

# Kiszla: In blowout loss, Broncos Country saw 51 reasons why Vance Joseph is wrong coach for Denver

By Mark Kiszla  
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Can we skip the hot seat and go straight to the pink slip? Sooner or later, Vance Joseph must go. John Elway hired the wrong coach for the Broncos.

There are 51 reasons Joseph should be fired immediately, and only one reason to keep him: There's nobody on the current Denver staff that can fix this hot mess.

"I'm the head coach here, so it starts with me. I've got to fix this," Joseph said Sunday, after a 51-23 defeat that ripped the heart out of the Broncos and eliminated what little hope remained for the remainder of this NFL season.

OK, let's start with the uncomfortable fact the Broncos quit on their rookie coach during a blowout loss to Philadelphia that felt like a bad flashback to our worst Josh McDaniels nightmares.

"I can't keep doing this. I can't keep going through losses like this, man. It's breaking my heart," said defensive end Derek Wolfe, a sixth-year pro who owns a Super Bowl 50 ring. "The whole time I've been here, we've been winning. We've always found a way to win. And this kills me."

So maybe returning Brock Osweiler to the job as starting quarterback wasn't such a great idea. His performance against the Eagles — two interceptions and a 53.4 quarterback rating — was more groan-worthy than all those recent Brock-to-the-future puns. If the Broncos are really that desperate to recapture lost glory, does anybody have a phone number for Tim Tebow?

As it turns out, Gary Kubiak was ahead of the curve. Kubiak quit before this dysfunctional team made everyone in Broncos Country sick to watch. Sunday afternoons in Colorado are now better spent taking the dog for a long walk. What's the next time fans need to check in? And with the eighth pick in 2018 NFL draft, Denver selects ...

But let's keep the discussion to the crisis at hand. Could Joseph possibly be more out of his depth? The last time the Broncos lost four consecutive games, the year was 2010, and the knucklehead on Denver's sideline was doing a bad Bill Belichick impersonation. Although McDaniels never had a firm grip on his emotions, at least he had a clue with X's and O's.

So many things point to Joseph's ineptitude that there aren't enough fingers of blame to cover it all.

What has led to this team's 3-5 record?

"The same stuff," receiver Demaryius Thomas said.

Week after week, the the Broncos are a calamity of bad stuff. It stinks. And it doesn't get corrected. That's the definition of bad coaching.

Near the outset of an afternoon of endless misery, the Broncos were caught with 12 players on the field. In the final minute of the fourth quarter, they took a delay-of-game penalty, their last of 14 flagged infractions, because their punting unit was a man short.

Philadelphia gashed Denver's overhauled run defense for 5.3 yards per carry and quarterback Carson Wentz sent four touchdown passes soaring into the wild blue yonder, piercing the soul of a secondary formerly known as the No-Fly Zone.

The Eagles began scoring early, with a seven-play, 75-yard explosion on an opening possession that ended with a glaring, red-rocket salute to receiver Alshon Jeffery in the end zone. And Philadelphia put the Broncos on full blast so often the home team's official Twitter feed confessed to one embarrassing glitch at Lincoln Financial Field: "Apologies, we actually ran out of fireworks."

Everything about the Broncos screams their head coach has lost this team. But if a photograph is worth a thousand words, here's a scene that impeaches Joseph:

After Jay Ajayi made the Denver defense look as helpless as those pathetic pixels that digital Bo Jackson used to run over in Tecmo Bowl, scoring on a 46-yard touchdown run to put Philly ahead 31-9 late in the second quarter, linebacker Von Miller trudged to the sideline and sat on the Denver bench alongside 15 teammates, whose body language was broken and as bereft of passion as anything we've seen since Jay Cutler departed from Colorado.

Whatever Joseph told his team at halftime made zero impression. The Eagles took the kickoff to begin the third quarter and humiliated the arm tacklers on a half-hearted Denver defense with a 13-play, 77-yard drive that was 7 minutes and 28 seconds of undeniable proof the Broncos had quit on their coach.

"I told the team after the game that every man has to do a self-check," Joseph said.

The team has no bigger problem than the man Joseph sees in the mirror.

But cheer up, Broncos Country. The NFL draft is 172 days away, which gives John Elway nearly six months to find a new quarterback for his next head coach.

# Eagles top-ranked run D stifles Broncos; Demaryius Thomas ends TD drought; more notes

By Nicki Jhabvala  
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The Eagles' league-leading rushing defense is as advertised. Philadelphia held the Broncos to 35 yards on the ground, their lowest output of the season. Denver averaged 1.8 yards per rushing play, gained only one first down on the ground and had five rushes stopped for a loss.

"Everybody is doing their job," Eagles defensive end Brandon Graham said. "When you know it's a run, we're calling it out. So if we see it, we just trust it and go with it. Sometimes it's play-action, but at least we have the mindset of 'this is a power play or this is a trap play.'

"In the red zone, we know we're going to get one-to-trap. I think (linebacker) Mychal (Kendricks) made a great play stopping them on the one trap on the goal-line. That's because people were yelling, 'Trap, trap, trap.' Even though (Denver) scored, that's why we are so good against the run because everybody is reading their keys and trusting their game preparation. It's paying off because we know what it is coming."

Eagles' safety Malcolm Jenkins said the lopsided win surprised even them, but they trusted in their defense. "With the stable of (defensive) backs that we have, it makes it hard for anybody to stop us when it comes to running the ball," he said. "Our defense has been good against the run all year. I think when you put all those things together, that complementary football really make s hard on teams that don't have the same balance that we do."

**Inactives.** Receiver Emmanuel Sanders returned against Eagles after missing two games because of an ankle sprain, but inside linebacker Todd Davis needs another week to recover from his ankle sprain. Zaire Anderson started in place of Davis, who was joined on the inactive list by reserve tackle Donald Stephenson (calf), rookie running back De'Angelo Henderson, receiver Jordan Taylor, cornerback Lorenzo Doss, rookie linebacker DeMarcus Walker and quarterback Paxton Lynch.

For the Eagles, tight end Zach Ertz was inactive with a hamstring injury. Ertz tested his hamstring during warmups and was hopeful of playing, but was unable to go.

**Drought over.** Demaryius Thomas scored a 1-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter to snap his scoring drought at 13 games. The last time Thomas has scored a touchdown was Nov. 13, 2016, at New Orleans.

Thomas' touchdown Sunday was also the first by a Broncos receiver since Week 2 of this season, against Dallas.

**Footnotes.** Safety Darian Stewart was the Broncos' game-day captain. ... Denver lost 105 yards on 14 penalties, tied for the second-most in a game in franchise history. Said cornerback Chris Harris: "Penalties killed us. ... I feel like we had tight coverage and then bam, a penalty. We have killed ourselves with too many penalties, but today, you cannot make that many mistakes against an offense as good as them."

# Denver Broncos reach new low in drubbing by Philadelphia Eagles

By Nicki Jhabvala  
Denver Post  
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Ball security is job security.

That's the saying, Brock Osweiler explained last week, and those were his marching orders as he took over as the Broncos' starting quarterback for a second time. The Broncos hoped the small charge would create bigger change and "stabilize" an offense that desperately needed a jump-start.

But a single swap at quarterback couldn't correct the Broncos' long laundry list of problems, especially not against the NFL's top team with an MVP candidate, Carson Wentz, at quarterback.

The Broncos again beat themselves Sunday, racking up 14 penalties and accruing mistake after mistake after mistake in all three phases while losing to the Eagles 51-23.

The loss was the Broncos' fourth consecutive since the Week 5 bye, the longest losing streak since John Elway joined the front office in 2011, and it set them back to 3-5 in a season that seems long gone.

**BOX SCORE:** Eagles 51, Broncos 23

Blame for this one was shared by all, but primarily by a unit that has been the franchise's leader for two years running. The Broncos' offense was again a bumbling mess, their special teams were again spotty (at best), their coaching was again questionable. But it was their defense that took the biggest hits: 419 yards (197 rushing), seven touchdowns and 51 points allowed, the most by an opponent since 2010.

"It starts with me," coach Vance Joseph said. "I'm the head coach here, so it starts with me. I've got to fix this."

Osweiler, who was intercepted twice and nearly picked off three other times, was sacked three times, and completed only 19 of 38 passes for one touchdown and a 53.4 passer rating. After his second interception, in the third quarter, Osweiler's rating dipped as low as 15.7, encapsulating the latest wreckage.

"I thought Brock did a fine job. Brock had a great week," he said. "I was proud of the week he had. Obviously we had two more interceptions today. That I don't like. But I have to go back and watch the tape and get a feel for how Brock played."

Asked whether Osweiler will retain his starting job heading into a home game against New England, Joseph said "we'll see," reiterating that he wants to review the tape before making the final call. But when asked whether he felt his players checked out before the final whistle, Joseph insinuated much more.

“I told the team after the football game that every man has to do a self-check,” Joseph said. “Only each man would know what his heart said to him in the fourth quarter there, so that’s where I’ll leave that.”

If there was a glimmer of hope for Denver, it lasted all of five minutes in the first quarter, as Denver scored a quick three points on their opening possession to mark the first time it had scored out of the gate since Week 2. Kicker Brandon McManus drilled a 52-yard field goal, giving the defense a cushion — albeit a small one — against Wentz, Philadelphia’s second-year quarterback.

But that lead was short-lived and a new tone — a stronger tone — was set by the Eagles. Philadelphia scored on its first drive, a seven-play sequence that ended with a 32-yard touchdown pass to Alshon Jeffery.

Philadelphia entered the game having outscored its opponents 47-9 in the first quarter, the best differential in the NFL. And the Broncos would become its latest victim.

