is the defense. The offense may struggle as they implement a new offense under Brian Daboll, while the defense remains largely intact and under the guidance of DC Mike Nolan. The team returns nearly all of their starters from last year while using free agency and the draft to add much-needed depth. ILB Channing Crowder was released, but the team quickly filled the void by signing Kevin Burnett to a four-year, \$21m contract. Burnett is considered better in coverage, but may not be as stout against the run. The team welcomed back Jason Taylor to provide some pass rush and depth behind Koa Misi and Cameron Wake, while the Dolphins secondary seems

poised to take the next step with Vontae Davis and Sean Smith at corner. Seventh-round pick CB Jimmy Wilson has made a name for himself early, too. Known for his physical play, and off the field problems as a youth, Wilson is intent to take advantage of his opportunity while moving to safety and probably making an immediate impact on special teams.

Special Teams: Entering camp for the second straight year, long snapper John Denney, punter Brandon Fields and kicker Dan Carpenter are the only players at their respective positions on the roster. For 2011, Carpenter's goal of being needed less may initially seem odd, but in the team context it is probably the goal of every kicker, "We want to score more touchdowns. I think it's pretty safe to say the more points you score the better chance you have to win. There are so many games in this league that are settled by three points or less. But seven points is always better than three."

Dolphins Depth Chart

QB: Chad Henne, Matt Moore, Kevin O'Connell, Pat Devlin

RB: Reggie Bush (3RB), Daniel Thomas, Lex Hilliard, Kory Sheets, Nic Grigsby

FB: Lousaka Polite, Charles Clay

WR: Brandon Marshall, Brian Hartline, Davone Bess (PR), Clyde Gates, Roberto Wallace, Marlon Moore, Brooks Foster, Phillip Livas, Patrick Carter, Julius Pruitt

TE: Anthony Fasano, Mickey Shuler, Jeron Mastrud, Dedrick Epps

K: Dan Carpenter

NT: Paul Soliai, Ronald Fields, Frank Kears, Johnny Jones

DE: Kendall Langford, Randy Starks, Tony McDaniel, Philip Merling, Jared Odrick, Ryan Baker, Robert Rose

ILB: Karlos Dansby (W), Kevin Burnett, A.J. Edds, Austin Spitzer, Mike Rivera, Mark Masterson

OLB: Cameron Wake (W), Koa Misi (S), Jason Taylor (S), Ikaika Alama-Francis (S), Jason Trusnik (W), Quinton Spears (S), Jonathan Freeny (W)

CB: Vontae Davis, Sean Smith, Will Allen (inj), Nolan Carroll, Benny Sapp, Nate Ness, Jimmy Wilson (FS), Jose Perez, Vincent Agnew

S: Jeremiah Bell (SS), Chris Clemons (FS), Reshad Jones (FS), Tyrone Culver (SS), Mark Restelli (SS)

Minnesota Vikings

QB: It became evident on **Saturday night** that the defense was further along than the offense. New offensive coordinator Bill Musgrave is working hard to implement his system while tailoring it to fit what Donovan McNabb does best and play to his strengths, calling it the "**Donovan's system**." The two spent considerable time together as Musgrave sought input from McNabb and took an open-minded approach to take the offense where McNabb wants it to go. That approach is one of the reasons McNabb wanted to go to Minnesota. "I looked at it as a good fit because you have a head coach [Les Frazier] who knows you, he knows your regimen, he knows how you spend extra time trying to be better at what you do," McNabb said. "Bill Musgrave has played the position. He knows the best way

of approaching the game and making the offense comfortable is what's best suited for the players, what they feel comfortable with, what they can get done." McNabb will make \$5m on his one-year contract. Saturday night, McNabb had trouble avoiding the pass rush as he went 0-for-2 with two sacks as the offense struggled to pick up the blitz. The offensive line has a big question at left tackle after releasing Bryant McKinnie after he reported to camp at almost 400 lbs. The team signed Charles Johnson to fill the void, but he was roundly abused by Jared Allen in the opening days of practice leading some to believe that Phil Loadholt could still be move to that side if push comes to shove. Joe Webb worked with the second team for the first time in three days, and completed 2-for-3. Christian Ponder worked with the third group and went 1-for-2 with sack. Ponder generally worked with the second team ahead of Webb all week, but he struggled with his accuracy and threw a few interceptions. "It's called being a rookie quarterback in the National Football League," HC Leslie Frazier said. "There's going to be some other days like that." When asked if rookie WR Stephen Burton was the wrong route on two of his picks, Ponder said, "I just threw two bad balls." As for how he is progressing, Ponder said, "It's coming along, definitely. We're getting a lot thrown at us right now and obviously this is the first year that everyone's been in it. I think so far, so good. I think today kind of was a step back but I think those are the days that you learn the most from. Tomorrow should be a lot better."

RB: Adrian Peterson enters the final season of his rookie contract without an extension in the works. If it is bothering him, he's not letting it show. "I'm going to sit back and let the chips fall where they may," Peterson said. "The only thing I can do is control what I can control and that's coming out and making sure that I'm prepared, making sure that I'm doing everything I can do to help this team win. That's been my focus for four years and this fifth year is going to be the same." Peterson never considered holding out. Instead, he is intent on expanding his role and getting more involved in the passing game. Peterson has lobbied the staff to let him play on third downs and the Vikings allegedly plan to give him a "**much bigger role**" in the downfield passing game. Frazier indeed is listening, but he warned that Peterson must improve as a receiver for that to happen. For his part, Peterson made some impressive catches in practice at the end of the week and he already averaged 39.5 catches in the last two years, so it's possible with an expanded role that he could flirt with 50 catches this year. First, he'll need to beat out Toby Gerhart, who played extensively on third downs in his rookie season.

WR: With Sidney Rice long gone, Percy Harvin is primed to become the team's No. 1 receiver in terms of production and leadership. Harvin is reportedly **driven to break out this season** after feeling as though he is underappreciated by his peers around the league. He has gone six months migraine-free and has really stood out during the first week of practice. Frazier complimented Harvin for taking on a leadership role, noting that it's the first time he has seen Harvin demonstrate his leadership on the team. "This is what you want from star players," Frazier said while noting that he intends to keep five receivers on the roster. After Harvin, Michael Jenkins and Bernard Berrian, it becomes a numbers game with the leading candidates being Jaymar Johnson and Greg Camarillo. Harvin,

Jenkins and Johnson have impressed the most during the first week. It's not out of the question that Johnson could move past Berrian on the depth chart if he continues to perform as he has in the first week. Johnson has caught everything, showed great instincts and also has the speed to supplant Berrian as the primary vertical threat. Devin Aromashodu was signed to add depth and competition along with super-sized rookie Stephen Burton and Emmanuel Arceneaux, but so far, Johnson has made the most plays of this group followed by Camarillo.

TE: In what appears to be a growing trend around the league, the Vikings are yet another team that seems to have more depth and talent at tight end than they do at the wide receiver position. The NFL is a copy-cat league, so perhaps teams like Minnesota, Carolina, Baltimore, Seattle and Jacksonville are looking to duplicate the success that New England had last year with their talented rookie tandem. Visanthe Shiancoe has been pleased with the new offense, noting that Musgrave's system is beneficial for tight ends. "It's a little better than I expected," Shiancoe said. "I'm excited and I'm just going to stay ready." But he didn't offer any predictions for himself. "I'm not saying all that, man. I'm not talking about it. No. It's not about me. It's about being ready for the team when they call my number." That could be due to the team's investment in second-round pick Kyle Rudolph, who is big, has caught nearly everything thrown at him and flashed plenty of athleticism for his size. Rudolph worked out with Larry Fitzgerald during the lockout. Fitz certainly sang his praises when asked about his potential. "He's 270 pounds and he's 6-foot-7," Fitzgerald said. "He can run. He can move and get out of his breaks. He's got great hands. He can hold the edge when he needs to block. I was teasing him already -- I call him Mark Bavaro reincarnated. He's going to be special like that, I think, and I'm excited to see his progression."

Defense: The defense hopes to get Cedric Griffin back in the lineup soon, although he is coming back from his second torn ACL in as many seasons. Erin Henderson has been lining up with the first team at weak-side LB replacing the departed Ben Leber in the lineup. Pat Williams remains a free agent and the team signed former Saints NT Remi Ayodele to replace him. The "Williams Wall" may not return intact this season, in part, because they are expected to finally serve their four-game suspensions resulting from the much-ballyhooed Starcaps case.

Special Teams: The Vikings did not lose kicker Ryan Longwell to free agency, re-signing him to a 4-year deal. Longwell was happy, "[My wife] Sarah and I are really excited to be back with the Vikings. It was our intention all along to stay if we could, so we feel so blessed it worked out this way. I'm a big believer in the way Coach [Leslie] Frazier approaches life and football, so I can't wait to get to work." The other two specialists also remain the same this year: long snapper Cullen Loeffler, who had a quiet summer, and punter/holder Chris Kluwe, who significantly increased his media presence this summer. Camp leg duties belong to Nate Whitaker, an undrafted rookie out of Stanford.

Vikings Depth Chart

QB: [Donovan McNabb](#), Christian Ponder, Joe Webb, Rhett Bomar, Alexander Robinson

RB: Adrian Peterson, Toby Gerhart, Lorenzo Booker, Matt Asiata

WR: Percy Harvin (KR), Bernard Berrian, Michael Jenkins, Greg Camarillo (PR), Jaymar Johnson, Devin Aromashodu, Stephen Burton, Juaquin Iglesias, Emmanuel Arceneaux, Andre Holmes, Dominique Johnson

TE: Visanthe Shiancoe, Jim Kleinsasser, Kyle Rudolph, Jeff Dugan (FB), Allen Reisner, Ed Barhem

K: Ryan Longwell, Nathan Whitaker

DT: Kevin Williams (sus), Remi Ayodele (NT), Fred Evans, Letroy Guion, Tremaine Johnson

DE: Jared Allen, Brian Robison, Everson Griffen, Christian Ballard, De'Aundre Reed, Adrian Awason, David Akinniyi

MLB: E.J. Henderson, Jasper Brinkley

OLB: Chad Greenway (S), Erin Henderson (W) (RFA), Heath Farwell (S), Kenny Onatolu (S), Ross Homan (W)

CB: Antoine Winfield, Cedric Griffin (inj), Asher Allen, Chris Cook (inj), Brandon Burton, Devon Torrence, Marcel Gipson, Cord Parks, Marcus Sherels

S: Husain Abdullah (SS) (RFA), Tyrell Johnson (FS/SS), Jamarca Sanford (SS), Eric Frampton, Mistral Raymond (FS), Ryan Hill, Chris Adingupu

New England Patriots

QB: It didn't take Tom Brady long to get right back into the groove. On Saturday, Brady and the first team offense performed well. Brady completed 14-of-17 throughout the team periods. When the team went four wides, Brady was at his best completing all five of his passes **according to Greg Bedard on Boston.com**. Brady connect with Chad Ochocinco one play that highlighted the session, then followed it with an even better 20-yard out to Aaron Hernandez near the sideline in tight coverage. After Brady, Brian Hoyer was also crisp completing 7-of-9 while rookie Ryan Mallet completed 2-of-3 while taking a few sacks. It turned out to be one of Mallet's less impressive days. His passes have been high throughout the first week, and that continued on Saturday. He was holding the ball too long and had another pass land at the feet of Michael Jenkins, but on a positive note, he did a great job executing the play-action fakes. In red zone drills, Danny Woodhead scored on a 6-yard run off the left guard while Brady threw an incomplete pass to Hernandez who was covered well by Leigh Bodden. Brady then found Ochocinco in the back of the end zone. Ben Jarvis Green-Ellis followed a pulling Logan Mankins but was unable to find the end zone and then the second team took the field as Hoyer connected with Hernandez for back-to-back TDs. On Thursday's red zone drills, Brady scored twice on their three plays. Wes Welker beat Devin McCourty off the line, Deion Branch caught a quick screen and BJGE beat Jerod Mayo to the pylon.

RB: BenJarvus Green-Ellis signed a one-year, \$1.835m contract as a restricted free agent, but his role is almost certain to change after the team drafted Shane Vereen and Stevan Ridley and brought back veterans Kevin Faulk and Sammy Morris in what amounts to a crowded Patriots backfield. BJGE does lead the pack for the moment to handle the early down work, but we'll have to see how it plays out during the

preseason. Danny Woodhead seems likely to beat Kevin Faulk for a spot as a third-down specialist, while Sammy Morris looks like a longshot to earn a spot unless Ridley or BJGE disappoint. Making things more difficult for offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien is that his rookie running backs have missed time due to injury. "I think any time you're not out on the field that's a tough adjustment. You have to try to keep up on your own with meetings and playbook things and not being out there, obviously you're not getting the reps. So they're working hard to come back as fast they can and they will and as soon as they're healthy, they'll be back out there." Vereen left halfway through Wednesday's session with a nagging hamstring after participating in just two practices. On the second day of practice, Ridley had a pair of drops out of the backfield.

WR: The headlines last week centered around the acquisition of Chad Ochocinco, who will make \$6m this season and then become an unrestricted free agent in 2010. O'Brien had this to say about Ochocinco's first few days of practice, "I know from here being here. He's been very professional. He works really hard in the meeting room and on the field. He's a competitive guy. He takes a lot of pride in it and I would say that about the whole group of receivers right now. Ochocinco's fitting in. He's progressing on a daily basis and just like everybody else there's ups and downs at this point in training camp and he's just trying to be as consistent as he can be like everybody else out there." On Saturday, Brady and Ochocinco turned in the play of the day with a 40-yard completion down the sideline over a pair of defenders. On Thursday, however, he had his worst day of practice with at least four drops, two coming without a defender on him. Ochocinco stayed after practice to catch more passes from Brady. After missing most of his rookie season, Taylor Price may have a difficult time making the roster, but he looked great in one practice when matched up in a get-off-the-line drill against the DBs. Kyle Arrington stuffed Welker on one play, but then Welker blew right by Thad Turner shortly after that.