By halftime, the Eagles totaled 31 points while the Broncos had yet to score a touchdown.

Wentz, meanwhile, continued to build upon his MVP-worthy season, completing 15-of-27 passes for 199 yards and four touchdowns for a rating of 118.7 before Philadelphia put in backup Nick Foles.

“They run this college offense,” Broncos cornerback Chris Harris said. “They kind of run what the Chiefs do. They got an option to run, an option to pass. They run the read option, (Wentz’s) checking to a lot of things. It’s a college offense and he’s just executing it very good.”

Before they arrived in Philadelphia, the Broncos face stacked odds in numbers alone — many numbers, in fact, from the Eagles’ league-leading record (now 8-1), to the video-game stats of their quarterback, to the stifling play of their top rushing defense. If there was an opening for the Broncos’ defense to capitalize, it came via Zach Ertz, Philadelphia’s tight end and leading receiver who was ruled out with a hamstring injury.

Denver has struggled to contain tight ends this season, but Ertz’s absence made little difference. Backups Trey Burton and Brent Celek had no problem filling the void, combining for 80 yards and a touchdown.

The Broncos, meanwhile, struggled to muster 226 total yards, with a season-low 35 yards rushing. Passes were dropped, tackles were missed and miscommunication was evident from start to finish.

The problems started early, just as they had in the previous three losses. The Broncos’ deficit spiraled into chaos as they amassed five penalties, rushed multiple times for zero or negative yardage, and Osweiler threw an early pick in the first quarter alone. At one point in the second, Denver had more penalties (eight) than points (six) and the same number of penalty yards (65) as total yards.

“We’re not a great football team right now, but that doesn’t mean we don’t have a great football team within us,” outside linebacker Von Miller said. “We have all the pieces in place from top down. But today, we were not a good football team — offensively, defensively, special teams, whatever. We’re just not good right now. But the positive thing going forward today is, we still have a lot of time.”

The final dagger came early too when, late in the second quarter the Broncos trailed by 18 and moved within six yards of the end zone. Osweiler found Demaryius Thomas for a 12-yard strike and running back C.J. Anderson got them to Philadelphia's 4-yard line. But after another negative run and incompleteness by Emmanuel Sanders, Denver was forced to settle for a field goal when it desperately needed a touchdown to stay in it.

"I think coach put us in good positions all night to make plays. ... But once again, that's football," Osweiler said. "It's easy to second-guess yourself after the play's happened. But we just got to clean it up. Philadelphia is too good of a football team. When you get into their territory, you have to find ways to score touchdowns. You're not got going to beat a team like that on the road by kicking field goals and punting the football all day."

The game was gone by then. The Broncos' season might have ended too, though they made a couple of last-gasp attempts to make the final score respectable.

Osweiler connected with Thomas for a 1-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter. The score was Thomas' first since Nov. 13, 2016, and ended a 13-game touchdown drought for the wide receiver. Less than two minutes later, Miller strip-sacked Foles; linebacker Brandon Marshall recovered the fumble and ran it back 19 yards for a touchdown.

The two scores softened the blow but couldn't erase the damage.

"I think every man has to look themselves in the mirror, including me, and say, 'Look, what can I do better? What am I not doing good enough? How can I improve? What technique can I play better?' " Marshall said. "We just have to do more, man. I don't think anybody could have thought they played well today. I don't feel I played any good at all, actually. We just got to do more. Do more, find that something deep down inside of us and just fight."

And lest anyone thought the Eagles were going to end it quietly, wide receiver Nelson Algholor caught a 35-pass against Harris to set up the Eagles' seventh touchdown, by running back Corey Clement.

"The same stuff the past three or four weeks," Thomas said. "You can't win football games in this league like that, as you saw today. ... I say this every week: We have to do some work and we have to figure out who wants to play and who doesn't want to play now. There was effort, but if we wouldn't have had those turnovers, who knows what could've happened. We have some things to do, but like every week for the past four weeks I've been saying the same thing: We can't beat ourselves."

When Joseph decided to bench quarterback Trevor Siemian in favor of Osweiler last week, he admitted one position change wasn't the answer to the team's myriad troubles. He simply hoped for a rejuvenation of sorts, and a return to the basics — catching the ball, securing the ball and finding the end zone.

Instead he got many more questions that need answering and fewer tricks to try to turn things around before the Patriots arrive in Denver.

"What do we try next? To coach better and play better," Joseph said. "... It's eight games in and we're halfway. We've got to coach better and play better. It starts with me."

# Brock Osweiler started strong in second stint as Broncos starting QB. It didn't last.

By Nick Kosmider  
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Brock Osweiler looked like he had shed the rust.

On his first play in his first start during his second stint as the quarterback of the Broncos, Osweiler found Demaryius Thomas for a 14 yard gain. First down.

A few plays later, Osweiler shuffled to his left and floated a 19-yard pass to Cody Latimer, pushing the Broncos near the red zone. He was calling out blitzes, identifying coverages and grabbing control. For a few minutes, Osweiler appeared to be providing the spark Vance Joseph was hoping for when he benched Trevor Siemian.

"I felt very good right from the start," said Osweiler, who made his first start since a poor performance in a divisional playoff loss to the Patriots as Houston's quarterback in January. "I think we showed that with that initial drive. We all made some good plays. So I felt pretty good right at the beginning."

Comfort, of course, was fleeting. Osweiler's career since being drafted in the second round by the Broncos in 2012 has been defined by inconsistency, a pattern that continued in Sunday's 51-23 loss. He completed 19-of-38 passes for 208 yards with one touchdown and two interceptions.

Any hope that Osweiler's promotion to the starting role would be enough of a catalyst to jump-start a dead offense faded quickly.

The Eagles answered the Broncos' opening-drive field goal by scoring 10 points on their first two drives. When the Broncos got the ball back near the end of the first quarter, needing to generate some momentum in a game quickly shaping into a track meet, Osweiler locked onto Thomas. Philadelphia cornerback Patrick Robinson read the play the entire way, stepping in front of the pass and collecting a back-breaking interception.

Three plays later, Carson Wentz, who has managed to make a quarterback position that has caused such consternation for the Broncos look like easy arithmetic, beautifully placed a screen pass to running back Corey Clement in the face of a pass rush and watched Clement do the rest of the work on a 15-yard touchdown.

In turning the ball over in his own end, Osweiler failed to check the most important box on the to-do list he had been provided by Joseph: take care of the football.

"Any time you put your team in a position like that, it's horrible," Osweiler said. "And so we have to figure out what the problem is, and we will, because that's horrible."

Joseph said last week that naming his starting quarterback for the Broncos' next game, against the Patriots, would be easy if Osweiler played well against the Eagles. Joseph labeled Osweiler's

performance against the Eagles as “fine,” but he wasn’t ready to announce who will oppose Tom Brady in a nationally televised game Sunday night.

“We’ll see,” he said. “I have to go back and watch the tape and see how the game was played from that position before I make any decisions.”

# Grading the Broncos in their 51-23 loss to the Eagles

By Nick Kosmider  
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## Grades

**Offense: D-.** Penalties. Dropped passes. Turnovers. Wash. Rinse. Repeat. A change at quarterback did little to produce any progress for one of the NFL's worst offenses.

**Defense: F.** Not since a 59-14 loss to the Raiders in 2010 had the Broncos surrendered so many points. Denver gave up six touchdowns through the first three quarters.

**Special teams: D.** Isaiah McKenzie had a 44-yard punt return and Brandon McManus made all three field-goal attempts, but penalties during kickoff returns were among a number of calamities, which has become a weekly occurrence.

**Coaching: F.** In one of their worst losses since 2010, the Broncos were undisciplined and uninspired, issues that fall directly on the doorstep of the coaching staff.

## Game Balls

**Carson Wentz, Philadelphia QB.** The second-year quarterback bolstered his MVP candidacy by throwing four touchdown passes, carving up Denver's defense with maximum efficiency.

**Jay Ajayi, Philadelphia RB.** In his first game with the Eagles following a trade with Miami last week, Ajayi rushed for 77 yards, 46 of which came on a touchdown run that put the game out of reach in the second quarter.

**Brandon Marshall, Denver LB.** Marshall got the lone sack of Wentz and later returned a fumble for a touchdown after Von Miller sacked and stripped backup Nick Foles in the fourth quarter

# The Broncos' defense begged for a fight. When it finally came, Denver threw no punches.

By Nick Kosmider  
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Carson Wentz had already thrown three touchdown passes in the first half against the Broncos on Sunday afternoon. He had been a Gulfstream jet coasting without turbulence through the No Fly Zone.

So, for the sake of variety, Philadelphia's second-year quarterback handed the ball to his newest teammate, running back Jay Ajayi, and got out of the way late in the second quarter. Wentz wasn't about to hog the joyride of a romp through the Broncos' defense all for himself.

Ajayi has been in Philadelphia only a few days, arriving last week in a trade from Miami. But even new kids on the block have their way with the Broncos these days. Ajayi's 46-yard touchdown run around left end all but ended the game before halftime, but the misery for Denver's defense in a 51-23 loss was only getting started.

"We got our (butt) kicked," defensive end Derek Wolfe said, still steaming 30 minutes after the Broncos' fourth consecutive defeat, their longest losing streak in seven seasons. "What else needs to be said? It's sad because there's a lot of time and work and blood and sweat invested into this season. To go out there and get our (butt) kicked like that, it really hurts."

Linebacker Von Miller kept repeating the number over and over afterward, trying to come to grips with the fact the Broncos had just produced their worst defensive performance since a 59-14 loss to the Raiders in 2010, one year before Miller was drafted.

"51 points," he repeated, shaking his head.

For weeks the Broncos defensive players have asked for "a fair game." It was a request of their offense to avoid an avalanche of turnovers and miscues, at least enough to give a defense that entered Sunday as the league's best statistically to do its thing. The Broncos were by no means efficient on offense Sunday, but three field goals and one turnover in the first half constituted as much of a fair game as this maligned group could provide on the road against the league's top team.

"The offense did what we needed them to do today," Miller said. "You can't put anything on the offense. Our offense played better than it had been doing. As a defense, we said that if we got that part we could start winning. We got that part today, and on defense we (wet) the bed today."

Just how ugly was the performance from a unit that has been regarded as the NFL's best since it stormed through the 2015 season and wrecked the Carolina Panthers in the Super Bowl?

The Broncos gave up 197 rushing yards, with four different Eagles gaining at least 25 yards. Denver gave up three touchdowns in the first quarter. They were torched by Wentz, who went 15-of-27 for 199 yards and four touchdowns before trading his helmet for a headset in the fourth quarter.

Wentz became the first quarterback to throw for three scores in a half against the Broncos since Andrew Luck in 2013. And the Eagles' MVP candidate threw two of those in the first quarter.

The Denver defense also committed its share of a season-high 14 penalties for 105 yards.

"We're not very good right now," cornerback Chris Harris said.

The Broncos have now given up 16 touchdown passes, already three more than they surrendered in 2016. Denver thought it caught a break when the Eagles' leading receiver, tight end Zach Ertz, was ruled out because of a hamstring injury. Instead, Wentz found backup tight ends Brent Celek and Trey Burton for 80 combined yards and a touchdown.

Even backup Nick Foles completed his only pass attempt, a 35-yard deep ball down the sideline for Nelson Agholor that set up the final Philadelphia touchdown and put the icing on the stink sandwich for the Broncos defense.

Members of the Broncos' defense have lamented the fact they often aren't being tested by opposing offenses. Other teams, the Broncos claimed, could operate risk-averse offenses like bumpers on a bowling lane because the offense wasn't doing anything.

But, after the Broncos took a 3-0 lead following a promising opening drive, the Eagles went into attack mode. The Broncos never responded. Cornerback Aqib Talib bit on a run fake on Philadelphia's opening drive, and his efforts to chase Alshon Jeffery were futile as the receiver hauled in a 32-yard touchdown pass.

The Eagles had brought the fight for which the Broncos' defense had clamored. But a heavyweight bout that features one fighter not throwing punches usually results in a brutal knockout.

"It wasn't there today," Harris said when asked if he saw the team fight after it fell into a hole. "I don't know what it was. But the effort wasn't there."

Defensive players in the visiting locker room Sunday had trouble finding silver linings. The losing has taken its toll.

"We can't get it to come together," Wolfe said. "It starts with us. It's the players. We have to come together to make it happen. There's no quit. You can't quit. What, you're gonna quit? You can't. That's not even an option. I can't keep doing this. I can't keep going through losses like this. It's breaking my heart."

# Joseph undecided whether to stick with Osweiler

By Mike Klis

9 News

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It was understood that if Brock Osweiler played well, he would keep his job as the Denver Broncos' starting quarterback.

It's also known that in the NFL, playing well is in the eye of the beholder.

"I thought Brock did a fine job," said Broncos' head coach Vance Joseph. "Obviously, we had two more interceptions today. That's not all right but I have to go back and watch the tape to really get a feel for how Brock played."

Asked specifically if Osweiler would remain his starting quarterback, Joseph was non-committal.

"We'll see," Joseph said. "I have to go back and watch the tape and see how the game was played at that position before I make a decision."

What's sad is it might not matter who Joseph picks to become his starting quarterback. The Broncos got hammered here Sunday by the Philadelphia Eagles, 51-23, and play next week against Bill Belichick, Tom Brady and the New England Patriots, who are 6-2 after winning four in a row.

The 3-5 Broncos have lost four in a row by a combined score of 124-52. An average score of 31-13.

"We're not very good right now," said Broncos cornerback Chris Harris Jr.

Joseph has three options for his starting quarterback. One, stick with Osweiler. Two, go back to Trevor Siemian. Three, give the ball, ready or not, to first-round draft pick Paxton Lynch.

CBS reported Sunday morning the Broncos could go with Lynch as soon as next week against the Patriots. The problem is Lynch hasn't thrown many passes of substance as he's just returning from a two-month shoulder injury. He has practiced for two weeks but has had virtually no reps as the No. 3 quarterback.

And the last time anyone saw Lynch play, he was struggling to process the speed of the passing game during the preseason. He likely hasn't had a chance to improve while rehabbing in the trainer's room.

Lynch is expected to play once the Broncos become all but eliminated from the playoffs. But probably not before then.

As for Osweiler, the good was he did move the ball early against the Eagles. His first drive of the season ended with a long Brandon McManus field goal and a 3-0 lead.

He completed 19 of 38 for 208 yards which is OK. With the game well out of reach, he connected with Cody Latimer for 32 yards to end the third quarter and then finished the drive with a 1-yard touchdown to Demaryius Thomas.

But most significantly, the Broncos were embarrassed Sunday in a game that wasn't as close as the lopsided final score indicated. The Broncos were down 44-9 entering the fourth quarter when Eagles coach Doug Pederson went to his bench.

Oswieiler threw two interceptions. On the first, Eagles cornerback Patrick Robinson beat Thomas to the catching area on a slant pattern. It gave the Eagles the ball at the Broncos' 15-yard line and three plays later, it was 17-3 home team.

The second was a wild, blind heave downfield. Thomas was well covered and Oswieiler was getting hit as he threw but the Eagles were up, 38-9 and he chucked it anyway.

"It just seemed like kind of that time to throw one up," Oswieiler said. "See, if we can get a big play downfield, maybe a pass interference call. But the bottom line, we have to stop turning the football over. Until we do that it's going to be hard to win football games. And we've got to clean it up. It's just that simple."

Did Oswieiler do enough to get another chance? He hopes so.

"Absolutely," he said. "I think every player in the National Football League plays this game to be the starter. To contribute to his team and help their football team win games. I would love to be the starter. And I can promise you this game is not going to discourage me. I'll work harder than ever to clean up these problems."

# Despite appearances, Denver D says it didn't quit

By Mike Klis

9 News

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Vance Joseph was asked if at times he saw some quit in his Denver Broncos' defense Sunday during its 51-23 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles.

Times like on its final play of the first half when Jay Ajayi in his brand spanking new green Eagles' uniform ran 46 yards for a touchdown, and first play of the second half when Corey Clement was given credit for 28 yards even after a teammate was flagged for holding.

"I told the team this after the football game: Every man has to do a self-check of himself," Joseph said. "And each man would know what his heart said to him in the fourth quarter. That's where I'll leave that."

To a man, not one Denver defensive player said he quit or noticed anyone else on their unit who did.

All those missed tackles, though, not to mention allowing 51 points, sure made it look like they did.

"I missed a tackle, too, but it wasn't like I wasn't trying," said Broncos defensive end Derek Wolfe. "I was trying to go for the ball, that's why. Normally, I'm trying to tackle the player, not try to grab the ball out of his hands. I missed it but that's what happens in game like that. You try to do something else. I can't accept that guys weren't out there not trying."

Still, this wasn't exactly the 0-16 Lions of 2008 that got steamrolled. The Broncos entered this game ranked No. 1 in the NFL in total defense, No. 2 in defending the run. They won't be ranked near that high anymore after they surrendered a C-note for the first time since Josh McDaniels' final season as head coach in 2010 – and a whopping 197 yards rushing.

There were times in the second half, when the Broncos' effort appeared, say, 75 percent-hearted.

"The effort was terrible," said Broncos cornerback Chris Harris Jr. "You can't have that type of effort and expect to win against a team like that. They're a really good team, though, man. Got to tip your hat to them."

Not bringing maximum effort on certain plays is not the same as quitting, Harris said. He didn't see any surrender. Nor did linebacker Brandon Marshall.

"No, nobody ever breaks our will," he said. "That stuff never happens. Nobody ever breaks my will. They just did some things – it was weird, man, we couldn't stop anything. We couldn't stop the pass or run, we couldn't stop anything. It was never, we got our wills broke. We always fight to the end. It was just a freak-type game."

Indeed, the Broncos did score a defensive touchdown in the fourth quarter when Von Miller strip-sacked mop-up quarterback Nick Foles and Marshall picked up the fumble and returned it 19 yards for a touchdown.

Harris gave more credit to the Eagles' scheme, which features their talented young quarterback Carson Wentz operating an option-style attack with ball fakes and sprint-out passes.

"This college offense is taking over the league," Harris said. "We've got to figure it out."

Maybe, that was it. Maybe, the Broncos just met their match. Which is an even scarier thought, especially with the greatest quarterback of them all, Tom Brady, and the New England Patriots are up next.

"Nobody quit," Wolfe said. "We didn't give up. That's ridiculous. They just bested us, man. They bested us today."

# Eagles pound lifeless Broncos, 51-23

By Mike Klis

9 News

November 6, 2017

Vance Joseph was proven correct.

The Denver Broncos' woes weren't just the fault of Trevor Siemian.

Continuing their worst stretch of football since 2010, the dreaded final season of Josh McDaniels, the Broncos were whipped by the Philadelphia Eagles, 51-23, here Sunday on an overcast, but mild, early November Sunday at Lincoln Financial Field.