TE: Perhaps the best player in camp beyond Tom Brady was second-year TE Rob Gronkowski, who has reportedly been a **man among boys**. "No one has come close to being able to guard him, or contain him," writes Ian Rapoport of the Boston Herald. "He's been an absolute beast." Gronk has overmatched defenders in practices with his enormous size and ability to get vertical. Fellow second-year standout Aaron Hernandez has made several nice plays as well. On Saturday, Hernandez made a beautiful catch as he stretched out to get a Brady pass in red zone drills on a corner route to the back pylon. It was so pretty, the team ran the same thing on the next play with the same result, only Hernandez didn't have to work as hard to catch that one. He also had a one-handed grab of a Hoyer pass for a TD in the same drills. In blocking drills pitting TEs against DEs, Belichick watched as Gronk beat his man twice and tied on his third rep while Hernandez was overpowered and finished 0-for-3.

Defense: The team continues to rebuild their defense by adding a steady stream of veterans that have prompted lots of speculation that they'll play more 4-3 this year than the 3-4 scheme used most of the time last season. Among the new

faces are DT Albert Haynesworth and DE Andre Carter, who were forced to adapt to the Redskins 3-4, DE Mark Anderson, DE Shaun Ellis and corner Kyle Arrington. Arrington and Darius Butler are competing for the Patriots' third cornerback job. Rookie CB Ras-I Dowling has been limited after the first two practices.

Special Teams: Kicker Stephen Gostkowski is back after missing the second half of last year with a torn quad. ST coordinator Scott O'Brien noted, "(We're) starting him off with the field goals because we want to get him back in the timing, the operation of everything. When he goes to kick off, it's just him and the ball, and he's got his rhythm. He can do that on his own. The priority was to get him back and evaluate where he is at, but also to (work on his) timing, to get him back with the snapper, get him back with the holder, and start with that." The long snapper is Matt Katula who came on board last year after Gostkowski's injury and the holder is once again punter Zoltan Mesko. Undrafted rookie Chris Koeplin from UMass has been handling kickoffs for now.

Patriots Depth Chart

QB: Tom Brady, Brian Hoyer, Ryan Mallett

RB: BenJarvus Green-Ellis (RFA), Shane Vereen, Danny Woodhead, Stevan Ridley, Kevin Faulk, Sammy Morris

WR: Wesley Welker, Deion Branch, Chad Ochocinco, Julian Edelman (PR), Brandon Tate (KR/PR), Taylor Price, Matt Slater (KR), Jeremy Ross

TE: Rob Gronkowski, Aaron Hernandez, Lee Smith, Will Yeatman

K: Stephen Gostkowski, Chris Koeplin

DT: Vince Wilfork (NT), Albert Haynesworth, Kyle Love, Brandon Deaderick, Myron Pryor, Ron Brace (inj), Atiyah Ellison, Darryl Richard, Landon Cohen

DE: Mike Wright, Shaun Ellis, Andre Carter, Mark Anderson, Aaron Lavarius, Alex Silvestro, Clay Nurse

MLB: Jerod Mayo (M), Brandon Spikes, Gary Guyton (W/M), Jeff Tarpinian, Anthony Leonard

OLB: Rob Ninkovich, Jermaine Cunningham, Eric Moore, Markell Carter, Marques Murrell, Tracy White, Dane Fletcher

CB: Devin McCourty, Leigh Bodden, Darius Butler, Kyle Arrington, Ras-I Dowling, Jonathan Wilhite, Malcolm Williams

S: Brandon Meriweather (SS), Patrick Chung (FS), James Sanders (FS), Brandon McGowan, Sergio Brown (SS), Bret Lockett, Josh Barrett (RFA)

New Orleans Saints

QB: It didn't take long for Drew Brees to get back into the swing of things as team practices got underway. Brees was rusty in one day of practice, but bounced back quickly and overall he and his receivers have picked right up where they left off last season. Brees hooked up frequently with favorite target Marques Colston and second-year tight end Jimmy Graham in the first few days of team drills. In one drill, Brees was so amped up that he **came out firing** and hit the goalpost

on a pass intended for Robert Meachem. Later, he found Devery Henderson who made a wonderful catch, then he connected with Lance Moore across the middle. Even TE David Thomas got into the act with a few nice receptions. All in all, it didn't matter who was covering, Brees hit them. Later on, it was the defenses turn as they recorded two straight sacks. Malcolm Jenkins also picked off Brees twice in the first few days of practice. As for the sacks, keep in mind that defensive coordinator Gregg Williams loves to send everything he has at the offense and while the Saints defense is off to a good start, Brees is well equipped himself.

RB: No. 28 overall pick Mark Ingram has hit the ground running with the Saints in his first NFL training camp. According to the New Orleans Times-Picayune, he is "coming on fast" and expected to be "heavily involved" when the season begins. That said, his first carry proved to be one he'll remember as he has his helmet knocked off and then proceeded to have the ball stripped from him by LB Jonathan Vilma. It proved to be a hiccup, though, as Ingram quickly rebounded to run hard throughout the day looking impressive overall. Pierre Thomas is healthy again and **doing everything he can to show he is the number one back**. Thomas ran super hard and bulldozed through several would-be tacklers for a touchdown in one early practice. Both Ingram and Thomas have run with good power while mixing in nice moves, too. Darren Sproles followed them up with a nifty move to split defenders at the line and turn on the jets for a long gain. Thursday's practice featured more of the same. Thomas, Sproles and Ingram all had long runs, while Ingram clung onto the ball determined not to have it stripped from him again. On Wednesday, Joique Bell didn't finish off a run as he jobbed toward the end zone only to have Jonathan Amaya strip the ball. Chris Ivory underwent surgery on Friday to repair a sports hernia. He had not practiced yet as he continues to recover from offseason surgery to repair a Lisfranc fracture. He seems destined to start the season on the PUP list. Lynell Hamilton and C.J. Gable were both waived.

WR: Marques Colston got off to a nice start in camp before taking the day off last Friday. There doesn't appear to be any problems with his knee and he reassured reporters on Saturday saying the **knee is ok**. On Wednesday, Adrian Arrington and Colston each turned in highlight reel catches. Colston and Robert Meachem have the starting spots nailed down while Lance Moore will rotate into the second spot with Meachem and serve as the team's primary target in the slot. Devery Henderson will reprise his role as the team's deep threat, which leads us to the fifth spot, previously occupied by special teamer Courtney Roby, a return specialist. With Darren Sproles on the roster and likely taking over those return duties, Roby is probably on the outside looking in at a roster spot. The team could very well opt to keep third year Adrian Arrington, who has flirted with the roster since being drafted by the Saints out of Michigan. Arrington doesn't lack in talent, but he's simply been unable to move his way up the depth charts with so much talent in front of him. If anyone has to be worried about Arrington it might be Henderson, whose production has faded a bit along with the occasional drops that come with his territory.

TE: Jimmy Graham continues his ascent after a productive rookie season. He appears to be on the **cusp of NFL stardom**. Graham added 10 pounds of muscle in the offseason, reporting to camp at a svelte 265 pounds without losing any of his explosiveness or leaping ability. Better yet, Brees seemed to target him relentlessly in various drills. David Thomas and Tory Humphrey have re-signed, but not until later in the week providing Graham with even more reps on the first few days. "I'm going to have to block a lot more than I did last year so I'm constantly working at that and trying to get better at that," he said. "I'm definitely going to have a lot more responsibility than I did last year and the mental errors I had last year I can't have that... It's incredible to think how far I've come in two years and it seems like I'm still taking steps forward." While Graham has certainly come along way, he is still a work in progress. While he has made numerous great catches, he also has dropped some routine balls and has plenty of work to do to be more consistent.

Defense: The Saints made several under the radar moves in free agency in the last week to go with a couple bigger moves during the offseason to bolster their defense. While Will Smith is expected to serve a four-game suspension stemming from the now years old Starcaps case, the team added Cameron Jordan in the first round of the draft while signing Turk McBride via free agency. Additionally, they swooped in and stole NT Aubrayo Franklin from the 49ers to compete with Shaun Rogers opposite Sedrick Ellis on the interior defensive line. Jonathan Casillas returns healthy after tearing his ACL in the preseason last year and Martez Wilson was drafted in the second round and immediately inserted as the starter on the strong-side. For now, Rogers is working with the first team and SLB Danny Clark is getting reps there as well. According to Danny Cox of the Examiner, this could be a **career year for cornerback Jabari Greer**. Greer had three interceptions in five practices to open camp. DC Gregg Williams has been happy with the play of rookie Johnny Patrick and Malcolm Jenkins in coverage drills while being aggressive against the offense with a wide array of blitzes. The team had Jonathan Amaya running with the 1s at strong safety in the opening practices while Roman Harper waited to join the team's practices as the CBA was ratified.

Special Teams: Two of 2009's playoff heroes are secure in their specialist roles as the Saints enter training camp. Garrett Hartley will handle the placekicking while Thomas Morstead will again handle the punting, kickoffs and holding. Hartley was 21 of 24 on FGs during the first three days of camp. The long snapping position has been less stable. Last year they went through Kevin Houser, Jason Kyle, Jake Ingram, and ended with Justin Drescher. Kyle was cut from the team this July after failing a physical. That leaves Drescher with the starting job, unless undrafted rookie Kyle Nelson out of New Mexico State can unseat him.

Saints Depth Chart

QB: Drew Brees, Chase Daniel, Ryan Colbourn, Sean Canfield
RB: Mark Ingram, Pierre Thomas, Darren Sproles, Chris Ivory (inj), Joiqee Bell, Chris Taylor
FB: Korey Hall, Kolby Hurt, Jed Collins
WR: Marques Colston, Robert Meachem, Lance

Moore, Devery Henderson, Courtney Roby (KR), Jarred Fayson, Joe Morgan, John Chiles, Montez Billings, Andy Tanner

TE: Jimmy Graham, David Thomas, Tory Humphrey, Tyler Lorenzen, Harry Flaherty, Michael Higgins

K: Garrett Hartley, Jacob Rogers

DT: Sedrick Ellis, Aubrayo Franklin, Shaun Rogers, Tom Johnson, Mitch King, Swanson Miller, Dexter Larimore

DE: Will Smith (susp), Cameron Jordan, Alex Brown, Turk McBride, Junior Galette, Jeff Charleston, Greg Romeus

MLB: Jonathan Vilma

OLB: Martez Wilson (S), Jonathan Casillas (W), Scott Shanle (S), Jo-Lonn Dunbar (W), Clint Ingram (S), Danny Clark, Will Herring, Ramon Humber, Ezra Butler, Jeremiha Hunter

CB: Jabari Greer, Tracy Porter, Patrick Robinson, Fabian Washington, Johnny Patrick, Trumaine McBride, Terrail Lambert, Mark Parson

S: Roman Harper (SS), Malcolm Jenkins (CB/FS), Pierson Prioleau, Nathan Bussey, Jonathan Amaya, Chris Reis, Paul Oliver, DeAndre McDaniel, Isa Abdul-Quddus

New York Giants

QB: More than a week into camp and it's been relatively quiet on the Eli Manning front – which is a good thing. Right now the Giants are more focused on getting the pieces around him in place, including the establishment of William Beatty as the everyday left tackle, finding a new starting tight end, and working out the depth chart at wide receiver beyond the Nicks-Manningham 1-2 punch. There's a competition for the #2 job between Sage Rosenfels and David Carr, who re-signed with New York this offseason. Rosenfels is the more capable playmaker, but Carr was a solid backup in his last stint in New York.

RB: Henry Hynoski. If the name doesn't ring a bell, don't feel bad. He's a rookie undrafted fullback from Pittsburgh who has been punishing opposing defenders every single practice. While it's premature to call Hynoski a lock to make the 53-man roster, he very much could earn a spot as the Giants new lead blocking fullback. His case is enhanced by the decision to move Bear Pascoe back to the tight end position. Hynoski is a classic throwback, and he embraces the role: "They brought me in here to be a battering ram and that's going to be the first thing I do. I know what my main role is. I have to line up and block people and blow people up, so that's what I'm prepared to do. Anything else is a bonus." There's not a lot to say about the tailbacks yet, other than a) they're in camp, b) they're happy, and c) they're healthy. Brandon Jacobs and Ahmad Bradshaw will provide a dynamic 1-2 punch again this year, and the backups will sort themselves out – but right now Andre Brown probably warrants a slight edge over rookie Da'Rel Scott.

WR: Hakeem Nicks and Mario Manningham are locked in as the starters, and both could be impact fantasy threats. At this point, it would be a surprise if Manningham gave up his starting role to Steve Smith – when/if Smith gets healthy.

Smith continues to recover from microfracture surgery and has yet to re-sign, although there are reports that he will do so (likely a one-year incentive laden contract) in the coming days. In the meantime, the Giants are trying to sort out the backup receiver situation among a crowded group. Victor Cruz, who was the star of last year's camp, has picked up where he left off. He missed most of last year with a hamstring injury, but is back making plays and – based solely on what we've seen so far – deserves the #3 role. Veteran Domenik Hixon, another receiver coming back from a season-ending injury last year, has the experience and rapport to make a strong case for the job. He hasn't ever shown the consistency during the regular season to project a major role, so ultimately the Giants may have to decide between unproven upside versus proven mediocrity. Rookie Jerrel Jernigan is getting a chance to make an impression, but he won't see the field in the regular season much if things go according to plan. Devin Thomas and Ramses Barden are banged up, and doing themselves no favors in trying to make the 53-man roster. The Giants signed Michael Clayton this past week, but he will only make the team if one of the younger receivers is deemed a disappointment.

TE: Most observers thought the re-signing of Kevin Boss was a formality, yet the dominoes fell a different way. The Raiders lost Zach Miller to the Seahawks, which prompted them to lure Boss away from New York with a 4-year \$16 million contract. While Boss wasn't an elite playmaker, he was a valuable piece to the Giants offense, particularly as a blocker. For now, the door is wide open for Travis Beckum to shake off the slow start to his career and re-establish himself as the fluid offensive weapon the Giants envisioned when they drafted him out of Wisconsin. Eli Manning was disappointed **about the loss of Boss**, but tried to paint his other options in a good light. Daniel Coats, Bear Pascoe and Jake Ballard are the other tight ends in camp. Not exactly a who's who of the position, that's for certain.