The Eagles had been up 44-9 when their star quarterback Carson Wentz was pulled with 3 minutes left in the third quarter and given the rest of the day off

It's the first time the Broncos had surrendered 50 points or more since losing to the Oakland Raiders, 59-14, in 2010, a season that ended with a 4-12 record.

There were times when the vaunted Denver D didn't seem to show much fight as it missed way more tackles than usual. Eagles recently acquired running back Jay Ajayi scored on a 46-yard run and Corey Clement had his first, two touchdown game.

The Broncos settled for two consolation touchdowns in the fourth quarter, the first a 1-yard pass from Brock Osweiler to Demaryius Thomas, and the second came off a Von Miller strip sack fumble against backup quarterback Nick Foles. Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall recovered the fumble and returned it for another touchdown. Thomas' short score snapped his touchdown skid of 13 games.

Before then Osweiler, who started in place of the benched Siemian, led the Broncos to three, Brandon McManus' field goals, while Wentz, the sensational second-year quarterback, was leading the Eagles to touchdowns.

The Broncos' season is becoming a disaster. After a 3-1 start, the Broncos came out of their bye week wearing the motivational saying "MORE" across their workout T-shirts and an inexcusable home loss to the then-winless New York Giants.

The Broncos' season has only become worse. They are 3-5 with a home game against the defending Super Bowl-champion New England Patriots up next.

The Eagles won their seventh straight and improved to 8-1.

An unexpected problem for the Broncos was their defense played poorly allowing three long touchdown drives each time on the next possession after McManus converted field goals. McManus, who was born here, raised in the area, and played college ball at Temple, made all three field goal attempts of 52, 53 and 24 yards.

Each time, the Denver D couldn't follow with a stop.

Joseph, the Broncos' first-year head coach, made his first quarterback switch of his career this week as he replaced the turnover-prone Siemian with the veteran Osweiler.

On the first drive of the game, Osweiler completed passes of 14 yards to Thomas and 19 to Cody Latimer to get close enough for McManus to boot a 52-yard field goal.

All the Broncos needed was for their No. 1-ranked defense to come through with a stop and momentum would be with the visitors.

The defense, though, appeared dispirited from the start. Wentz picked up a third-and-9 with a quick pass to backup tight end Trey Burton for 14 yards.

The Broncos thought they had a third-and-1 stop but star cornerback Aqib Talib was called for holding. With Talib upset at the call, the Eagles went right back at him, and Wentz hit a wide-open Alshon Jeffery for a 32-yard touchdown.

Osweiler did throw an interception that hurt. He threw a slant pattern to Thomas, who was beaten to the ball by cornerback Patrick Robinson, who returned to the Broncos' 15.

On third down, Wentz slipped an inside screen to running back Corey Clement who ran to daylight for the touchdown.

While that score wasn't necessarily on the Denver defense, it was otherwise no match for Wentz and the creative Eagles' offense. Wentz completed a relatively modest 15 of 27 passing for 199 yards, but he also threw four touchdowns with no interceptions.

Osweiler was 19 of 38 for 208 yards with one touchdown and two interceptions. The Broncos also struggled to run the ball as C.J. Anderson, Jamaal Charles and Devontae Booker combined for 35 yards on 19 carries.

Both head coaches made some curious late-game decisions given the blowout situation. The Eagles not only went for it on fourth down with 5:34 left and a three touchdown lead, Foles completed a 35-yard deep pass down the right sideline to Nelson Agholor.

Joseph responded by calling two timeouts inside of 2 minutes and his team down by four touchdowns.

Both coaches shook hands and exchanged pleasantries at midfield after the game.

# 9 keys for Broncos against Eagles

By Mike Klis

9 News

November 6, 2017

Vance Joseph's quest for the first road win of his NFL head coaching career included a team work out for his Denver Broncos here Saturday at Temple University's practice field.

Former Bronco receiver Steve Watson and current kicker Brandon McManus once walked on the Temple campus grounds.

Which may have nothing to do with the price of Von Miller jerseys at the Broncos' team stores. But maybe some historical ties will help the Broncos win a road game across town Sunday against the Philadelphia Eagles at Lincoln Financial Field.

OK, we're searching. To date, the Broncos are 3-1 at home, 0-3 at home.

"One adjustment: Don't give the ball away," Joseph said Friday. "How about that?"

Oh, yeah, Joseph made one other adjustment: He changed quarterbacks. Trevor Siemian is out. Brock Osweiler is back in.

The Broncos are tied with Washington as the league's biggest underdogs this week. The Eagles are 7.5-point favorites against the Broncos. Seattle is a similar favorite at home against Washington.

Here are 9 keys to the Broncos pulling off an upset:

## 1. One turnover or less

During their three-game losing streak, the Broncos committed not one turnover, not 9, but 11 turnovers. Turnovers cost Siemian his starting job. The Broncos -11 turnover ratio on the season is surpassed only by 0-8 Cleveland.

## 2. Right the ship, Brock

New quarterback Osweiler has an enthusiastic personality. Change to status quo brings hope the situation will improve. Change, in the Broncos' case, cannot be bad.

## 3. Harass Carson Wentz into turnovers

Joseph in two separate press conferences this week mentioned how Eagles' second-year quarterback holds on to the ball a little longer than others. Broncos pass rusher Von Miller gets to the quarterback a little quicker than others.

## 4. Cover Zach Ertz

The weakness in the Denver defense this year has been in its failure to cover the tight end. During their three-game skid, New York's Evan Engram (5 catches, 82 yards, 1 touchdown), the Chargers' Hunter Henry (4 catches, 73 yards) and Kansas City's Travis Kelce (7 catches, 133 yards, 1 TD) combined for 16 catches, 288 yards and 2 TDs.

Ertz is second to Kelce among tight ends with 43 catches and 528 yards and first with 6 touchdowns. But he suffered a hamstring injury during practice this week and is listed as questionable. Even if Ertz plays, he figures to be limited. Maybe, the Broncos' safeties and linebackers can keep up.

## **5. Get DT and TD**

Broncos' No. 1 receiver Demaryius Thomas has gone 13 consecutive games without scoring a touchdown. The switch to Osweiler may help snap his skid.

The Eagles' defense is No. 1 against the rush, allowing just 70.4 yards per game – the Broncos are No. 2 at 72.9 yards. So, the Broncos may have to put it up before they can run. The Broncos passing game should also be helped by the return of Emmanuel Sanders, who missed the past two games with an ankle injury.

## **6. Cover the kicks**

The Eagles have the league's second-best punt returner in Kenjon Barner (14.6-yard return average), so as he did Monday night against the Chiefs' Tyreek Hill, Broncos' punter Riley Dixon will again have to concentrate on hang time, first, distance, second.

## **7. Catch the kicks**

Both Broncos' punt returner Isaiah McKenzie and kickoff returner Cody Latimer mishandled the ball Monday night at Kansas City.

It's not easy judging the ball the first time playing in strange surroundings.

## **8. Stop Blount, Ajayi**

Eagles' power back LeGarrette Blount is 11th in the league with 467 yards rushing on 4.7 yards per carry. Newly acquired Jay Ajayi was 13th with Miami with 465 yards. Joseph is anticipating Ajayi getting a few carries.

## **9. Get ready, Talib and Harris Jr.**

The stars of the No Fly Zone haven't received much action lately, especially Aqib Talib. But with Ertz hurt, and the Broncos' strong in defending the run, Wentz may look outside where he has two fine receivers in Alshon Jeffrey (28 catches, 14.9-yard average) and Nelson Agholor (27 catches, 14.5-yard average).

# The Eagles ran out of celebratory fireworks playing against the Broncos

By Jacob Rodriguez

9 News

November 6, 2017

The Denver Broncos haven't had a loss this bad since 2010 - when they were beaten to a pulp by the Raiders 59 to 14. The team's on their third-string quarterback and dealing with a host of issues.

To add insult to injury, it looks like the Philadelphia Eagles beat the Broncos so badly on Sunday their stadium ran out of fireworks to celebrate their touchdowns (7 of them).

**@Eagles**

**Apologies, we actually ran out of fireworks at @LFFStadium. #FlyEaglesFly**

**2:12 PM - Nov 5, 2017**

**131 Replies 3,471 Retweets 8,693 likes**

The Broncos (3-5) lost 51-23 to the Eagles (8-1) in a game where the box score - even though it's lopsided - doesn't tell the full story.

Yes, the Eagles ran out of fireworks, but they also pulled their starting quarterback and a starting guard before the end of play Sunday.

Even Von Miller has conceded: he said after the game that the Broncos aren't a good football team.

9NEWS' Broncos insider Mike Klis took a look at the game - you can read his full recap here.

It may not have been a good week for the Broncos, but at least Demaryius Thomas caught his first TD pass this season. We're looking on the bright side here.

They'll always be our team. After all, #WeAreBroncos.

Oh yeah, and then there was this incredible play:

**@Broncos**

**Strip-sack Miller!!@BMarshh54 scoops it and scores.#DENvsPHI**

**1:54 PM - Nov 5, 2017**

**84 Replies 232 Retweets 817 likes**

# Broncos again take wait-and-see approach at quarterback after latest loss

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

November 6, 2017

After the first chance didn't go all that well in the Denver Broncos' 51-23 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles, quarterback Brock Osweiler left Lincoln Financial Field on Sunday evening wondering if he will get a second chance.

Because now it really isn't about who plays quarterback for the Broncos. That became a supremely muddled affair as soon as they benched the guy who won the job. Now it's a matter of an increasingly frustrated team with an increasingly frustrated head coach with an increasingly growing string of losses trying to just pick a guy who won't give the ball away.

That is the state of affairs with this offense, given that the Broncos benched Trevor Siemian this past week, put Osweiler into the lineup, gained a subpar 3.8 yards per play in what was easily the worst loss of the post-2010 era, rushed for a season-low 35 yards and lost by 28 points.

Asked afterward if he were ready to say whether Osweiler would start next weekend against the New England Patriots, Broncos coach Vance Joseph was noncommittal, much the same way he was about Siemian after Monday night's loss in Kansas City looked to be the season's low point -- before Sunday's new low was discovered.

"We'll see," Joseph said. "I have to go back and watch the tape and see how the game was played from that position before I make any decisions."

The list of choices is a puzzle to say the least, especially if the Broncos can't protect any of the guys they put behind center any better than they have in the past six games.

Siemian, a team captain who won the job in back-to-back training camps, was sent to the bench with 10 interceptions and repairs needed in his confidence and footwork. Osweiler, who added two more interceptions Sunday to the Broncos' growing pile, is trying to regain his own career footing after a bumpy ride with the Houston Texans last season to go with a bumpy ride this past summer before the still-winless Cleveland Browns released him.

Then there's Paxton Lynch, who is still coming back from a preseason shoulder injury, and even if the Broncos' medical and coaching staffs suddenly declared Lynch physically and mentally ready to start after so much time off, the Broncos next opponent is ... the New England Patriots. So Lynch, who battled some confidence issues in the team's preseason games, especially after mistakes, would be asked to face whatever Bill Belichick comes up with coming off a bye.

But any decision starts with whether Joseph feels that what transpired on that side of the ball against the Eagles could be repaired with another change at quarterback, or whether he thinks it best to play Osweiler against the Patriots and see if things go any more smoothly.

"I thought Brock did a fine job," Joseph said as he measured his words carefully with every response Sunday. "I was proud of the week he had, and he did a fine job. Obviously, we had two more interceptions, which I don't like, but I have to go back and watch the tape to really get a feel for how Brock played."

The Broncos finished Sunday with 226 yards, their lowest output in an increasingly ugly season, including just 35 yards rushing, also a season low. Osweiler threw the team's 11th and 12th interceptions.

His second interception was every bit as bad as Siemian's third interception in Kansas City, part of an effort Joseph called "horrific" a week ago before removing Siemian from the lineup. Osweiler was sacked three times and finished with 208 yards passing, with much of that coming after the Eagles had at least a three-touchdown lead.

Osweiler's teammates said the troubles on offense went way beyond the quarterback's play -- "I think Brock did a good job. He put us in the right positions, came in on a short week and was prepared," guard Ron Leary said. The troubles do extend well past the quarterback, so perhaps Joseph looks at the video and decides Osweiler gets another shot to try to kick-start something in the offense. Osweiler hopes so.

"Absolutely, I think every player in the National Football League plays this game to be the starter, to contribute to his team, to help their football team win games," he said. "So I would love to be the starter of this football team. I can promise you that this game is not going to discourage me. I'm going to work harder than ever to clean up these problems and get us back in the win column."

The bottom line of bottom lines is that the Broncos haven't been in the win column since Oct. 1, when they were a 3-1 team with big dreams. Now, they are a team with five losses in their past six games, searching for some kind of offensive identity before the lack of one takes their whole season down.

# It's official: Broncos' list of problems goes way beyond quarterback

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

November 6, 2017

The Denver Broncos got all the confirmation they could possibly need about their long, and still growing, list of problems Sunday as they were repeatedly serenaded with "Fly, Eagles, Fly" after a cascade of Philadelphia touchdowns completed a thorough flattening of the Broncos' season.

In a 51-23 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles at Lincoln Financial Field, the Broncos confirmed that a change at quarterback didn't repair any of what is wrong with their offense. They confirmed they don't bounce back from mistakes. They confirmed their defense can't snipe at the offense's struggles, because they've got plenty of problems of their own to worry about -- it was the first time the franchise had surrendered 50 points in a game since the disaster that was the 2010 season.

And the Broncos confirmed, perhaps once and for all in this season -- with, oh, just the New England Patriots coming for a visit next Sunday -- that they might be a wobbly 3-5 middleweight against the league's heavyweights.

"We didn't play well -- period," Broncos linebacker Von Miller said. "Fifty-one points is tough."

"It starts with me," coach Vance Joseph said. "I'm the head coach here, so it starts with me, I've got to fix this. We had a great week of practice in all three phases and had a great plan, so obviously I missed something this week."

The Broncos sent Trevor Siemian to the bench this past week in large part because of his 10 interceptions -- six of them in the past three games -- and in doing so Joseph said "it's not all Trevor," but that something had to be done. The Broncos then spent a rather ugly afternoon proving that beyond any shadow of a doubt.

The offense is a morass of low confidence and low output. The Broncos continue to open up the formation as if Peyton Manning is behind center, and they continue to put whoever is at quarterback in harm's way. And on Sunday, the league's best run defense showed what things would look like for the Broncos if they couldn't do that either.

The Eagles held the Broncos to 35 yards on the ground, nearly 100 below their season average.

The Broncos dropped passes, missed blocks and tossed in a pile of penalties for good measure. It seems the Broncos changed quarterbacks but nothing else that wasn't working in what is now a four-game losing streak and five losses in the past six games.

The Week 2 win against the Dallas Cowboys seems like a football millennium ago.

"(The Eagles) are the No. 1 team in the league for a reason," said Broncos guard Ron Leary. "We were up for a challenge, but then we didn't get it done."

And the defense? File away all of the hollow, gee-the-defense-is-really-mad-at-the-offense drive-time chatter. Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz may have retired the No-Fly Zone, or at least sent it into sabbatical, with as efficient a four-touchdown day as a second-year star-in-the-making can have.

His four touchdown passes also mean the Broncos have now surrendered 16 in eight games this season, or three more than they surrendered all of last season. And Von Miller didn't have a sack until there were just over eight minutes left in the game when the Eagles had put Nick Foles in at quarterback because Wentz simply had done enough.

The Eagles also pounded away at what once was the league's best run defense with 197 yards. Jay Ajayi has been an Eagles running back for all of five days, and with 1:20 left in the first half, he romped 46 yards through the Broncos' defense for a touchdown.

"It's not going to be pretty watching that [game video]," defensive end Shelby Harris said. "But, you know, you have to watch it and we have to get better. It's a lot of the little stuff ... the Eagles exposed that."

In short, this was some 2011 stuff, when the Broncos were digging out of the 4-12 finish the season before. Six years ago, the Detroit Lions hammered the Broncos 45-10 in Denver and sent the Broncos sprinting toward the installation of an option offense for Tim Tebow the following week. For Broncos history buffs, Jim Schwartz was the Lions' head coach that day and currently he's the defensive coordinator for the Eagles, so he's officially an issue for the Broncos when he's on the schedule.

But take a hearty piece of Sunday's wreckage and put a little in everybody's lap inside the Broncos' suburban complex. Siemian took the bulk of the heat for the last seven weeks, but now he has plenty of company. And Joseph has a whole lot of season left with a sulking team that has lost its way.

# Trouble brewing for Broncos: How they got here, what's next

By Mike Sando

ESPN

November 6, 2017

A storied NFL franchise with an all-time great quarterback at the controls got blown out Sunday. That team was the Denver Broncos. The all-time great quarterback is John Elway, the team's top football executive since 2011 and general manager since 2012.

Embarrassing as the 51-23 defeat to the Philadelphia Eagles might have been, the outcome could not have surprised even a Broncos optimist. Philly is rolling behind dynamic young quarterback Carson Wentz. Denver lacks the ground game and pass protection to support its lower-tier quarterbacks, and if 2016 first-round pick Paxton Lynch does not clear those hurdles when his turn behind center inevitably comes, then what?

The Broncos' four-game slide into a 3-5 record at their season's midpoint has been brewing for a while. Denver was 8-8 last season despite a statistically dominant defense. Vegas oddsmakers set the Broncos' win total at eight in 2017 under the assumption little would change. Peyton Manning's retirement and a series of less-than-stellar drafts are taking a toll, bringing Elway face to face with the next challenge in his Mile High executive tenure.

Elway has long relished the challenge born of great responsibility. A franchise savior as a player, he wasn't content with simply being part of the team. He sought and won full control of the Broncos' football operation, and when results have not met expectations, he has not hesitated making changes that have left him standing as the most responsible party.

## Drafts not riding to the rescue

The Broncos pointed to an impressive array of organizational accomplishments since 2011 in announcing a contract extension for Elway over the summer. Second-most total wins in the league. Five AFC West titles. Two Super Bowl appearances. One Super Bowl victory.

"During his six seasons as an executive," the Broncos declared, "Elway is the only general manager in the NFL during that span who has acquired future Pro Bowl players through the NFL draft, street free agency, unrestricted free agency and college free agency."

While Elway arrived as executive vice president of football operations 2011, he did not become GM until 2012, when the team announced that 2009-11 GM Brian Xanders would be leaving the organization as Elway asserted fuller control.

Even if Elway deserves credit for a 2011 draft class featuring No. 2 overall pick Von Miller, it's notable that Denver is one of only three organizations, along with Cleveland and New Orleans, to have zero Pro Bowl players drafted since 2012. Pro Bowls are not the only or even the best way to size up draft classes -- Derek Wolfe and others have become important contributors -- but that still seems like a surprising realization running counter to perception.

The Chiefs (five), Raiders (four) and Chargers (two) have combined to draft 11 Pro Bowlers over the same span: Tyreek Hill, Marcus Peters, D.J. Alexander, Travis Kelce and Dontari Poe for the Chiefs; Amari Cooper, Khalil Mack, Derek Carr and Latavius Murray for the Raiders; Melvin Gordon and Jason Verrett for the Chargers.