Defense: The biggest story on defense has been what's NOT happening – which is to say Osi Umenyiora and his trade demands. No one would blame the Giants for simply cutting their ties with the permanently disgruntled defensive end, but Giants owner John Mara has tried to step in and make peace between Osi and the organization. "We want him on this team," Mara said. "He belongs here. He's had a great career here. He adds a lot to this team. I always say, the reason we were able to win Super Bowl XLII was that they couldn't block our front. That was the first time all year Tom Brady faced that kind of pressure. That, to me, is the heart of our team. We're hoping we can work it out soon." As for those players ON the field, the defensive front seven appears in good shape and should be able to absorb the loss of DT Barry Cofield in free agency. Mathias Kiwanuka will start at linebacker, at least on non-passing downs, and Jason Tuck and 2nd year Jason Pierre-Paul should start at DE (depending on whether Osi comes back). At DT, 2nd year man Linval Joseph will likely be joined by rookie Marvin Austin – but for now Chris Canty is being called the nominal "starter." The secondary suffered a blow as rookie CB Prince Amukamara broke his foot. His initial prognosis is for a return in a few weeks, but it may linger into the regular season.

Special Teams: As a rookie, Matt Dodge had a tumultuous 2010, resulting in a fair amount of scrutiny from fans, the media, and his coach. This August he faces competition for his job from veteran Steve Weatherford, a free agent pickup from the Jets. Weatherford said of Dodge's rookie season, "I can't really imagine that. I think Matt's a stronger person and player for going through that because all of us go through growing pains as a rookie, but his were made public and the way he dealt with it, I'm very impressed with. I feel like mentally you either melt from that or you grow from it. I think he's chosen the latter." The other two specialist spots remain the same as the last several years: Lawrence Tynes the kicker and Zac DeOssie the long snapper.

Giants Depth Chart

QB: Eli Manning, Sage Rosenfels, David Carr, Ryan Perrilloux

RB: Ahmad Bradshaw, Brandon Jacobs, D.J. Ware, Da'Rel Scott, Andre Brown, Charles Scott

FB: Bear Pascoe (TE), Henry Hynoski

WR: Hakeem Nicks, Mario Manningham, Victor Cruz, Ramses Barden (PUP), Jerrel Jernigan (KR/PR), Darius Reynaud (PR/KR), Domenik Hixon, Duke Calhoun, Michael Clayton, Sam Giguere, Devin Thomas, Todd Watkins

TE: Travis Beckum, Daniel Coats, Jake Ballard, Christian Hopkins

K: Lawrence Tynes

DT: Chris Canty, Linval Joseph (NT), Marvin Austin, Gabe Watson (NT), Rocky Bernard, Dwayne Hendricks, Irahim Abdulai

DE: Justin Tuck, Osi Umenyiora, Mathias Kiwanuka, Jason Pierre-Paul, Dave Tollefson, Ayanga Okpokowuruk, Adrian Tracy, Justin Trattou, Alex Hall, Craig Marshall

MLB: Jonathan Goff, Phillip Dillard, Greg Jones

OLB: Michael Boley (W), Clint Sintim (S), Zack DeOssie, Adrian Tracy (S), Jacquian Williams, Kenny Ingram, Mark Herzlich, Spencer Paysinger

CB: Corey Webster, Aaron Ross, Terrell Thomas, Prince Amukamara (inj), Brian Jackson, Michael Coe, Brian Witherspoon, Cary Harris, Woodny Turenne, Joe Burnett, Darnell Burks, Bruce Johnson (IR)

S: Antrel Rolle (FS), Kenny Phillips (SS), Tyler Sash, David Sims, Jarrad Tarrant, Chad Jones (IR)

New York Jets

QB: For the New York Jets, the key to this year is the further development of Mark Sanchez, who knows he needs to take a leap forward in his game if the Jets are to reach the Super Bowl. Prior to the open of Training Camp, **Sanchez set a goal for himself of increasing his completion percentage to 65-70%**. That's a high bar to set but Sanchez knows he has to aim high in order to improve. "It's my job to elevate my game," Sanchez said, "and get all of us better." He's already become a key leader for the team, putting together practices during the lockout and being named a team captain. Part of his work this week was renewing chemistry with Santonio Holmes and building it with guys like Plaxico Burress and rookies Scotty McKnight and Jeremy Kerley. It's been hard in Plax's case as he tweaked his ankle before even practicing with Sanchez, but

the young quarterback spent plenty of time on the sidelines discussing the offense with his newest weapon. It's vital Sanchez get on the same page with all these receivers as **the Jets have said they are going to open up the pass game this season**. For all the talk though, the quarterbacks struggled in week one of training camp. Sometimes Sanchez connecting with his targets, sometimes struggling although some of that can be chalked up to many of his vets were on the sideline for part of the week since they had just signed or renegotiated contracts. Sanchez played better when they showed up on the field, reminding us that a timing offense like this needs all its ingredients. **Rookie Greg McElroy struggled some as well, throwing some bad passes, but impressing the staff with his knowledge of the playbook**. McElroy is a very smart player and it makes sense that while he's got a ways to go on the field, he's ahead of the curve in the classroom. Mark Brunell returned to the team with the rest of the vets and a new contract on Thursday.

RB: Rex Ryan says teams will be seeing a lot of Shonn Greene this season as veteran LaDainian Tomlinson is relegated primarily to a third down role. Greene has begun to show some versatility in camp as well and **Ryan noted his improvement in the pass game**. "He's catching the ball much better than he has," Ryan said. Reporters have noted he isn't body catching the ball as he has in the past, which makes him more fluid and better able to gain yards on a catch. While Tomlinson took a pay cut and accepted a more limited role on the team, he's also said he feels he has something left in the tank. His week was up and down, one moment beating LB David Harris in space on a long catch and run, the next minute having S Eric Smith rip a ball from his hands. Meanwhile the battle between second year back Joe McKnight and rookie Bilal Powell has begun to turn a little bit in McKnight's favor. Powell has looked a bit slow in hitting the hole, likely in part because he's overthinking the play as rookies tend to. McKnight has shown some explosiveness in the open field and catching the ball well for the most part, save for some bad drops on Thursday. Regardless he has really turned things around after a nauseating rookie training camp and a lackluster first season. It's long from done, but McKnight is winning himself a piece of the ball. FB John Conner is still literally knocking people out in practice (this week's victim, rookie LB Matthias Berning) and is set to take over full time from the departed Tony Richardson.

WR: It took most of the week but on Thursday, most of the Jets' wide receiver corps was in place again. Santonio Holmes returned Thursday and made some nice catches although the whole offense was still getting back into synch. New addition Plaxico Burress injured his ankle earlier in the week before he even got on the field, practicing on the side with Holmes but finally saw the field Sunday and caught passes. He will start team drills this coming week. Burress, along with the other new Jet WR Derrick Mason, will have a very short time to get acclimated to the offense and Sanchez. Mason spent the weekend clearing medical and filling out paperwork. **He is expected to fill the slot in place of the departed Jerricho Cotchery as well as protect the team against further Burress injuries**. The story of week one was rookie Jeremy Kerley, who received a lot of reps with the vets out, often in the slot. **Kerley was lighting up the practice field all week** and made very few mistakes. He also seems to be building a rapport

with Sanchez, who said of the rookie, "He's a baller. There's always one big surprise at camp. For a guy who didn't know much of the playbook, he's picked it up really fast." Seventh round pick Scotty McKnight has also showed some promise but his production has been a bit inconsistent so far.

TE: Dustin Keller had a solid first week of camp, **finishing things off Sunday with some great work in 1-on-1 drills Sunday**. Keller could be poised to see a significant increase in production as Rich Cimini of ESPN **New York feels that with so many new faces at wide receiver, Keller will be a stabilizing force for Sanchez**. With Tom Moore on board (a guy who increased Dallas Clark's role in Indy) and Braylon Edwards, Jerricho Cotchery and Brad Smith gone, the opportunity is there. Keller has also added weight, which should help him in run blocking duties. Jeff Cumberland had a solid preseason in 2010 but didn't do anything during the actual season. He'll look to recover some of his momentum in the next couple of weeks.

Defense: As has been the case since Rex Ryan came on board, the defense has made life hard for the offense so far, though of course much of the week they were facing a unit that lacked many of its playmakers. With Shaun Ellis leaving for New England, **Muhammad Wilkerson will be slotted in right away at defensive end**. He'll likely move inside at times to free up Calvin Pace and Jamaal Westerman to harass the quarterback. Wilkerson had some good moments this week, but showed he still has some work to do when he was shut down in one-on-one pass-rush drills by a first year free agent, G Dennis Landolt. He'll have to step it up quick against the ones. Back to Calvin Pace, **it was recently revealed he was never healthy after surgery on a broken right foot**, which explains in part the mediocre year he had. Having Pace at 100% will be a big benefit to the Jets as will having David Harris back and signed for the next four years. "I think he's one of the top linebackers in football, there's absolutely no question," Ryan said. While the Jets were disappointed free agent Nnamdi Asomugha went to Philly, CB Antonio Cromartie was happy to be back **and says he harbors no ill will for the Jets' pursuit of Asomugha**. "Just know I have a big chip on my shoulder," he said on Monday. "Expect something big this year." He and Darelle Revis returned to their old ways, generating multiple deflected passes and interceptions throughout the week.

Second year CB Kyle Wilson also looks good according to Ryan. Wilson made more than a few mistakes in 2010 and got flagged far too often. If he has a good preseason, he will probably get a shot as a nickel back. With the return of Eric Smith and Brodney Pool continued to look good at the safety positions once they arrived in camp.

Special Teams: Tanner Purdum is back for a second year at long snapper. The other two specialist roles are up for competition during August. At punter, T.J. Conley is back for his third consecutive camp and hoping the third time is a proverbial charm. His competition is Australian Chris Bryan who punted for Tampa Bay last September. At kicker, Nick Folk was re-signed to a one-year deal, but he'll have to win the right to keep his job. He'll be challenged by a resurgent Nick Novak who is coming off a strong showing in the UFL last

year. Novak took the early lead on their first day of kicking in camp going 4-of-4, while Folk went 2-of-4.

Jets Depth Chart

QB: Mark Sanchez, Mark Brunell, Greg McElroy, Drew Willy

RB: Shonn Greene, LaDainian Tomlinson (3RB/SD), Joe McKnight, Bilal Powell, Chris Jennings

FB: John Conner, Josh Baker (TE)

WR: Santonio Holmes, Derrick Mason, Plaxico

Burress, Jeremy Kerley, Patrick Turner, Scotty McKnight, Logan Payne, Courtney Smith, Michael Campbell, Dan DePalma

TE: Dustin Keller, Matthew Mulligan, Jeff Cumberland, Collin Franklin

K: Nick Folk, Nick Novak

DT: Sione Pouha (NT), Mike Devito, Marcus Dixon (NT), Jarron Gilbert, Martin Tevaseu

DE: Muhammad Wilkerson, Kenrick Ellis, Matt Kroul, Ropati Pitoitua, Trevor Pryce, Mike DeVito, Lorenzo Washington

ILB: David Harris (M), Bart Scott (L), Josh Mauga (M), Nick Bellore, Stafford Gaitling

OLB: Calvin Pace, Bryan Thomas, Jamaal Westerman, Garrett McIntyre, Brashton Satele, Brian Toal

CB: Darrelle Revis, Antonio Cromartie, Kyle Wilson, Donald Strickland, Marquice Cole, Julian Posey, Ellis Lankster

S: Jim Leonhard (inj), Dwight Lowery (CB/FS), Brodney Pool (SS), Eric Smith (SS), DaJuan Morgan, Emmanuel Cook, Byron Landor, Davon Morgan

Oakland Raiders

QB: The early results are mixed for Jason Campbell and the Raiders passing game. Campbell has shown he has plenty of arm strength and accuracy to fulfill Al Davis's vision in a vertical passing game, but as the San Francisco Chronicle suggests, they **better get some better blockers**. The Raiders have to improve their pass protection if Campbell is going to take a lot of five- and seven—step drops. Campbell has impressed HC Hue Jackson with his leadership and command of the offense, though. He was given Friday off to rest his arm, but looked a tad rusty when he rejoined the team on Saturday. "Jason Campbell is the starter of this team, doing great and leading this team," Jackson said. "I'm excited about him. The thing I like the most is, sometimes things don't go right, and Jason keeps his poise. That's what a quarterback has to do. Your team has to know, when things get a little off, all of a sudden you're not going to cave in. He doesn't cave in. It's like, 'Coach give me the next play, let's go.' That's the kind of quarterback I want on my team." Kyle Boller returns and he'll compete with Trent Edwards for the backup spot. Neither player is particularly exciting if the Raiders are without Campbell for any stretch of time or games. On Friday, Boller worked with the first team while Edwards handled the second-team reps.

RB: The thing about Darren McFadden is that he is so talented, but also quite risky when it comes to durability concerns. McFadden was off to a roaring start to camp making numerous

big plays while flashing his speed and underrated toughness before suffering a fractured orbital bone in his eye. He'll miss two weeks. On the surface it sounds bad, but he'll be fine and it's probably more of a blessing in disguise as it will prevent McFadden from more injury risk playing in meaningless games. The Raiders offense didn't chance during the off-season, so McFadden knows the offense and he can hit the ground running for the last couple of preseason games. It gives Michael Bush plenty of reps, too. Bush reported on Saturday and signed his one-year, \$2.61m tender as a restricted free agent. He rejoined the team by working with the first team off the bat. While he's clearly the backup to McFadden, he also figures to get some looks in short-yardage situations and to spell McFadden and preserve him for the rigors of a 16 game slate. Michael Bennett missed a couple days, but returned to practice on Friday.

WR: The star of camp thus far has unquestionably been rookie fifth round pick Denarius Moore. Jackson singled out Moore for his sustained great play throughout the first week. "Wow! He's a tremendous young player," Jackson said. "I mean when you look around, every time you look up, there's No. 17 making a play." Campbell **made the comparison to Jacoby Ford**, who surprised everyone last year after falling in the draft. "He's so talented, he's so athletic," said Campbell. "...Some things you just can't coach, he has about him. He's a guy that can add a lot to our offense this year." Jackson later had more praise to heap saying, "Every day there's something. A ball goes up, he comes down with it and makes a play... The game is not too big for him. **There is no fear in the young man.**" Moore has impressed on and off the field. Boller couldn't believe how quickly he has picked up the offense. "Most of these rookies, their head is spinning," Boller said. "He might be at his most comfortable when he goes up to catch the ball." Even Moore, who is avoiding all media during camp, admitted, "I didn't think I'd catch on this quickly." Moore's plays have been numerous. On Friday, he put a move on DeMarcus Van Dyke and flew downfield for a long TD. Later, he made a great catch in traffic on a well-thrown ball over the middle. On Saturday, he was jammed by SS Tyvon Branch, but kept working and reeled in a pass from Boller with one hand not allowing Branch to break it up. He beat Van Dyke again and made a nice catch despite good coverage by Van Dyke and Hiram Eugene. The coaches have responded by putting Moore into the lineup with the starters at the end of practice for red zone drills. Moore had a few drops along the way, but has otherwise been ridiculous.

Louis Murphy has been **nicked up**, which has caused him to miss plenty of practice. The same with Darrius Heyward-Bey, who practiced for a third straight days in limited drills. Whatever was ailing DHB remains a mystery. Ironically, Chaz Schilens got extra snaps along with Moore taking advantage of Murphy and Heyward-Bey's absence. The Raiders added Chad Jackson and Derek Hagan over the weekend, but neither player seems a good candidate to make the roster.

TE: Gone is Zach Miller and replacing him is former Giants starter Kevin Boss, who signed a four-year, \$16 million contract. Of course, Boss isn't the receiver that Miller is, but he is a better blocker and certainly adequate in the passing game.

When Boss met with HC Jackson to work out for the Raiders last week, he knew it was the right place for him. "The moment I met Coach Jackson, I could just feel his energy and it was just exciting for me," Boss said. "Within moments of meeting him, I felt on board with his ideas and, like he was saying, his passion for the game, just his energy, is just exciting to be around and just thrilled to be a part of it now." Getting extra snaps before Boss joined the team, Brandon Myers made a nice sliding catch in Friday's practice. Rookie David Ausberry got credit for the play of the day when he snared a ball with one hand as he landed on the ground. "I know I can make the plays, they know I can make them," Ausberry said. "I'm trying to get that respect and get on the field to help."

Defense: The Raiders lost their best player via free agency when Nnamdi Asomugha signed with the Eagles. Despite that, they return the rest of their starters and with Rolando McClain leading the way at MLB, the defense looks like they're planning to be more physical. McClain has taken Hue Jackson's challenge not accept simply being good, but aiming to be great. So far, **McClain isn't disappointing**. "We're still working," McClain said. "We want to make a name for ourselves and be one of the great Raider defenses here, so that's what we're striving for right now." During the offseason, McClain watched film and took up swimming to shed 5 or 6 pounds and get faster. Jackson has raved about McClain almost every day.

Special Teams: All three of the Raiders specialist stalwarts are back for 2011. Kicker Sebastian Janikowski continues to keep a surprisingly low profile. Punter Shane Lechler continues to be mentioned in the media for his prescient comments made back when Tom Cable was fired. Long snapper Jon Condo will continue snapping after being re-signed following the lockout. The only other specialist on the roster in camp is punter Glenn Pakulak, who's now better known for venturing into the reality television scene via *Most Eligible Dallas*.

Raiders Depth Chart

QB: Jason Campbell, Kyle Boller, Trent Edwards

RB: Darren McFadden (inj), Michael Bush, Taiwan Jones, Michael Bennett

FB: Marcel Reece, Rock Cartwright, James McCluskey

WR: Louis Murphy (inj), Jacoby Ford (KR) (inj), Darrius Heyward-Bey, Denarius Moore, Chaz Schilens, Nick Miller (PR), Chad Jackson, Derek Hagan, Shawn Bayes, Eddie McGee

TE: Kevin Boss, Brandon Myers, Richard Gordon, David Ausberry

K: Sebastian Janikowski

DT: Richard Seymour (DE), Tommy Kelly, John Henderson, Desmond Bryant

DE: Lamarr Houston (DT), Matt Shaughnessy, Trevor Scott (inj), Jarvis Moss

MLB: Rolando McClain, Travis Goethel

OLB: Kamerion Wimbley (DE), Quentin Groves (W/DE), Sam Williams, Bruce Davis, Darryl Blackstock

CB: Stanford Routt, Chris Johnson (inj), Walter McFadden, Jeremy Ware, Demarcus Van Dyke, Chimdi Chekwa

S: Michael Huff (FS), Tyvon Branch (SS), Mike Mitchell (SS/FS), Stevie Brown

Philadelphia Eagles

QB: The Eagles and Michael Vick's agent have begun talks about a contract extension, and it's expected a new multi-year deal could be in place before the season begins. On the field, Vick is focusing his training camp on one major goal – handling the blitz better. In spite of an MVP-caliber 2010, Vick struggled at times with complex blitzes, so he and the coaches have made that a focal point of their offseason program. Offensive coordinator Marty Mornhinweg is confident Vick is ready to take the next step: "He's doing an outstanding job," Mornhinweg said. "He's a very bright guy. He picks things up very quickly. He's got a natural feel of the game. He'll be very, very good [against the blitz], and that's part of that last step in his sort of evolution. He can light it up as a quarterback right now. And then now he takes that extra step and he becomes a surgeon. That's the next step." New backup Vince Young made headlines for crowning the Eagles a "dream team", but has a tough job ahead of him in the coming weeks – adjusting to one of the more complex and nuanced playbooks in the league. Head coach Andy Reid has promised that Young will see a lot of preseason snaps in anticipation of his being Vick's primary backup on game days.

RB: LeSean McCoy looks every bit as explosive and versatile as he did in 2010 – when he emerged as one of the NFL's best young runners. It seems that every practice has yielded a "wow" moment, with McCoy showing great patience and vision. He's also displaying more vocal leadership. New backup Ronnie Brown is an imposing figure, and has looked good in the first few practices (free agents weren't allowed to take the field until August 4th). Brown reportedly had offers from three other teams, for more money, but chose Philadelphia for a chance to win. "I guess at this point in my career, it's not so much the financial standpoint for me," Brown said. "It was more about winning and putting myself in a good situation where I felt comfortable, where I'd be on a team that made winning a priority."

WR: The Eagles do not negotiate with hold outs, and DeSean Jackson predictably ended his 11-day hold out on Monday (August 8th). Jackson had little choice, because a failure to report would've meant a loss of an accrued season, making him the Eagles "property" in 2012. Jackson said all the right things upon his return: "Honestly man, it feels good to be back. I've been sitting around kind of itching, waiting just to get back out here with my teammates. The atmosphere, everything feels good. With the lockout being so long, and then with the lockout ending, I've just been kind of sitting around waiting. I feel good to be back and I'm happy to be back out here with my teammates and everything like that." The reality is that in spite of major free agent activity, the Eagles have the cap space to restructure Jackson – and will likely do so in short order. His running mate – Jeremy Maclin – is the real concern. Maclin supposedly lost 10-15 pounds in the offseason due to a bout of mononucleosis, but now rumors are rampant that he may be suffering from a more serious illness. We won't speculate beyond that, other than to note he's yet to practice during

camp. If Maclin were to be sidelined for any period of time, long-time slot option Jason Avant would be ready to step in.

TE: Brent Celek's role in the passing game took a step back last year, as the team asked him to stay in and block more. This year with the additions on the offensive line, and the signing of Donald Lee – a powerful blocking TE – Celek is going to see more targets. Some were concerned that Celek didn't have good chemistry with Michael Vick – if that was true last year, it appears to be a thing of the past. “[Vick]’s doing great,” Celek said. “He’s picking up everything. The throws he’s having are on point every single time. I can’t say enough good things about him. He’s really impressed me. He’s even becoming a bigger leader on this team.”

Defense: The Eagles frenzied offseason has given the local media plenty of stories. On the defensive line, DT Mike Patterson had a seizure last week and was later diagnosed with arteriovenous malformation, which essentially means his nerve endings at the base of his skull are tangled. The good news is Patterson should be able to make a full recovery and live a healthy life, but what his near-term role on the Eagles remains in question. His agent is making overtures that Patterson will be able to play, but the Eagles are staying quiet until the doctors give a more definitive outlook. The Eagles decision to trade Brodrick Bunkley to Denver might have been a bit premature given the Patterson situation, but the team is not without alternatives. Free agent Cullen Jenkins is a major upgrade at the position, and will be joined either by Anthony Dixon or veteran Anthony Hargrove. On the outside, Trent Cole gets a new running mate with Jason Babin – who returned to Philadelphia after a breakthrough year with the Titans. In the secondary, the story has been the arrival of Nnamdi Asomugha – who has been well spoken and widely available to fans and the media – as well as what Asante Samuel's future holds. Samuel was understandably upset at reports he might be benched in favor of Asomugha and Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, but he hasn't let the impact his practice intensity. Cooler heads have prevailed and Samuel and Asomugha are lining up as starters, with DRC as the slot/nickel CB. The Eagles first depth chart surprisingly listed 2nd year Nate Allen as the starting STRONG safety, rather than the free safety position he played a year ago. New defensive coordinator Juan Castillo downplayed the designation, saying that the Eagles scheme treats both safeties interchangeably.

Special Teams: Magician / long snapper Jon Dorenbos is still around, but kicker David Akers and punter Sav Rocca are gone via free agency. Their roles will be filled by a pair of highly touted rookies. The Eagles drafted the top rated kicker in this year's class, Alex Henery out of Nebraska. He is the most accurate kicker in NCAA history. They also signed undrafted punter Chas Henry from Florida. He won the Ray Guy Award last year. Special teams coordinator Bobby April noted, "They've both been in high-pressure situations, and they have not succumbed to any pressure at this point, and we don't expect they will at any point. That's the good thing about their background.... we're very happy we have them."

Eagles Depth Chart

QB: Michael Vick, Vince Young, Mike Kafka, Jerrod Johnson

RB: LeSean McCoy, Ronnie Brown, Eldra Buckley (KR), Dion Lewis, Graig Cooper, Derrick Locke

FB: Owen Schmitt, Stanley Havili

WR: DeSean Jackson (PR), Jeremy Maclin (inj), Jason Avant, Riley Cooper, Chad Hall, Sinorice Moss, Johnnie Lee Higgins (KR), DeAndre Brown, Terrance Turner, Rod Harper, Keith Carlos, Jeremy LaFrance, Gerald Jones

TE: Brent Celek, Clay Harbor, Donald Lee, Cornelius Ingram, Martell Webb

K: Alex Henery

DT: Mike Patterson (inj), Antonio Dixon, Cullen Jenkins, Anthony Hargrove, Derek Landri, Trevor Laws (inj), Marlon Favorite, Cedric Thornton

DE: Trent Cole, Juqua Parker, Jason Babin, Darryl Tapp, Brandon Graham (inj), Daniel Te'o-Nesheim, Phillip Hunt

MLB: Casey Matthews, Greg Lloyd

OLB: Moise Fokou (W), Jamar Chaney (S), Keenan Clayton (W), Akeem Jordan (S), Brian Rolle, Richard Jeanty, Chris Wilson, Brandon Peguese, Terence Thomas

CB: Nnamdi Asomugha, Asante Samuel, Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, Joselio Hanson, Trevard Lindley, Curtis Marsh, Brandon Hughes, Jorrick Calvin (KR), Jamar Wall, Isaiah Trufant

S: Nate Allen (FS) (inj), Kurt Coleman (SS), Jaiquawn Jarrett (SS), Marlin Jackson (FS) (inj), Jarrad Page (SS), Colt Anderson (SS), Jamar Adams (SS)

Pittsburgh Steelers

QB: Ben Roethlisberger hasn't been held back by it in the past, but it isn't comforting that he'll have to be dealing with change again on an offensive line that was sub-par to begin with. 2010 right tackle Max Starks was cut after showing up out of shape, and left tackle Flozell Adams was also released in a cap savings move. Right tackle Willie Colon was re-signed to a five-year, 29 million dollar deal, with 7.5 million guaranteed after missing all of 2010 with a torn Achilles tendon. Johnathan Scott is expected to play left tackle and Ramon Foster and Doug Legursky will compete for the right guard position. Foster suffered a concussion and Scott an ankle injury in the first week of camp, but neither is expected to keep them sidelined for a long period. 2010 fifth round pick Chris Scott is also having a great camp and may get in the battle for the right guard job. Roethlisberger has been very sharp early in camp, even displaying some running ability, and backup Byron Leftwich started bad, but has been improving. The #3 quarterback job is up in the air between grizzled vet Charlie Batch and youngster Dennis Dixon. Dixon didn't sign his fifth-round tender at first and asked for a trade, but eventually showed up and accepted the contract. He was also unimpressive early in camp, wanting to run instead of break down the defense with his arm, but Dixon came on by the weekend to throw well with timing and confidence.

RB: The Steelers backfield belongs to Rashard Mendenhall and he has had a strong start to camp to indicate that he is primed to put up a top 10 fantasy RB season. Behind Mendenhall things get much less clear. The team needed a third-down back and

they decided to draft Baron Batch out of Texas Tech in the seventh round in addition to re-signing veteran Mewelde Moore. Moore is a well-known and proven commodity, but Batch is getting universally good reviews in camp, especially as a blocker. He is a solid all-around back who may stick with this team for a long time. Isaac Redman has been quiet, but he is still likely set as the primary backup to Mendenhall with his powerful running style. Jonathan Dwyer, the talented back who fell to the sixth round last year because of concerns about him on and off the field, has been nearly invisible according to reports. His effort has been inconsistent and he may not even survive the initial set of training camp cuts. The Steelers also added a back among the undrafted free agents they signed, the latest in a long line of Wisconsin big backs, John Clay. Clay has been mostly nondescript in camp and will be lucky to make the practice squad.

WR: The Steelers have some work to do at wide receiver, and no, it's not in the quest to make Mike Wallace the first 2,000 yard receiver, even though he said he wants to do it. Hines Ward is still set to be the #2 receiver and he returned to practice on Monday after starting camp on the PUP with a thumb injury. The #3 wide receiver this year was expected to be Emmanuel Sanders, who had built so much momentum last year that you wondered if he could overtake Ward this year. Well, we found out when camp opened that Sanders actually had surgery on both feet this offseason, not just the one he broke in the super bowl, and now he's out for at least another two weeks after having an injection treatment in the left foot to help its healing from a stress fracture. It's hard to count on anything from Sanders early in the season, and the team jettisoned veteran depth in Antwaan Randle-el to get under the cap. So where do they go from here?