Offensive players drafted by Denver in the first three rounds since Elway became GM include Brock Osweiler and Lynch at quarterback; offensive linemen Michael Schofield, Ty Sambrailo and Garrett Bolles; running backs Montee Ball and Ronnie Hillman; receivers Cody Latimer and Carlos Henderson; and tight end Jeff Heurman. Center Matt Paradis was a late-round find, and Trevor Siemian has provided more than what a seventh-round quarterback typically would. But for a team that has needed help on offense, the drafts have not been transforming.

### **Free agency is tougher now**

The Broncos have shined during Elway's tenure when adding high-profile free agents such as Aqib Talib and DeMarcus Ware. Yet, while money tends to carry the day in free agency, Manning's presence on the roster made Denver a prime destination for veteran free agents. As the Broncos try to keep their edge defensively while supplementing a lagging offense, will they succeed in free agency to the degree they could in building a championship roster?

Elway himself was the key for landing Manning in free agency years ago. No GM could have been better qualified or equipped for luring an all-time great quarterback. Then, once Manning arrived, he became the best recruiter the Broncos could have had.

"Peyton controlled the atmosphere, had everyone playing and focusing because he would chew their ass if they didn't," a veteran coach from the AFC said. "There was a high level of accountability because of him. That all gets placed on the coaching staff, which [Gary] Kubiak and his crew wasn't able to match, and nobody has matched since. There is just a huge void that did not get filled anywhere."

Denver can still succeed in free agency, but where there was once an edge, there is now less of one -- unless the Broncos dive into the market for another veteran quarterback, in which case the Broncos' defense could be attractive.

### **The path forward at QB**

Trevor Siemian has 20 interceptions and an 11-10 record in 21 starts for Denver since the start of last season. He was reasonably efficient when the Broncos protected him, but that was not the case frequently enough, and when Siemian threw the ball back across the field for a pick at Kansas City in Week 8, his fate appeared sealed.

Osweiler, whose two picks Sunday gave him 18 in 15 starts for Houston and Denver during the past two seasons, actually owns a higher Total QBR than Siemian in both players' starts since the 2016 opener (Siemian has the higher passer rating).

All of this puts Lynch front and center. He was the quarterback Dallas coveted before "settling" for Dak Prescott, which in the spring of 2016 led Cowboys owner Jerry Jones to publicly lament his team's decision against trading up for the player Denver picked 26th overall that year. It all seems farcical in

light of Prescott's success, but Lynch hasn't played enough for anyone to make a final judgment. Lynch has made two starts and will presumably take over the job from Osweiler once his injured shoulder heals -- perhaps this coming week.

Lynch, unlike Siemian and Osweiler, has the athleticism to improvise behind a shaky line. The Broncos could build zone-read concepts into their offense to maximize Lynch's skill set. There's a chance Lynch will stabilize the offense and help Denver win lower-scoring games while limiting turnovers. Of course, Lynch also might flounder.

"They are sliding because they don't have a quarterback, period," a veteran AFC coach said.

In looking at the Broncos' recent Elway-era drafts, it's tough to know how much responsibility coaches should bear on the player development front. Elway holds coaches to a high standard forged during his playing career. He knows what he wants. And if the current staff winds up helping Lynch develop into a quarterback Denver can win with, the Broncos won't be hurting for new material when the time comes to announce Elway's next extension.

But with New England on the schedule in Week 10, this nosedive might not be finished, and the future appears a little tenuous.

# Eagles rout Broncos 51-23 to keep NFL's best record

By Staff

Associated Press

November 6, 2017

Carson Wentz tossed four touchdown passes, Corey Clement had three scores, and the Philadelphia Eagles routed the Denver Broncos 51-23 on Sunday.

The Eagles (8-1) dismantled the league's top-ranked defense, racking up 419 yards, to win their seventh straight game and head into a bye week with the best record in the NFL.

Brock Osweiler couldn't get the Broncos (3-5) on track in his first start since rejoining the team in September. He threw two interceptions. Denver has lost four in a row and five of six.

Wentz was 15 of 27 for 199 yards before giving way to Nick Foles. He has three four-TD performances in the last five weeks.

Clement had two TD runs and one TD catch, and newcomer Jay Ajayi ran for 77 yards and one score.

The Eagles hadn't scored 50 points since a 54-11 victory over the Bears on Dec. 22, 2013.

# Brock Osweiler struggles, Broncos routed by Eagles 51-23

By Rob Maddi  
Associated Press  
November 6, 2017

A quarterback change only made things worse for the Denver Broncos.

Brock Osweiler struggled in his first start since returning to the team and the NFL's top-ranked defense was dominated by Carson Wentz and the Philadelphia Eagles.

With Trevor Siemian on the bench, Osweiler took his turn and threw a pair of costly interceptions .

But despite all their troubles on offense, the Broncos still had their defense going strong.

Until Sunday.

Wentz tossed four touchdown passes, Corey Clement had three scores, and the Eagles routed Denver 51-23.

The Broncos (3-5) hadn't allowed 30 points in a game this season, nor any TD runs. They gave up 31 points in the first half and two scores on the ground.

The last time the Broncos allowed more points, they beat the Cowboys 51-48 on Oct. 6, 2013. But Peyton Manning isn't around anymore.

"We had a great week of practice in all three phases and had a great plan, so obviously I missed something this week," coach Vance Joseph said.

Osweiler was 19 of 38 for 208 yards and one TD. He took three sacks, threw two picks and hardly looked like the answer.

Two years ago, Osweiler was 5-2 as a starter filling in for Manning. He returned to the bench as Manning and the defense led the Broncos to a Super Bowl victory.

Osweiler then signed a big contract with the Texans after that season and went 9-7 in 2016, including 1-1 in the playoffs. He was traded to Cleveland, released and came back to Denver as Siemian's backup.

Once Paxton Lynch is ready to play, Osweiler could be carrying a clipboard once again.

"Every player plays to be the starter," Osweiler said. "I would love to be the starter. This game isn't going to discourage me and I'm going to work hard to clean up these problems and get us back in the win column."

Joseph wouldn't commit to Osweiler starting against New England (6-2) next Sunday night.

"I have to go back and watch the tape and see how the game was played from that position before I make any decisions," Joseph said.

The biggest surprise was the way Philadelphia dismantled Denver's defense. Then again, Wentz and the Eagles (8-1) have been doing it all season.

"We played a great offense," Broncos cornerback Chris Harris Jr. said. "They are probably the best offense we have seen and that is what happened."

The lone bright spot for Denver's defense came after Wentz left the game. Von Miller had a strip-sack on Nick Foles, Brandon Marshall recovered it and ran 19 yards for a TD.

Another positive for the Broncos was kicker Brandon McManus, who played on the same field in college for Temple. McManus kicked field goals of 52, 53 and 24 yards. He was only 10 for 15 coming in and 8 for 17 in his career beyond 50.

"We're at the midway mark," Joseph said. "We have to coach better and play better, and it starts with me."

# Carson Wentz tosses 4 TD passes, Eagles beat Broncos 51-23

By Rob Maddi  
Associated Press  
November 6, 2017

Carson Wentz and the Philadelphia Eagles are rolling into their bye week with the best record in the NFL. Von Miller and the Denver Broncos are going the opposite way.

Wentz plans to go hunting during his time off, and his teammates have various mini-vacations scheduled. When they return to face the Dallas Cowboys on Nov. 18, they'll be in the same spot atop the standings.

"This is a special group," Eagles coach Doug Pederson said. "We're 8-1 for a reason and we don't need to go backward now. This is a good week for us to get healthy and make a push."

Wentz tossed four touchdown passes, Corey Clement had three scores, and the Eagles routed Denver 51-23 on Sunday.

The Broncos (3-5) return home to face defending Super Bowl champion New England (6-2) looking to snap a four-game losing streak.

"We're not a good football team right now," Miller said. "The positive thing is we still have time. We still have time to be great."

The Eagles dismantled the league's top-ranked defense, racking up 419 yards, to win their seventh straight game. Yet, Wentz sees room for improvement.

"Absolutely, we're never going to settle," he said. "Always things to learn from. I think we can keep getting better."

Brock Osweiler couldn't get the Broncos on track in his first start since rejoining the team in September. He threw two interceptions and coach Vance Joseph wouldn't commit to a sticking with him.

"I have to go back and watch the tape and see how the game was played from that position before I make any decisions," Joseph said.

Here's some things we learned from Philadelphia's dominant win over Denver:

**AJAYI'S IMPACT:** Jay Ajayi quickly made an impact in his first game with the Eagles after coming over from Miami in a trade. Ajayi had 77 yards rushing, including a 46-yard TD run to put Philadelphia ahead 31-9 in the second quarter. Ajayi, a 2016 Pro Bowl pick, led a ground attack that had 197 yards rushing. Clement had 51 yards and LeGarrette Blount added 37.

"Definitely believe we can do a lot of special things here," Ajayi said. "Glad to be part of the dynamic that we have in there."

**BROCK'S NOT THE ANSWER:** The Broncos need more than Osweiler to turn things around. He was no better than Trevor Siemian, who was benched after throwing three picks in a loss to the Chiefs. Osweiler was 19 of 38 for 208 yards and one TD. He took three sacks, threw two picks and made bad decisions.

"I'm not going to be discouraged," he said. "The more game experience you get, the better you're going to get. That's where we are."