Antonio Brown has been getting a ton of time with the first team while Ward was out, and he is set to be the #3 receiver right now for as long as Sanders is out. Brown has made some spectacular plays in camp, but he has also made some spectacular gaffes. The Steelers appear ready to count on Brown in three-wide sets, but they are also looking into other more established options. Plaxico Burress came and went - specifically to the Jets - and Jerricho Cotchery has also visited now, only to leave without a contract. While this doesn't show the greatest confidence in Brown, it also shows the team is willing to give him a chance to elevate his game to seize a semi-regular role. This might be the most fluid situation to watch in Steelers camp.

With Randle-el gone, the #5 wide receiver job is wide open. Candidates include: Limas Sweed, who was building some momentum on the comeback trail before suffering a sprained shoulder, Tyler Gresham, who has been around the Steelers for a while and has a solid possession receiver game, and Arnaz Battle, the special teams ace who has had some issues with back spasms so far in camp. A few undrafted free agents are turning heads too, Armand Robinson from Miami-Ohio, Roethlisberger's college and Wes Lyons, who actually came out in 2009, but was out of football last season and signed with the Steelers in the offseason. Robinson has combined decent size, speed, toughness, and sure hands to make his mark, and Lyons 6'8" frame will remind Steelers fans of Weegie

Thompson. They are long shots to win the #5 role, but either or both could end up on the team's practice squad.

TE: The Steelers are set at #1 TE with Heath Miller, and he should be poised for a bounce back fantasy year with good health and some of the issues creeping up at wide receiver. #2 TE Matt Spaeth left for Chicago in free agency, but Steelers fans won't miss him and his drops at crucial times in the game. The team signed massive athletic undrafted rookie Weslye Saunders, and trusted beat writer Ed Bouchette said the team does like him even though he has a lot of work to do. Saunders has looked good in backs on backers and could make the team or practice squad if they don't think someone else will steal him. They signed John Gilmore, a decent two-way depth TE, and beat writer Gerry Dulac thinks they could sign another TE, possibly blocking specialist Reggie Kelly. Holdover TE/FB David Johnson has had a good camp so far, especially catching the ball, so he could land that #2 job when the dust settles.

Defense After firebrand LB James Harrison had few kind words for NFL commissioner Roger Goodell in his infamous offseason Men's Journal interview, the Steelers voted no on CBA as a message to Goodell, led by team representative Ryan Clark. Clark said Goodell's complete power over the fine process was a "deal-breaker". Elsewhere, the team locked down stud OLB LaMarr Woodley to a six-year, 61.5 million dollar deal with a whopping 22.5 million dollar signing bonus, and yes, dinner is on Woodley according to his teammate. Starting corner Ike Taylor was also re-signed to a four-year, 28.5 million dollar deal with a 7.5 million dollar bonus. Chances are, he won't play that contract until its conclusion. The Steelers are expected to turn their attention to signing star safety Troy Polamalu next. Polamalu has been resting early in camp to ease his return from an Achilles injury.

First-round pick DE Cam Heyward has been mentored by 2009 first-round pick Ziggy Hood with good results. Heyward hasn't been showing Hood's level of strength in practice, but he looks quicker and better suited to create pressure on the quarterback. Second-year LBs Jason Worilds and Stevenson Sylvester are in the spotlight and being expected to step up their games this year. Worilds has been "ridden all over the field" by Mike Tomlin according to one reports and the team wants him to spell James Harrison as he is coming off of offseason back surgery. Sylvester has drawn raves almost every day and he was called one of the stars of the practice scrimmage game. He is learning all four linebacker positions now, including James Farrior's buck position, which could conceivably come open as early as next year.

Special Teams: After parting ways with kicker Jeff Reed last season, Shaun Suisham was signed to finish the year and then re-signed following the lockout. Although Suisham is certainly the favorite to keep the job, Swayze Waters has been in various NFL camps in recent years and could conceivably challenge. The biggest question is at punter. Can Dan Sepulveda bounce back from his second serious knee injury? Or, will his replacement from last year, Jeremy Kapinos, retain the job? Sepulveda can look for inspiration via long snapper Greg Warren, who bounced back last year after two years of ACL injuries.

Steelers Depth Chart

QB: Ben Roethlisberger, Byron Leftwich, Charlie Batch, Dennis Dixon

RB: Rashard Mendenhall, Isaac Redman (SD), Mewelde Moore (3RB), Jonathan Dwyer, Baron Batch, John Clay

FB: David Johnson (TE)

WR: Hines Ward, Mike Wallace, Emmanuel Sanders (KR) (inj), Antonio Brown (KR), Arnaz Battle, Limas Sweed, Tyler Grisham, Terrence McCrae, Armand Robinson, Adam Mims, Eric Greenwood

TE: Heath Miller (inj), John Gilmore, Weslye Saunders, Vaughn Charlton

K: Shaun Suisham

NT: Casey Hampton, Chris Hoke, Steve McLendon (inj), Anthony Gray

DE: Aaron Smith, Brett Keisel, Evander Hood, Cameron Heyward, Miguel Chavis

ILB: James Farrior (L), Lawrence Timmons (R), Larry Foote (R), Stevenson Sylvester (R), Mario Harvey

OLB: James Harrison (R), LaMarr Woodley (L), Jason Worilds (L), Christopher Carter, Eric Clanton

CB: Bryant McFadden, Ike Taylor, Keenan Lewis, William Gay, Crezdon Butler, Curtis Brown, Cortez Allen, Tuff Harris (RFA), Niles Brinkley

S: Troy Polamalu (SS) (inj), Ryan Clark (SS), Ryan Mundy (FS), Will Allen (SS), Brent Greenwood

St. Louis Rams

QB: Sam Bradford looks like he's ready to take the next step after having one of the best rookie seasons on record for NFL quarterbacks. He should have no shortage of opportunity either with Josh McDaniels running the offense. It looks like HC Steve Spagnuolo is letting McDaniels call the shots on that side of the ball without much interference. If McDaniels is true to form that means an increase in pass attempts for Bradford and a likely move up the ranks of fantasy quarterbacks. In Friday's practice, Bradford was nearly perfect. His throws were accurate and well timed. He didn't seem to make a mistake. Leading the first team, they dominated the defense in 11-on-11s. Bradford had the offense running like clockwork and even backup A.J. Feeley looked good. Thaddeus Lewis and Taylor Potts didn't fare as well, each threw interceptions.

RB: Steven Jackson is openly lobbying to have a bigger role in the passing game. We'll see if that transpires under McDaniels but Jackson has caught 90 passes in the past, but he has barely touched 50 in any season since 2006. The Rams added Cadillac Williams and Jerious Norwood for depth after getting by with Kenneth Darby for the last two seasons. Williams has plenty of heart and made significant contributions catching the ball last year, but he averaged barely more than two yards per carry with the Bucs, so it remains to be seen if he or Norwood will make much of an impact, if any. Norwood appears to be headed for kick return duties while Williams may help prevent Jackson from that bigger role in the passing game. In Williams' first practice, he ran with the 1s and looked good generally while producing a few nice gains. In goal line drills, the defense was much better than the offense – a disturbing sign

for a team that has not generated many scoring opportunities for Jackson the last couple of years. The first team offense, without Jackson, failed to score against the second team defense. The running plays were generally failures with many of them losing yards.

WR: The Rams picture at wide receiver is as unclear as it gets. Mike Sims-Walker is probably the most talented player on the roster, but he joins the team as a free agent and needs to learn the playbook and offense. Donnie Avery is coming off a season-ending knee injury and he's being eased back into practice. Sims-Walker **gave himself a mixed review** after his first practice. "I was rushing a lot of things," he said. "I was just so anxious to be out there, trying to make a play, trying to impress. But I'm pretty sure it'll slow down for me and I'll be back to my old self in no time." Sims-Walker has been inconsistent over the last two years with the Jaguars, but perhaps he could put up bigger numbers playing with Sam Bradford, who is certainly more accurate, if not more talented than Garrard. Meanwhile, the Rams rookies have been among the quickest to learn the playbook. Greg Salas and Austin Pettis caught HC Spagnuolo's eye. "They don't look like normal rookies to me," Spagnuolo said, which is good news for Salas, who missed a few practices with a sore knee. The Rams are currently eight-deep with nobody's role set in stone. In Sunday's scrimmage, Sims-Walker and Brandon Gibson worked with the second-team while Danny Amendola resumed his role in the slot where he was targeted with several, short quick throws from Bradford. Mardy Gilyard had one of the best catches early on with a 15-yarder working with the 2s. In Friday's practice, Gibson, Pettis and Amendola were all solid. Gibson had a nice diving catch while Pettis displayed good hands and after the catch ability. Sims-Walker have a nice catch on a deep ball, but also dropped at least a couple passes. Avery looked good running routes while working with the twos.

TE: Don Banks from Sports Illustrated took in one practice last week and came away highly impressed by rookie Lance Kendricks. Banks reported: At Rams camp, where rookie tight end Lance Kendricks is off to a star-of-camp start early on. The 2nd-rd pick is going to be a weapon." Kendricks also shined during player-organized workouts during the lockout. The team plans to use him in a variety of ways. He can line up in the slot, backfield, out wide or go in motion as a move TE. He's a player to watch in preseason game and a player to consider at the back end of deeper leagues who could flourish like Rob Gronkowski and Aaron Hernandez did as rookie last year. Michael Hoomanawanui has been sidelined with a concussion.

Defense: The Rams added a few pieces to the defense via free agency and the draft, namely DE Robert Quinn and SS Quinton Mikell. They also shuffled the interior of their defensive line adding veterans Justin Bannan and Dan Muir while signing Zac Diles to be their weak-side linebacker. In Friday's practice, DE Chris Long was, at times, unblockable. He beat Jason Smith like a piñata at least a few times. Robbins left the field early after tweaking his knee. For now, it looks like Quinn will work into the rotation with Long and James Hall as a nickel rusher. Also on Friday, cornerback Jerome Murphy broke his ankle. He will need surgery and will miss the rest of the season.

Special Teams: The Rams enter training camp with five specialists on the roster. Josh Brown is back again at kicker. During the lockout he spent some time conditioning at a local high school, "I bought me some track spikes and I've been running with the track team a little bit. It's a good time. I'm definitely the slowest guy out there. But you know, I'm trying to stay in shape." Brown's now joined by recently signed camp leg Todd Carter, who would have been the Panthers kickoff specialist last year were it not for an injury. Donnie Jones is back again at punter. Chris Massey is back again at long snapper. He's joined by camp wrist Jacob McQuaide, an undrafted rookie out of Ohio State.

Rams Depth Chart

QB: Sam Bradford, A.J. Feeley, Taylor Potts

RB: Steven Jackson, Cadillac Williams, Jerious Norwood, Kenneth Darby (RFA), Keith Toston

FB: Mike Karney, Brit Miller

WR: Donnie Avery (inj), Mike Sims-Walker, Danario Alexander, Danny Amendola (PR/KR), Brandon Gibson, Mardy Gilyard, Greg Salas, Austin Pettis, Dominique Curry (inj), Brandon McRae

TE: Billy Bajema, Michael Hoomanawanui, Lance Kendricks, Fendi Onobun

K: Josh Brown

DT: Fred Robbins, Justin Bannan, Dan Muir, Darell Scott, Gary Gibson, Jermelle Cudjo, Arthur Thomas

DE: Chris Long, James Hall, Robert Quinn, C.J. Ah You, George Selvie, Eugene Sims

MLB: James Laurinaitis, Josh Hull

OLB: Zac Diles (W), Na'il Diggs (S) (inj), David Vobora (W), Brady Poppinga (S), Chris Chamberlain (RFA), Bryan Kehl (W), Jabara Williams, David Nixon

CB: Ronald Bartell, Bradley Fletcher, Justin King (inj), Jerome Murphy (inj), Quincy Butler (RFA), Mikail Baker, Jonathan Nelson, Al Harris, James Dockery, Dionte Dinkins

S: Quintin Mikell (SS), Craig Dahl, James Butler (SS) (inj), Jermale Hines (SS), Darian Stewart (FS)

San Diego Chargers

QB: There's no mystery or intrigue surrounding the Chargers' plans at quarterback. Philip Rivers is now the established team leader, and his job security as the starting QB is similar to that of the other elite signal-callers. No training camp battle here. Rivers is happy to have his full complement of weapons at his disposal, with Vincent Jackson and Malcom Floyd both in camp from the outset, and Antonio Gates returning from last year's foot injury. The backup QB position is also set. Billy Volek returns for his fifth year as a Charger, and his familiarity with the system makes him a lock for the #2 job. Volek signed a short-term (two-year) deal with the team, so UDFA Scott Tolzien may be viewed as the backup quarterback of the future. The Wisconsin product is smart and accurate, and gets rid of the ball quickly. He has some of the qualities of a young Drew Brees, and should make the Chargers' final 53-man roster because he'd likely be signed away by another team if he's placed on the practice squad.

RB: If Ryan Mathews stays healthy, he'll be the Chargers' lead back this season, while Mike Tolbert will be the change-of-pace and short-yardage back. That was also the plan heading into last season, however, so stay tuned. It was of some concern that Mathews struggled with conditioning drills early in training camp, but he's since gotten past that and has looked good in practice. Mathews showed impressive athletic talent last year, but acknowledges that he made some mistakes with ball security and his pass-protection assignments. While the plan is for Mathews to be the featured back, he must prove that he can protect the ball, protect Philip Rivers, and protect his own health. Even if he can do all those things, the Chargers would like to run the ball more frequently this season than they did last year, so there will be opportunities for Tolbert to get a fair number of touches. Rookie Jordan Todman will likely be the third RB, and may be asked to do a few of the things that Darren Sproles did so well for the past few seasons. Whether he can partially fill those shoes remains to be seen, but he does have the straight-ahead speed to be a dangerous threat in the open field.

WR: Vincent Jackson's 2010 season, characterized by a prolonged holdout followed by some nagging injuries, was mostly a waste. But he's back in 2011, playing under the franchise tag. The Chargers are unlikely to sign him to a long-term deal immediately, but he could receive a long-term offer following the season if he can stay out of trouble. (He could also be franchised again up to two more times.) Malcom Floyd tested the free agent waters, but ultimately returned to San Diego and will start opposite Jackson. Jackson and Floyd are both big targets who can get deep and make plays downfield. Along with Antonio Gates, they will also give opposing defenses fits in the red zone. Former Dallas Cowboys Patrick Crayton appeared ready to be the Chargers #2 receiver before Malcom Floyd re-signed, and will now occupy the slot. Crayton generally played well last season (his first with the Chargers), filling a niche that the team had been hoping former first-round-pick-turned-injury-bust Craig Davis would grow into. Crayton is well suited to the slot, and developed some chemistry with QB Rivers late last season, catching 23 passes for 420 yards in a five-game stretch before he hurt his wrist. Vincent Brown was the team's third-round pick this year, and should be in the mix to play right away. He has terrific hands, and WR coach Charlie Joiner believes that Brown will be able to get open against NFL defensive backs. Expect him to be the team's fourth WR, with his playing time perhaps increasing over the course of the season. Seyi Ajirotutu and Kelley Washington should round out the WR squad as the fifth and sixth receivers. Both are having strong camps. Ajirotutu is similar in some ways to Malcom Floyd, although he is less experienced and is not quite as natural a pass-catcher as Floyd is. (He may prove to be more durable than Floyd, however.) Richard Goodman will try to make the team as a kick returner, but will more likely find a spot on the practice squad.

TE: Antonio Gates began training camp on the PUP list, which means that last year's foot injury is still an issue. He is back at practice now, though, and running pretty well, so it looks like he'll be able to manage any lingering soreness during the season. He is expected to rest a few days each week through training camp, but maintains that once the games start, observers won't be able to tell that he's anything less than

100%. Optimism runs rampant in NFL training camps, however, so only time will tell if Gates can get to and stay at full strength. Randy McMichael returns as Gates' backup, but while he is solid as both a blocker and as an underneath receiver, his fantasy potential is nil in most leagues. If Gates misses time, the compensatory targets would likely go more to the WR and RB positions than to the backup TE.

Defense: Defensive coordinator Greg Manusky will replace Ron Rivera (who left for the head coaching job in Carolina), and will bring a more aggressive mindset to the defense. Expect more blitzing and more risk-taking in general. Rivera was highly respected in San Diego, but he did have a tendency to call off the heat once the team got a lead. Manusky is expected to keep the pressure on for the whole 60 minutes every week. The Chargers' defensive line, due to the team's 3-4 scheme, presents little fantasy potential. While Luis Castillo has not lived up to his contract, he is a solid run-defender who does many things well that don't show up in the box score (which is unfortunately, no help to his fantasy owners). First-round pick Corey Liuget is expected to start opposite Luis Castillo. Like Castillo, Liuget is considered to be a smart player with good instincts. Vaughn Martin will be Luis Castillo's backup. He played his college ball in Canada, but he's a natural athlete who's been in the NFL for two years now, so he'll be expected to make a significant contribution in the rotation. Inside, defensive tackle Antonio Garay had a fantastic year in 2010, but won't rack up the stats that fantasy owners covet. The top three ILBs from last season (Stephen Cooper, Kevin Burnett, and Brandon Siler) have all departed through free agency, so the Chargers will have a new look in the middle of the defense. Takeo Spikes can play either ILB position, so expect him to be on the field a lot. Next to Spikes, it is Donald Butler's job to lose. Butler was the Chargers' third-round draft pick last year, but missed the entire season with an Achilles injury. Behind them, rookie Jonas Mouton is expected to be next in the rotation. Butler and Mouton are both completely unproven, but the Chargers were willing to let Kevin Burnett leave in part because of their high hopes for the young ILBs. At OLB, the team is counting on former first-round pick Larry English to break out with at least a half dozen sacks this season. He needs to stay healthy and start living up to his potential. If he can't, he'll eventually go the way of WR Craig Davis, another first-rounder who couldn't stay healthy. The Chargers made a splash in free agency before the lockout by agreeing to terms with the talented but oft-injured Bob Sanders, who will start at strong safety. Sanders plays very aggressively, generally lining up close to the box, but anticipates well and makes good reads, so he is rarely out of position to make a play. His injury history is extensive, but he is healthy for the moment. The Chargers made it a huge priority to re-sign Eric Weddle this offseason, and ended up making him the highest paid safety in the NFL (an honor held at one point by Bob Sanders). Weddle has gotten comfortable in the Chargers' system, and while he enjoyed a very productive season in 2010, he was close to making a number of big plays that he just missed. If he starts making a few more of those, he'll justify his contract. Darrell Stuckey will back up Eric Weddle at free safety. The team's hopes were originally high for Stuckey last year (his rookie season) due to what appeared to be an opening in the secondary. But a training camp injury kept him from getting on track, and whatever opportunity there was to

compete for a starting job last season was slammed shut by the signing of Bob Sanders this year. At CB, Quentin Jammer has been playing at a high level, but his age will soon become a factor. Opposite Jammer, Antoine Cason steadily improved last season and appears to be a fixture at one starting CB spot for years to come. Dante Hughes came on strong at the end of last season, playing very well in November and December. He will try to hold off rookies Marcus Gilchrist and Shareece Wright for the nickel position.

Special Teams: The Chargers had an apparent long snapper injury curse last year. Long time veteran David Binn is expected to resume the role this year. One of last year's subsequent injury fill-ins, Mike Windt, remains on the roster heading into camp. The team is set as always with the other two specialists: kicker Nate Kaeding and punter Mike Scifres. Camp leg services are being provided by Ricky Schmitt. All are working under new special teams coordinator Rich Bisaccia, about whom Binn commented, "He's real intense and detail-oriented. I like him. I think he's got high energy and he's demanding, which is a good thing. I expect that our special teams will be very good this year."

Chargers Depth Chart

QB: Philip Rivers, Billy Volek

RB: Ryan Mathews, Mike Tolbert (SD/FB), Jordan Todman, Curtis Brinkley, Isaac Odum

FB: Jacob Hester

WR: Vincent Jackson, Malcom Floyd, Patrick Crayton, Vincent Brown, Laurent Robinson, Seji Ajirotutu, Kelley Washington, Cameron Kenney

TE: Antonio Gates (inj), Randy McMichael, Kory Sperry

K: Nate Kaeding

NT: Antonio Garay, Cam Thomas, Ogemdi Nwagbuo

DE: Luis Castillo, Corey Liuget, Jacques Cesaire, Vaughn Martin

ILB: Takeo Spikes, Jonas Mouton, James Holt, Donald Butler, Bront Bird

OLB: Shaun Phillips (S), Larry English (W) (inj), Travis LaBoy, Antwan Barnes, Andrew Gachkar, Kion Wilson

CB: Quentin Jammer, Antoine Cason (inj), Marcus Gilchrist, Shareece Wright, Dante Hughes

S: Eric Weddle (FS), Bob Sanders (SS), Steve Gregory (SS), Quinton Teal (SS), Darrell Stuckey (SS)

San Francisco 49ers

QB: Besides learning a new offense being installed by HC Jim Harbaugh and OC Greg Roman, Alex Smith is also getting used to wearing a brace. Harbaugh insists. His quarterbacks also wore them at **Stanford** to protect them against severe injuries when planting and throwing. Of course, Smith is back for another encore. To Smith's credit, he was a leader for the team during the lockout by organizing workouts and becoming somewhat of a coach in the absence of them. So far in camp, he's been his usual good, but not quite as consistent self that we've seen in previous stints. At times he doesn't look any better than rookie backup Colin Kaepernick. On Thursday, he

wasn't very sharp on his longer passes as was the case when he was easily intercepted by safety Curtis Taylor on a 25-yard pass attempt. Even though he led off-season workouts, the rust was still apparent. At the end of a two-minute drill, Smith was intercepted again after his pass bounced off the hands of Vernon Davis. Smith has been running the first-team, Kaepernick the second and Jeremiah Masoli the third. After Smith underthrew Ted Ginn on a deep ball Friday, he and Ginn connected on a 50+ yard touchdown during two minute drills at the end of Saturday's session. Not to be outdone, Colin Kaepernick **had a long pass play** down the opposite sideline to Kevin Jurovich. Also on Friday, Smith completed a 50-yarder to Joshua Morgan. Harbaugh has kept them honest, stopping a drill once when Smith didn't get a snap off before the two-minute warning. He also called a delay of game penalty on the first team with Smith behind center. Smith needs to improve his deep ball as many are underthrown or wobbly. Kaepernick was picked off twice last Tuesday by Reggie Smith. Harbaugh likes what he sees in Kaepernick calling him a "great guy, smart guy who's got a hose," before critiquing him for forcing passes when rolling out of the pocket. "That's part of the learning curve," Harbaugh said.

RB: Frank Gore ended his brief holdout and reported to the team's facility last Monday. Harbaugh hinted that the front office will work with him on a contract extension. One of the loudest collisions during the first week of practices came on Friday when Anthony Dixon barreled into linebacker Patrick Willis about 10 yards from the stands while riling up the defense with his physical play and chirping. The next day, Dixon was on the receiving end of a bone-jarring hit from Willis near the goal line that resulted in a fumble. Willis stood over Dixon taunting him and Dixon disappeared the rest of the day, presumably with a twisted ankle as he had it re-taped. Rookie fourth-round pick Kendall Hunter was a decent blocker at Oklahoma State despite his 5-7 frame, but he was overwhelmed at times during pass protection drills early in camp. Bruce Miller was activated from the PUP list. The team is converting him from linebacker to fullback to compete with Moran Norris and former Titan practice squader Jack Corcoran.

WR: Michael Crabtree remains sidelined and he will likely miss most, if not all, of his third consecutive preseason with a foot injury. The exact specifics of his injury remain unknown. With Crabtree a concern, the 49ers signed Braylon Edwards to a one-year non-guaranteed contract worth \$1m. Edwards donned the 81 jersey on his first day, but said he wasn't planning to wear that number. Edwards will compete with Joshua Morgan for a starting spot. Edwards will likely wind up starting along with Crabtree with Morgan sliding inside where Ted Ginn, Kyle Williams and Ron Johnson are all looking for reps. "Make no bones about it, I'm here to be the guy, to make plays and to complement whoever is on the other side, like if it's (tight end) Vernon (Davis)," said Edwards, "I didn't come to accept a quiet role. I'm here to make noise." He has made plenty of noise this off-season, unfortunately. He could be facing legal trouble for a recent fight involving his cousins in Michigan. Edwards hopes to avoid the wrath of Roger Goodell, but after pleading guilty to a DUI in July, it's very possible. "He's hit some potholes, and you don't want that to spiral any further down," Harbaugh said. "It's time to start doing all the

little things right. He knows that and is capable of that. He's a good guy. I'm looking forward to working with him."

TE: Vernon Davis and Delanie Walker are essentially co-starters as the 49ers have featured a lot of formations utilizing both of them. Listed on the two-deeps behind them are Colin Cloherty and Konrad Reuland, who are competing for reps at H-back as well.

Defense: The 49ers defense lost its anchor in NT Aubrayo Franklin and they've done some rearranging within their secondary, too. Nate Clements is gone and replacing him is former Redskins CB Carlos Rogers. While the 49ers ultimately re-signed FS Dashon Goldson after a nice game of free agent poker, they went out and added some veteran competition by the way of SS Donte Whitner and FS Madiou Williams. It's questionable how much, if any, those two represent an upgrade over Goldson and Reggie Smith. Rookie Aldon Smith has **impressed**. He has been strong off the edge, on one play he zipped around the line and plowed into FB Moran Norris with tremendous force to knock Norris to the ground. "Just knowing I can be physical at this level definitely helps my confidence," said Smith, the seventh overall draft pick. "That play helped me build my confidence, and I just did my job on that play." Meanwhile, the 49ers have let it be known to anyone in the league with an email address that S Taylor Mays is available for trade. So far no takers. On Monday, Reggie Smith was diagnosed with a torn meniscus in his knee, so he'll miss at least a couple of weeks to have arthroscopic surgery.

Special Teams: The 49ers have a promising kicker in Fabrizio Scaccia, but he won't be their placekicker on opening day. That job belongs to free agent acquisition David Akers, whom the team signed to replace Joe Nedney. Akers noted, "He had such a wonderful career here and what a great guy for the community and what he did for team was amazing. I'm not trying to replace Joe. I'm just trying to come out and do the same thing I was able to do in Philly." He joins two specialists with whom he worked at prior Pro Bowls: punter/holder Andy Lee and long snapper Brian Jennings. Of them Akers commented, "You know they're easy to work with. And they're true professionals and they'll do whatever they can to help you."

49ers Depth Chart

QB: Alex Smith, Colin Kaepernick, Jeremiah Masoli, McLeod Bethel-Thompson

RB: Frank Gore, Anthony Dixon (SD), Kendall Hunter, Xavier Omon, Seth Smith

FB: Moran Norris, Bruce Miller, Jack Corcoran

WR: Michael Crabtree (inj), Joshua Morgan, Ted Ginn (KR/PR), Braylon Edwards, Lance Long, Kyle Williams (PR), Ronald Johnson, Joe Hastings, Kevin Jurovich, Tyler Beiler, Chris Hogan, Dontavia Bogan (IR)

TE: Vernon Davis, Delanie Walker, Konrad Reuland (HB), Colin Cloherty (HB), Chris Blohm, Nate Byham (IR)

K: David Akers, Fabrizio Scaccia

NT: Isaac Sopoaga, Ricky Jean Francois, Sealver Siliga

DE: Justin Smith, Ray McDonald, DeMarcus Dobbs, Will Tukuafu, Ian Williams, Brian Bulcke

ILB: Patrick Willis (M), Navorro Bowman (T), Larry Grant, Keaton Kristick (M), Scott McKillop, Blake Costanzo, Alex Joseph

OLB: Parys Haralson (W), Ahmad Brooks (S), Aldon Smith, Antwan Applewhite, Thaddeus Gibson (S), Monte Simmons, Kenny Rowe

CB: Shawntae Spencer, Carlos Rogers, Tarell Brown, Chris Culliver, Tramaine Brock, Phillip Adams, Cory Nelms, Phillip Davis

S: Dashon Goldson (FS), Donte Whitner (SS), Reggie Smith (FS) (inj), Madiou Williams (FS), C.J. Spillman (SS), Taylor Mays (SS), Chris Maragos (FS), Curtis Taylor (FS), Anthony West (SS), Colin Jones (SS)

Seattle Seahawks

QB: On Friday, the Seahawks opened practices at full strength. Tarvaris Jackson led the first team offense. While working off the expected rust, Jackson showed good arm strength and a nice touch while throwing outside of the pocket. On the flipside, he also struggled with his timing and fumbled several snaps during team and 7-on-7s. Overall, he was pleased just to be there. "It felt good just to get a chance to get out there and practice with the guys," Jackson said. "I've been here for about a week now. And it's just been kind of frustrating to be on the sidelines watching. I was just anxious to get out there. And now we got a chance to get out there and get familiar with each other." A surprise player **who has impressed the past couple days** was third stringer Josh Portis. He also struggled with fumbled snaps and accuracy, but he made several impressive passes in Saturday's morning practice including a deep throw to rookie Ricardo Lockette, who jumped over Brandon Browner in the end zone for the score. "He's very confident, and he's really a talented kid," Carroll said. "He's got great feet. He's got great delivery and a very strong arm. And he's very poised about it. He's just been a real pleasant surprise."