**MORE WEAPONS:** The addition of Ajayi gives an already deep offense even more weapons. Even without tight end Zach Ertz, one of the top players in the league, the Eagles scored 51 points against an excellent defense. Backup tight ends Brent Celek and Trey Burton combined for five catches for 80 yards and one TD.

"The beautiful thing is we were balanced," Wentz said. "We spread the ball around the way we did. We didn't miss a beat."

**UNDERRATED DEFENSE:** The Eagles wanted to prove their defense deserves to be mentioned along with the Broncos and the other top units around the league. They held Denver to 226 total yards and 16 points — the Broncos had a defensive TD.

"They always don't give us credit, but we have to go out there and put people on notice that the Eagles are new and improved," defensive end Brandon Graham said.

**BRIGHT SPOT:** Denver's Brandon McManus kicked field goals of 52, 53 and 24 yards. He was only 10 for 15 coming in and 8 for 17 in his career beyond 50.

**EAGLES' MARKS:** Philly is 8-1 for the fifth time in franchise history (1949, 1960, 1980 and 2004). The team advanced to the NFL championship game or Super Bowl in each of the previous four instances.

In the Super Bowl era, 91 teams started 8-1 or better through the first nine games and 88 made the playoffs (96.7 percent). Of those 91 teams, 40 reached the Super Bowl (44 percent) and 22 won the Super Bowl (24.2 percent).

# About 18 players protest during national anthem

By Staff

Associated Press

November 6, 2017

Associated Press journalists counted 18 NFL players protesting during the national anthem before games on Sunday.

Miami Dolphins players Julius Thomas, Michael Thomas and Kenny Stills knelt during the anthem before Sunday night's game against the Raiders.

Before recent games, the three players waited in the tunnel during the anthem. Coach Adam Gase had established a team rule requiring players either to stand for the anthem or stay in the tunnel.

But the players told Gase that waiting in the tunnel was interfering with their game preparation, according to a person familiar with the discussions.

The person said Gase told them he preferred they stand during the anthem but respected their right to express themselves and relaxed the team rule. The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the Dolphins didn't comment on the latest protests.

For the Dolphins, the game was the first since owner Stephen Ross joined with his players to create a fund for social justice programs.

San Francisco 49ers safety Eric Reid, linebacker Eli Harold and receiver Marquise Goodwin knelt during the anthem before their game with the Arizona Cardinals.

It appeared that six active players and at least one inactive player for Seattle sat for the anthem prior to a game with the Washington Redskins. The majority of the Seahawks defensive line has been sitting during the anthem for most of the season. Newly acquired left tackle Duane Brown knelt.

Only five players were spotted protesting the anthem in some form before the early games.

Philadelphia Eagles safeties Malcolm Jenkins and Rodney McLeod raised their fists during the anthem. Defensive end Chris Long put an arm on Jenkins. Giants injured defensive end Oliver Vernon took a knee.

Tennessee Titans wide receiver Rishard Matthews stayed off the field during the anthem.

Former 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick began the protest movement last season. He remains unsigned and has filed a complaint that team owners colluded against him because of the protests — aimed at police brutality against African-Americans and other issues.

Kaepernick's ex-teammate, Reid, said the players have sent a letter to NFL executive vice president of football operations Troy Vincent seeking another meeting with ownership. Reid said Kaepernick would attend this meeting after not being part of one last month.

"Colin started this protest. He's the reason that we're having these discussions with the NFL," Reid said. "So I think it only makes sense that he's there. Secondly, we are asking that a mediator be there, just to keep the conversation going. The first meeting was great. We were there for four hours. But I feel like we were talking in circles a little bit. So we want a mediator there to keep the conversation resolution-oriented, and I'm hoping that I hear back from Troy soon."

Most weeks, a handful of players — almost all of them black — have protested during the anthems. On Sept. 24, however, more than 200 players protested after President Donald Trump said owners should fire any players who didn't stand for the anthem.

About a dozen members of the New Orleans Saints took a knee before the anthem Sunday, but stood once the public address announcer asked the crowd to rise. That's been the Saints' typical anthem routine since the fourth week of the season.

No members of the Houston Texans knelt. One week earlier, all but about 10 Texans took a knee to protest team owner Bob McNair's comment that "we can't have the inmates running the prison" during a meeting of NFL owners about player protests.

Dallas Cowboys defensive tackle David Irving was pictured raising his fist shortly after the anthem finished playing before the Cowboys' game with the Kansas City Chiefs.

The latest round of protests came one day after a video circulated on social media of retired Los Angeles Dodgers broadcaster Vin Scully saying that he "will never watch another NFL game" because he's so disappointed by the protests and he has "overwhelming respect and admiration for anyone who puts on a uniform and goes to war."

# Broncos embarrassed by Eagles, drop fourth straight game

By Troy Renck

KMGH

November 6, 2017

The old, new quarterback stared across the line of scrimmage, trying to reconcile the cacophony of noise around him. Brock Osweiler fled the Broncos 16 months ago, and returned with renewed hope.

He was cast not as a savior, but as a quarterback who understood it was inexcusable to turn the ball over. Moments later, he fired a pick into Patrick Robinson's belly. The defense responded with a broken spirit, undone by lacking discipline and weeks of carrying too heavy a burden. The Broncos had no blueprint, no resistance and no chance.

The schedule insists there are eight more weeks. But the Broncos' status as contender died on Sunday, the obituary written in a 51-23 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles, their most humiliating since 2010.

"It starts with me," coach Vance Joseph said. "I have to fix it. We had a great week of practice in all three phases. But obviously I missed something. It always starts with me."

According to multiple players, Joseph told the team afterward they needed to search their souls, make it personal, do a "self check." Several said the insinuation was that some players quit on the team.

"I don't think that guys quit," linebacker Brandon Marshall said. "We didn't play well at all. We have to find a way to keep plugging away. It was bad. Nobody can feel good about this."

The Broncos arrived at Lincoln Financial Field looking to rescue their season. Instead a sobering truth became revealed. They are a bottom feeder. What has happened over the last five weeks remains one of the most dizzying spirals in franchise history. A sexy Super Bowl contender after a 3-1 start, the Broncos have dropped four straight games by double digits.

"We got our ass kicked," defensive end Derek Wolfe said. "Winners find a way to win. And that's why this kills me. We let them run the ball on us (197 yards on 37 carries). We had too many penalties (14 for 105 yards). We are fighting with each other. People are getting tired of it. One thing goes wrong and the whole thing crumbles."

Each of the previous three had some plausible explanations: lost edge after a bye, offensive line troubles, Trevor Siemian's carelessness with the football. There was no way to rationalize this. The Broncos were overwhelmed, outcoached and undressed.

"It was all bad," said quarterback Brock Osweiler, whom Joseph did not commit to as the starter against the Patriots. "All of it."

A first-time head coach at any level, Joseph had a lot to answer for after the ugliest regular-season loss since the Josh McDaniels era.

"We have to coach and play better," Joseph said. "That's on me."

The Eagles buried the Broncos at the neck, leaving their head exposed presumably so they could mock them, including a fourth down passing conversion late in the fourth. For the fourth straight week, the outcome was decided, in large part, before intermission. The Broncos entered the game allowing 21 points and 261 yards per game. They yielded 31 and 266 in the first half. They have been outscored 77-15 in the first half over the past four weeks. Couple that with nine penalties for 70 yards by intermission, and no one escapes blame. It represented the most points allowed in a first half and in a game since Oct. 24, 2010, the abyss of McDaniels' reign of error.

"They just beat us. I don't know what to say," explained cornerback Chris Harris Jr. "We aren't a good football team."

When Oswailer threw his second pick, a mindless toss into coverage, the Broncos' sat at minus-13 in turnover margin, worst in the league. Rather than offer a juxtaposition, the game only reinforced the previous month.

Starting Oswailer — long overdue after Siemian's interception binge — was cast as a reset button in the locker room. The defense admitted privately and publicly that it wanted a "fair chance," an opportunity to play without being compromised and with a lead. All played out in the first quarter.

Oswailer led an impressive, though slippery opening drive. The Broncos scored on their first possession for the first time since Week 2. He leaned on Demaryius Thomas (eight catches, 70 yards), benefited from a leaping catch by Cody Latimer, and lucked out when Jalen Mills dropped a potential pick six. The drive worked with multiple tight ends and stalled when three wide sets appeared. Brandon McManus, who played his home Temple games here, buried a 52-yard field goal. The Broncos entered the game having not led in any of their four losses.

The advantage disappeared in a blink, DMX's "Party Up" blaring throughout the stadium after Carson Wentz deked Aqib Talib on a 32-yard touchdown pass to Alshon Jeffery. It foreshadowed the defense's worst day in years. Wentz changed his cadence, leading to multiple offsides penalties on the Broncos. He also audibled repeatedly, with Harris admitting it seemed like Wentz knew "exactly" what Broncos were doing defensively.

"I don't know how to even put it into words," said Shane Ray, whose left wrist was sore, leaving him wondering if he will be playing in pain the remainder of the season.

Talib, upset about an interference call on the previous play, bit on the spread option fake, allowing Jeffery to run free. After sloppy possession by the Broncos -- Garrett Bolles has to reduce penalties at some point -- Wentz connected on back-to-back strikes to set up Jake Elliott's 45-yard field goal. Mercifully, the Eagles sat Wentz midway through the fourth quarter.

Then when it looked like things could not get worse, they did. Repeatedly.

Oswailer went against his own logic, doing the one thing he was told not to do. With Broncos needing a spark, he lit a dumpster fire with a first-play interception to Robinson, who was blanketing Thomas. The Eagles struck quickly with creativity on third down. Using the Broncos' aggression against them, Wentz

allowed the rush to leak in before sneaking a slip screen pass to Corey Clement for a 15-yard score. The Eagles inflated their cushion to 17-3.