RB: The team is installing new offensive line coach Tom Cable's zone blocking scheme and after just one week of practice, the results are encouraging as the group **looked pretty comfortable**. All three of the team's top backs, Marshawn Lynch, Justin Forsett and Leon Washington, bolted through running lanes for decent gains during team drills. The offensive linemen were executing up front and all three were making sharp cuts and getting into the second half of the defense. Newly signed OG Robert Gallery, who played for Cable in Oakland, says they just need to understand Cable's expectations and pace. "He pushes guys," Gallery said. "He wants you to push your body past where you thought it would go. I think that's the biggest thing – just the mentality he wants you to bring to the game. And in the style offense that he wants for us to be successful, we've got to come off the line and strike people – play, after play, after play – and some people aren't built for that. So if that's not your deal, and you can't learn to relish in that, it's going to be a long camp." General manager John Schneider has done a nice job putting together the talent up front that features three first round picks, center Max Unger (2nd rounder in '09) and guard John Moffitt (3rd rounder this year). It's a good start for the Seahawks running

game potential this year as their line is young and talented. If Lynch is properly focused and conditioned, he could be showing more of the Beast-mode that he unleashed on the unsuspecting Saints in last year's playoffs.

WR: The Seahawks made a huge upgrade by signing free agent Sidney Rice to pair with fellow bookend Mike Williams. In Rice's first few practices, he sure didn't disappoint either. He made a few **highlight reel catches** during a 2 1/2 hour workout while showing good footwork and route running. He is aided by knowing OC Darrell Bevell's playbook from their time together in Minnesota. "It helps a whole lot," Rice said. "As soon as we broke down I felt right in the huddle, the same plays I had the last four years. It felt great. I was comfortable with that as well as Coach Bevell's offense and T-Jack (Jackson) back there at quarterback." On Friday, Rice made a ridiculous catch while working against Marcus Trufant in coverage. "He had one that might have been better (Thursday)," Carroll said. "I think he's just loaded with those kind of plays." There will be plenty of competition behind the starters with Golden Tate looking to make a move in his second season while Ben Obomanu returns along with Deon Butler and rookies Kris Durham and Ricardo Lockette.

TE: The Seahawks weren't done in free agency after signing Rice and Jackson. They bolstered their TEs by snagging Zach Miller away from the Raiders in what was one of the bigger surprises of free agency. Miller gives the Seahawks another big target downfield and over the middle. He's a much better receiver than John Carlson, but the team will look for ways to utilize them both. On Thursday, the Seahawks wasted no time by installing several plays featuring both Carlson and Miller in two tight end sets. Miller certainly thinks he and Carlson can coexist. "We're similar, but we're different too," Miller said. "We can play off each other. Any time you can put pressure on a defense with two-tight-ends sets, you're going to give them headaches. We're going to do a lot of that, and it's going to be really good for our offense."

Defense: The Seahawks didn't rest on their laurels defensively either. While they released veteran MLB Lofa Tatupu, they already had a talented David Hawthorne itching for an opportunity behind him on the depth chart. They re-signed veteran DE Raheem Brock, added Jimmy Wilkerson, Alan Branch and Ryan Sims for depth and they looked up north to Canada to take a chance with 6' 4" 221 pound Brandon Browner, who Carroll recruited as the HC at USC. Browner passed on him at USC, but he went on to star at Oregon State before going undrafted. The Broncos tried him at safety, but it was a difficult one and Browner ended up hurt, on IR and eventually released. He wound up in the CFL where he has been an all-star three straight seasons. "I've matured, "...I did well up there in the CFL and it all worked out the way it was supposed to. I'm back where I want to be." This time around, Carroll didn't pass up the chance to get him. "The only guy I can ever think of that was this big was Mel Blount a million years ago," Carroll said. "He just is so tall. Most people would say he can't play being that tall, but he's doing it." With Walter Thurmond nursing a sprained ankle, Browner has worked his way into the mix with the first team defense opposite Trufant. He has matched up with Mike Williams and Sidney Rice. "He

kind of has the physical attributes we're looking for, good speed, good size, good strength," defensive backs coach Kris Richard said. "Put it all together with a little bit of technique and a lot of wins should come out of that, so he's doing a fantastic job thus far." If he pans out, the Seahawks struggles last year against bigger receivers could be a thing of the past. "He's come out here and he's competed like crazy," Carroll said. "He's had some very good days, one after another. He's a four-year professional veteran if you look at it. He's played a ton of football games and he just keeps growing and he fits in. I'm looking for him to challenge for some play time. He looks like he can do that. We're so fortunate that we hit that so we'll see how it goes."

Special Teams: Clint Gresham is back for a second season as the long snapper. Back for a fourth year is punter Jon Ryan, who also serves as the holder. He won't be holding for Olindo Mare, whom the Panthers signed via free agency. The kicking job will belong to the winner of a competition between Jeff Reed and Brandon Coutu. Reed finished last year with the 49ers after being released midway through the season by the Steelers. Coutu was drafted by the Seahawks back in 2008, but spent the year on the bench behind Mare. Both have proven to be accurate on placekicks but not overly strong on kickoffs. Undrafted rookie punter John Gold out of Texas is also on the roster.

Seahawks Depth Chart

QB: Tarvaris Jackson, Charlie Whitehurst, Mike Reilly, Josh Portis

RB: Marshawn Lynch, Justin Forsett, Leon Washington (KR), Thomas Clayton

FB: Michael Robinson

WR: Sidney Rice, Mike Williams, Ben Obomanu (KR), Golden Tate (PR), Deon Butler (PUP), Kris Durham, Ricardo Lockette, Isaiah Stanback, Doug Baldwin
TE: Zach Miller, John Carlson, Cameron Morrah (PUP), Chris Baker, Anthony McCoy

K: Jeff Reed, Brandon Coutu

DT: Colin Cole (NT) (PUP), Brandon Mebane, Junior Siavii, Ladi Ajiboye

DE: Chris Clemons, Red Bryant, Kentwan Balmer, Alan Branch, Ryan Sims, Raheem Brock, Jimmy Wilkerson, Dexter Davis, Lezarius Levingston, Jameson Konz, Pierre Allen

MLB: David Hawthorne

OLB: Aaron Curry (S), Leroy Hill (W), K.J. Wright (S), Malcolm Smith, Michael Morgan

CB: Marcus Trufant, Walter Thurmond, Kelly Jennings, Roy Lewis (PUP), Brandon Browner, Kennard Cox, Richard Sherman, Byron Maxwell

S: Earl Thomas (FS), Kam Chancellor (SS), Mark LeGree, Jeron Johnson, Jesse Hoffman, Ricky Thenarse

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

QB: So far so good for Josh Freeman as he enters his third season as the Bucs franchise quarterback. Freeman has looked sharp most of the time, but particularly in their annual night

practice at Raymond James Stadium. Freeman, Kellen Winslow and Mike Williams all looked like they were in midseason form. For fun, the quarterbacks also took part in a little competition at the end of the night throwing football at targets on moving golf carts. Freeman didn't win that one, third-stringer Rudy Carpenter did. In the team's **first padded session** Josh Johnson threw an easy touchdown to Winslow after he executed the play-action to the RB perfectly. "That was a fake that we've been working on for a long time trying to perfect it," QB Josh Freeman said. "Actually, he could've held it as long as he wanted." The offense was without G Davin Joseph and OTs Jeremy Trueblood and James Lee, who were unable to practice until Thursday when the CBA was ratified. Until then, Freeman was looking forward to going at it again when he had all of his guys available. "We know what kind of players Brian Price and Gerald (McCoy) and Adrian (Clayborn) and Da'Quan (Bowers) are," Freeman said. "They're studs. There's no doubt about it. "I want a repeat of this drill when we get Davin and Trueblood back. We'll be ready to go then." The Bucs also signed Jonathan Crompton over the weekend and he'll push to unseat Carpenter, but we wouldn't bet on it.

RB: The team ultimately decided to let Cadillac Williams sign elsewhere as HC Raheem Morris seemed happy with the players he had in the stable. ESPN's Pat Yasinkas thinks it will come down to fullback Ernest Graham and talented, but rarely healthy Kregg Lumpkin. Graham is the front runner for now, but Lumpkin has a shot as does rookie Allen Bradford. Graham also relinquished his FB duties to Erik Lorig in order to fully concentrate on his run at the backup RB spot. "I have a real trust factor with Earnest," OC Greg Olson said. "I just really trust the guy. I know right now, if we played a game today, he'd be that guy. He'd be the third-down back." Olson said Lumpkin will get a legitimate shot at it, too. "We're trying to make a decision between Earnest and Kregg," Olson said. "We like the way (fullback) Erik Lorig looks right now. I'd really like to take some of that fullback position off of Earnest and get Lorig playing full-time fullback and then let Earnest and Kregg kind of compete for that second tailback job. I know Earnest can handle the third down role. We'll see if Kregg can do that too." When the Bucs **donned pads for the first time** last week allowing full contact, the players delivered the goods. In goal-line drills, the defense beat the offense allowing only four touchdowns on 10 attempts. LB Geno Hayes was in on a couple stops, including one on RB Allen Bradford at the goal line. LeGarrette Blount had one of the score after he broke two tackles running behind LT Donald Penn.

WR: Amazingly, receivers coach Eric Yarber estimates that Mike Williams **used just 75% of his athletic ability** as a rookie despite compiling 965 yards and 11 touchdowns. Adjusting to the NFL game, he says, limited his potential and now he's learning multiple positions and the team plans to move him around in formations to avoid double teams. His second-year counterpart Arrelious Benn is still working to get back to 100% from ACL surgery. He expects to miss most or all of the preseason in order to be fully healthy for the regular season. He tore his ACL in Week 16 last season, so the team will be cautious and not hurry him back. On Wednesday, Benn practiced in pads for the first time, so there's a good chance that he will be ready for Week 1. Another **player to watch** is

Dezmon Briscoe, who latched on with the Bucs practice squad last season. Ever since, the coaches have been figuring out ways to get him on the field while trying him at split end, flanker and the slot. This year he seems poised to contribute if opportunity knocks. "He really got the ability to play all three (positions) just from trying to find a spot for him," HC Morris said. "He's just an exciting young player to watch." Briscoe has made several acrobatic catches in camp so far. "Right now, he's just showing (off) in camp," Morris said. For now, Briscoe will be competing with Sammy Stroughter, but if Benn isn't ready to go in Week 1, there's a good chance Briscoe will be.

TE: A healthy Kellen Winslow is primed for a big year, or at least that is what ESPN's Pat Yasinkas believes. It's easy to see his point, too. For the first time in many years, Winslow did not have any sort of knee surgery during the offseason. He is believed to have seven surgeries so far and the Bucs have been cautious with him for some time. He regularly plays all out on Sundays, while not practicing until Wednesday, Thursday or even (in one case) Friday. He says his knee feels better than it has in years. He also has a growing rapport with Freeman. "He has made a tremendous difference even when he wasn't 100 percent. He's so mentally tough, you don't always know when he isn't (healthy) because he's always ready to go," Morris said. "There were some times last year when we had to hold him out of practice during the regular season, but by Thursday or Friday he was ready to go. He'd come out and get his reps. The latest we ever went was a Friday walk-through, and I remember that week he was pretty good." Meanwhile, rookie Luke Stocker is **week-to-week with a right hip injury** suffered last Friday. "It's a crappy hand you got dealt, and I've got to play it now," Stocker said. "It's a raw deal... It's one of those things, just get some weight off of it, and take it a week at a time and see if we can get it back feeling right."

Defense: It looks as though the Bucs will feature three rookies in their front seven to go with their two talented defensive tackles selected at the top of last year's draft. At MLB Mason Foster has been running with the starters ahead of Tyrone McKenzie, while Adrian Clayburn and Da'Quan Bowers are working in as bookends on the defensive line. On Foster, Raheem Morris said, "He's doing well... It's hard to say the job is his and you've got to go through the bullets. You've got to go through the games, you've got to go out there and prove yourself. But you want to give him an opportunity to win it. He's doing a nice job of picking everything up and competing." At corner, E.J. Biggers made a leaping interception while Aqib Talib drew a big response from the crowd only to drop a sure interception moments later on a Freeman pass intended for Mike Williams. Biggers is competing with Myron Lewis for the team's third corner spot. Last year when Talib was hurt, Biggers started in his place while Lewis moved into the slot and both played reasonably well.

Special Teams: The Bucs grabbed free agent Michael Koenen from the division rival Falcons. He handles punting, kickoffs, and holding. He's backed up in camp by Robert Malone from Fresno State. After going through several kickers during the first half of 2009, Connor Barth secured the job for the second half and remains the starter. He's joined in camp by the

recently signed undrafted rookie Jacob Rogers out of Cincinnati. Andrew Economos tore his Achilles tendon during the lockout, but is hoping to be ready for the season opener. Handling the snapping in camp is undrafted rookie Christian Yount out of UCLA.

Buccaneers Depth Chart

QB: Josh Freeman, Josh Johnson, Rudy Carpenter, Jonathan Crompton, Mike Coughlin

RB: LeGarrette Blount, Earnest Graham (FB), Kareem Huggins (inj), Allen Bradford, Kregg Lumpkin, Mossis Madu, Armando Allen

FB: Erik Lorig, Rendrick Taylor

WR: Mike Williams, Arrelious Benn, Sammie Stroughter, Dezmon Briscoe, Michael Spurlock (RFA), Preston Parker, Raymond Webber, Detron Lewis, Jock Sanders, Ed Gant

TE: Kellen Winslow Jr, Luke Stocker, Daniel Hardy, Ryan Purvis, Nathan Overbay, Jose Cruz

K: Connor Barth (RFA), Jacob Rogers

DT: Gerald McCoy, Roy Miller, Brian Price, Al Woods, Frank Okam

DE: Adrian Clayborn, Da'Quan Bowers, Tim Crowder, Kyle Moore, Michael Bennett, Alex Magee, George Johnson, E.J. Wilson, Brandon Gibeaux

MLB: Mason Foster, Tyrone McKenzie, Nick Reveiz, Derrell Smith

OLB: Quincy Black (S), Geno Hayes (W), Dekoda Watson (W), Adam Hayward, Jon Alston

CB: Aqib Talib, Ronde Barber, E.J. Biggers, Myron Lewis, Elbert Mack, Anthony Gaitor, D.J. Johnson

S: Sean Jones (SS), Tanard Jackson (FS) (susp), Cody Grimm (FS), Corey Lynch (FS), Ahmad Black, Larry Asante, Dominique Harris, Vince Anderson, Devin Holland

Tennessee Titans

The Titans started practice with a lot of new faces including new head coach Mike Munchak. Munchak took over for long-time Titan coach Jeff Fisher in the offseason and is wasting no time in placed his own stamp on the team. For starters. Munchak seems intent on stressing dominance along the both lines of scrimmage as the key to opening up opportunities for both the offense and defense. Early in the week Munchak took the team to LP field for a "mock game", complete with 4,100 fans in attendance. Said Munchak, "It's for the fans to give them an opportunity to come out to the stadium, to get the players back over here realizing this is a home field we have to start taking advantage of again, all the newness with the coaching staff, the players," The game actually featured a number of situational packages (like the 2-minute and goalline offenses). Both the fans and the players were excited to be in the stadium. Said Jacob Ford, "It feels good to get out on our field so early in camp. It helps put all of this (the lockout) in the past so we can get to work and come together. The Titans first preseason game will be at LP Field Saturday, August 13th against the Minnesota Vikings.

QB: Presumed starter (and new addition) Matt Hasselbeck didn't begin practicing until Thursday due to the collective bargaining agreement not yet being ratified. Despite his role as a veteran brought in to mentor first round pick Jake Locker, Hasselbeck isn't comfortable just yet. After his first practice he said, "I'm asking them all kinds of questions. I think the perception was I was going to come in here and help those guys. I really have not helped them at all. They're helping me all the way, and I'm really appreciative of it," Hasselbeck said. That said, the players are responding to Hasselbeck's command of the huddle and his tempo. Said Coach Munchak, "I thought he was a young rookie he was so excited to be out here, and the way he was calling plays in the huddle and the speed," Munchak said. "I thought we had a good tempo going up until now, but he really picked things up even another notch. That's why I can add periods. We're finishing things so quickly, and the quarterbacks have really been making sure of that." Despite some early success in camp – including a number of hookups at the goalline to new tight end Daniel Graham – Hasselbeck struggled in the team scrimmage at LP Field. He had a number of passes off target and threw two interceptions in limited work.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the quarterbacks in the first week was Brett Ratliff. Ratliff is likely fighting for the third quarterback roster spot with Rusty Smith and is off to a good start. Coach Munchak praised Ratliff for helping get all of the quarterbacks together outside of practice to continue working on their craft. Ratliff also took some snaps with the second team, ahead of Jake Locker. Jake Locker has had an up and down first week of practice. Like most rookie quarterbacks, Locker is learning to deal with the pace of defensive shifts at the line of scrimmage. Said Locker, "I feel comfortable in there. I feel like I am doing my part to show I belong. Matt (Hasselbeck), Rusty (Smith), and Brett (Ratliff) have all been great...the biggest thing has been the speed on the other side of the ball...I'm working hard and getting better every day, which is all I can do." Locker's accuracy in the mock-game at LP field left much to be desired as he under-threw a number of receivers on short routes.

RB: With Chris Johnson sitting out in a contract dispute and Ahmad Hall not yet re-signed, Javon Ringer led the running backs this week. Ringer ran with the first team and drew high praise from Coach Mike Munchak who called him, "a good kid, a guy that knows what we want to do around here and can be counted on to do just that. So, he knows how we feel about him and like I've said he's a great zone runner, fits what we want to do real well, hits the hole really quick." Regarding Chris Johnson, Munchak said that he was unaware of any contract news but that Johnson is "our guy, and we want him here real quick." The Titans hope that both Johnson and Hall will be back soon so they can focus more of practice on the plays that include each player.

WR: Presumed #1 receiver Kenny Britt watched most of practice from the sidelines as he deals with a sore hamstring. He is expected back, however, for the second week of practice. Britt's absence opened the door for a number of other receivers to get first team reps including Damien Williams. Unfortunately, Williams had to leave the mock-game at LP

Field during the 2 minute drills owing to a hurt ribcage. He is not expected to miss much practice time. If any receiver has stood out in the first week, it is Marc Mariani. Despite being used primarily as a return specialist, Mariani showed sure hands with the second team during the first week of practice. Said Coach Munchak, "Marc can play. We know that about him and it's one of the things we like. He's able to do what is asked of him at the position and we don't have to worry much about him doing it wrong. He's been here so he knows what we're about and what we want to see.

TE: The Titans signed former Patriot Daniel Graham in the offseason to bolster their corps of Craig Stevens and Jared Cook. The tight ends so far have been featured heavily as receivers in the red zone and as blockers between the twenties. Said Coach Munchak, "Daniel and Craig are both fantastic blockers. Our linebackers are getting better by the snap by lining up against them. It's nice to have two guys that no how to put their heads down and get to work like that. It makes the job a lot easier for Matt (Hasselbeck) and Javon (Ringer) when the edges are sealed off so well.

Defense: The Titans signed Shaun Smith, Barrett Ruud, and Jonathan Babineux in an effort to bolster their mediocre defense. The standout of the first week of camp was rookie linebacker Akeem Ayers. Ayers has already started making plays during live action and drawn praise from coaches and teammates for his speed and technique in wrapping up the tackle. Rennie Curran also had a nice week making a number of interceptions during drills. Linebacker David Thornton announced his retirement.

Special Teams: Veteran kicker Rob Bironas is the only kicker on the roster in camp. The same cannot be said for punter Brett Kern, who is joined on the roster by undrafted rookie Chad Cunningham from the University of Tennessee. The same can definitely not be said for veteran Ken Amato, who is joined on the roster by two other long snappers – former Patriot Jake Ingram and rookie John Stokes from Vanderbilt. Early in camp, Cunningham and Stokes have missed practice due to injury.

Titans Depth Chart

QB: Matt Hasselbeck, Jake Locker, Rusty Smith

RB: Chris Johnson (3RB), Javon Ringer, Jamie Harper, Stafon Johnson, Dominique Lindsay, Herb Donaldson

FB: Ahmard Hall

WR: Kenny Britt, Nate Washington, Damian Williams (PR), Lavelle Hawkins, Marc Mariani (KR), Justin Gage, James Kirkendoll, Joe Hills

TE: Jared Cook, Craig Stevens, Daniel Graham, Cameron Graham

K: Rob Bironas

DT: Shaun Smith, Sen'Derrick Marks, Jovan Haye, Jurell Casey, Zach Clayton

DE: Derrick Morgan (inj), Jason Jones, William Hayes, Jacob Ford, Dave Ball, Hall Davis, Karl Klug

MLB: Barrett Ruud, Colin McCarthy, Ken Amato (LS), Jonathan Cornell

OLB: Akeem Ayers (S), Will Witherspoon (W), Gerald McRath (S), Rennie Curran (W), Tim Shaw (W) (RFA), Patrick Bailey (RFA), Colin Allred (RFA)

CB: Cortland Finnegan (PR), Alterraun Verner, Jason McCourty, Frank Walker, LeQuan Lewis, Ryan Mouton (IR)
S: Michael Griffin (FS), Chris Hope (SS), Vincent Fuller (FS), Jordan Babineaux, Robert Johnson (FS), Nick Schommer (SS), Tommie Campbell

Washington Redskins

QB: Is Mike Shanahan too smart for his own good? The league is curious to find out as the Redskins appear dead set on letting John Beck and Rex Grossman battle for the starting job. Beck was considered the favorite, in spite of not playing since 2007 (and going 0-4 in that stint), but a sore groin may keep him out of the first preseason game, and allow Rex Grossman to make an impression with the first unit. QB Coach Matt LaFleur is **trying his best to put lipstick on the Hogs**: “We just want somebody who will go out there and execute how we coach them,” LaFleur says. “Our quarterbacks don’t have to go out and make plays. They can let the plays come to them. I think both of those guys have done a pretty good job up to this point. We’ll see how they do when they get some live bullets flying at them, but with the progress both of them have made – and it’s tough with John being out for the moving of the ball period – but I think they’re progressing good and we just need them making sound decisions and take what’s there for them. Don’t try to force the issue.” I’m sure Redskins fans are ebullient with the thought that their QBs aren’t expected to make plays. Sooeey.

RB: The Redskins have 763 running backs in camp (OK, not that many, it just seems like it) but right now Tim Hightower – acquired from the Arizona Cardinals – is the leader of the pack. Ryan Torain is out with a broken left hand, and Hightower has made the most of the opportunity. In Monday’s practice, he took a screen pass for a long touchdown, and has looked confident running behind the Redskins one-cut zone-blocking scheme. Hightower had ball control issues in Arizona, and that’s been the fly in the ointment so far in camp – he can’t afford to get a reputation for putting the ball on the ground or no measure of talent will get him into the huddle. Rookie Roy Helu has been the #2 back in most practices, and appears more NFL-ready than fellow rookie Evan Royster.

WR: Re-signing Santana Moss was the Redskins best offseason move, and he should remain the team’s top receiver. The more interesting battle is for the other starting job, as Anthony Armstrong has been displaced this week by veteran free agent Jabar Gaffney. It’s too early in the process to worry, but inserting Gaffney into the starting role should serve as a motivational tool for the young, speedy Armstrong. The Redskins also drafted three receivers, but only Leonard Hankerson appears assured of a 53-man roster spot. Veteran Donte Stallworth, returner Brandon Banks, and disappointing incumbent Malcolm Kelly are also in the mix.

TE: Chris Cooley is one of the underappreciated players at his position, particularly from fantasy owners that are looking for a PPR option. But Cooley has been a bit hobbled in early camp,

with Coach Shanahan affirming that Cooley is dealing with soreness in his surgically repaired knee. It may be nothing, but Cooley needs to show some more bounce or he might prove a risky proposition at his current ADP. Cooley’s rest has given Fred Davis a chance to earn the attention of Mike and Kyle Shanahan, and so far he’s made the most of the opportunity. Lots of players claim to be in the “best shape of their lives” at the start of camp, but in Davis’ case, he’s noticeably thinner and more defined. He weighed in at 245 pounds after playing 2010 close to 260 pounds.

Defense: While the Redskins offensive makeover isn’t wowing many NFL analysts, the defensive overhaul does have potential to be significant. Jarvis Jenkins and Stephen Bowen, along with incumbent Adam Carriker, make for an imposing DE rotation, while Barry Cofield was signed away from the Giants to man the nose tackle spot primarily, but DC Jim Haslett also plans to use him at end in certain formations. The additions of Bowen, Jenkins and Cofield make players like Anthony Bryant and Kedric Golston more valuable as backups. The linebacking corps is largely intact from a year ago with the re-signing of Rocky McIntosh and the return of the ageless London Fletcher. The only big change is rookie Ryan Kerrigan lining up outside as a bookend to Brian Orakpo. Kerrigan has a lot of catching up to do, as he missed a week of camp with a bruised knee (he’s back practicing now) and is transitioning to the linebacker position after playing defensive end in college. The defensive secondary welcomes CB Josh Wilson and FS O.J. Atogwe into the starting lineup, but the team also re-signed Reed Doughty as insurance.

Special Teams: Incumbent kicker Graham Gano will face veteran competition this August in recently signed Shayne Graham, who ended last year with the Patriots. The latter said of their relationship, “We get along great. We’ve known each other before this. We actually trained together this summer a little bit, so really coming out here and not getting along with somebody is pointless.” The team also signed free agent punter Sav Rocca, formerly with the division rival Eagles. He is now with the team after initially having been delayed obtaining a visa out of his native Australia. Nick Sundberg is back for his second year at long snapper.

Redskins Depth Chart

QB: Rex Grossman, John Beck, Kellen Clemens, Ben Chappell, Mike Verica

RB: Ryan Torain (inj), Tim Hightower (RFA), Roy Helu, Keiland Williams (3RB), Evan Royster, James Davis, Shaun Draughn, Kevin Gidrey

FB: Darrel Young

WR: Santana Moss, Jabar Gaffney, Anthony Armstrong, Leonard Hankerson, Donte' Stallworth, Niles Paul, Terrence Austin, Aldrick Robinson, Brandon Banks (KR/PR), Malcolm Kelly, Isaac Anderson

TE: Chris Cooley (inj), Fred Davis, Logan Paulsen, Mike Sellers (FB), Joe Torchia

K: Shayne Graham, Graham Gano

NT: Barry Cofield, Anthony Bryant, Chris Neild

DE: Adam Carriker, Stephen Bowen, Jarvis Jenkins, Kedric Golston, Jeff Stehle, Darrion Scott

ILB: London Fletcher, Rocky McIntosh, Keyaron Fox, Perry

Riley, H.B. Blades

OLB: Brian Orakpo (S/DE) (inj), Ryan Kerrigan, Lorenzo Alexander, Rob Jackson, Markus White

CB: DeAngelo Hall, Josh Wilson, Kevin Barnes, Brandyn Thompson, Phillip Buchanon (susp), Byron Westbrook (KR), Tyrone Grant, Reggie Jones

S: Laron Landry (SS) (PUP), Oshiomongo Atogwe (FS), Kareem Moore (FS) (PUP), Reed Doughty, Chris Horton (SS), Macho Harris, Davonte Shannon, Dejon Gomes, Anderson Russell, Dante Barnes