There was a moment of flickers. Embattled punt returner Isaiah McKenzie delivered a career-best 44-yard punt return. The Broncos inched toward a score when controversy arose on third down. Emmanuel Sanders appeared to convert on a catch, but it was ruled incomplete. Joseph elected not to review the play -- he lost a timeout on the game's second play to avoid 12-men on the field.

"They said upstairs (with Broncos spotter) that it wasn't a catch," Joseph said.

McManus drilled a 53-yard field goal, but it was a fly on the Eagles' windshield.

Wentz, looking every bit the NFL MVP, toyed with an undisciplined Broncos defense. Philadelphia turned a roughing-the-passer penalty on Zach Kerr into a breathtaking score. Wentz connected with Trey Burton for a 27-yard touchdown for a 24-6 bulge. In an embarrassing first half, the Broncos' inability to cover tight ends remained near the top of the list, an indictment of the game plan. Even with Zach Ertz out, the Eagles wore out the Broncos just as Evan Engram and Travis Kelce did in recent weeks.

"This isn't on the offense. This is on defense," said Von Miller, who finished with a team-high eight tackles and one sack. "We pissed the bed."

Oswelier showed flashes, but the offense sputtered consistently on third down, converting one of its first six attempts. The Broncos settled for a 24-yard field goal, McManus' third of the half, when only a touchdown would work. At 24-9, the Broncos seemed merely chum to a great white shark.

Running back Jay Ajayi, rejuvenated by trade to Eagles this week, burst 46 yards, providing an exclamation point with a leap into the end zone. The Broncos showed some fight late, but it amounted to nothing more than fantasy league statistics. Thomas ended his touchdown drought at 13 games, and Miller registered a strip sack of Nick Foles that Brandon Marshall returned 19 yards for a score before a half-empty stadium.

In one way, Joseph was proven right. The Broncos' issues extend beyond benching a slumping Siemian. But after the worst regular-season loss in the John Elway era -- the Sea Sick Super Bowl has been expunged from the memory of fans -- Joseph knows the problems include the mirror.

Halfway into his inaugural season, he has waded knee deep into a crisis. How he navigates this mess will say about a lot about the players' belief in him and the Broncos' future at multiple positions.

"It's about reaching deep," guard Ron Leary said, "and deciding what kind of man you want to be."

## **Footnotes**

The Broncos caught a break when Eagles tight end Zach Ertz's hamstring acted up during warmups. The Eagles made him inactive. The Broncos entered the game ranking 27th in coverage against tight ends this season, and it only became worse against backups. ... The 51 points allowed was the most since 59 by the Raiders in 2010. .... The Broncos' inactives featured one mild surprise: inside linebacker Todd Davis. Davis told Denver7 on Friday he expected to play, but it was determined his high ankle sprain needed another week of recovery. Joining Davis as inactives included receiver Jordan Taylor, Paxton

Lynch, Lorenzo Doss and DeMarcus Walker (he remains a disappointing healthy scratch until he improves on special teams). ... Joseph on the 14 penalties. "It's unacceptable. We can't have it." ... Eagles safety Malcolm Jenkins, "I don't think any of us anticipated this. We are proving ourselves week in and week out."

# Why it happened: Eagles 51, Broncos 23

By Andrew Mason  
DenverBroncos.com  
November 6, 2017

Once again, the Broncos' hopes went astray early.

Denver dug itself a two-score hole in the first quarter and never recovered, eventually falling 51-23 to the Eagles at Lincoln Financial Field on Sunday.

""We got our [butt] kicked. What else needs to be said?" defensive end Derek Wolfe said. "We went out there and got our [butt] kicked. And it's sad, because there's a lot of time and work and blood and sweat invested into this season. To go out and get our [butt] kicked, that really hurts."

The loss, the Broncos' fourth in a row, dropped them to 3-5 at the halfway point of the season.

"It is rock bottom," cornerback Chris Harris Jr. said. "If we don't make the playoffs, that's the worst you can get. We can't afford to let anything else slide -- especially with our division, so we've got to figure something out."

Why did the Broncos fall?

Because the Broncos created an early deficit with self-inflicted wounds

The Eagles sprinted 75 yards to a 32-yard Carson Wentz-to-Alshon Jeffery touchdown on their first series, and two penalties played a key role, accounting for two of the three first downs accumulated by the Eagles before the scoring strike. The second penalty, a holding call against Aqib Talib, wiped out a third-down stop and set up the Wentz-to-Jeffery connection one snap later.

The infractions set the tone for what was to come.

An illegal block above the waist on the subsequent kickoff return forced the Broncos to start their next series at their 8-yard line. From that field position, the offense went nowhere, going three-and-out on a series that saw a false-start penalty push them into third-and-13. Philadelphia took advantage of good field position off the subsequent punt to drive 29 yards to a Jake Elliott field goal and a 10-3 lead.

On Denver's next play from scrimmage, Osweiler was intercepted by Philadelphia cornerback Patrick Robinson. That set up Wentz's second touchdown pass three plays later; Philadelphia led by double digits for the rest of the game.

Even Denver's only scoring drive of the first quarter included an avoidable mistake. That march ended in a 52-yard Brandon McManus field goal, but was derailed after a holding penalty sent the Broncos backward after they advanced to the Philadelphia 23-yard line.

The Broncos finished the game with season highs in penalties (14) and penalty yards (105), including seven penalties in the first half. Denver's penalty-yardage total was its worst since Week 15 of the 2015 season -- a 127-yard tally in a loss at Pittsburgh.

"That's unacceptable," Head Coach Vance Joseph said. "We can't have those."

The poor early start also forced the Broncos to abandon their running game, getting them out of the game they wanted to play. Running backs Devontae Booker, C.J. Anderson and Jamaal Charles combined for just 35 yards on 19 carries, and the Broncos finished with just one rushing first down.

Because the Eagles repeatedly gashed the Broncos on the ground

The Broncos came into the game having not allowed a rushing touchdown all season, becoming the first defense in three years to achieve that feat. But that statistic went out the window with 1:20 remaining in the first half, when Jay Ajayi burst off left tackle and into the open field for a 46-yard score that extended the Eagles' lead to 31-9.

Ajayi, Corey Clement, LeGarrette Blount and Wendell Smallwood combined for 190 yards on 34 carries as the Eagles became the first team this season to rush for over 150 yards and average more than 5.0 yards per carry against the Broncos.

Clement and Ajayi accounted for four of the Eagles' seven touchdowns as Philadelphia racked up as many trips to the end zone in a single game as the Broncos' defense had allowed in the previous five games combined.

"Stopping the run, that surprised me, in that we couldn't stop the run game," Joseph said. "And that was the bigger issue than the pass game. Defensively, they had a great plan in the run and pass game, and they exposed us."

Because Wentz used his tight ends to maximum effect

Even with Zach Ertz sidelined because of a hamstring injury, Wentz wasted no time involving tight ends Brent Celek and Trey Burton in the game. He targeted them with his first three attempts, completing two of the passes for 23 yards to quickly move the Eagles near midfield and get the Eagles out of an early third-and-9 from their 26-yard line.

Burton and Celek finished with 80 yards and a touchdown on five receptions.

Because the Broncos lost the turnover battle

Although this remained an issue, this was only a secondary cause of the defeat, as the game was slipping out of the Broncos' grasp even before Robinson intercepted Osweiler with 1:53 left in the first quarter.

A second interception off Osweiler late in the third quarter on a deep attempt to Demaryius Thomas set up the Eagles' sixth touchdown of the day.

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- With two Broncos touchdowns, you score \$1 roast beef sandwiches the day after a Broncos game at participating Arby's.

- Download the McDonald's app for free Broncos gameday offers! Additionally, get a \$1 Big Mac sandwich or Sausage McMuffin with Egg the day after every Broncos game as well as 30 percent off any hat after every Broncos game at Denver Broncos Team Stores with the McDonald's key tag.

- Buffalo Wild Wings: If the Broncos make a field goal, you could win a free sharable at Buffalo Wild Wings!

# From the Pocket: Brock Osweiler laments turnovers in Broncos' loss to Eagles

By Aric DiLalla  
DenverBroncos.com  
November 6, 2017

Brock Osweiler's return began with promise.

During his first drive back as the Broncos' starting quarterback, Denver moved the ball 47 yards on nine plays and moved the chains on three occasions.

Osweiler found Demaryius Thomas for 14 yards on the first play of the game and then moved the ball 19 yards to Cody Latimer a few plays later.

"I felt very good, right from the start," Osweiler said. "I thought we showed that with that initial drive. I think we all made some good plays. D.T., great catch first play. Cody Latimer made a huge play vs. man coverage. So I felt pretty good, right at the beginning. Obviously, no game is perfect and there's plenty of things I wish I would've done different, but that's a football game and I'll watch the tape and I'll learn from it and I'll move forward."

That drive stalled in the red zone following a holding penalty, though, and the Broncos settled for an early 3-0 lead. When they got the ball back, they trailed, and Denver pieced together just one other first-half drive that garnered a first down.

"Looking back on it, I [threw] it to Emmanuel [Sanders] in the red area," Osweiler said.

"Well, if I throw it to D.T., maybe we have a touchdown. But that's football. It's easy to second-guess yourself after the plays happen. We just have to clean it up. Philadelphia's too good of a football team. When you get into their territory, you have to find ways to score touchdowns. You're not going to beat a team like that on the road by kicking field goals and punting the football all day."

The Broncos also weren't going to stay competitive against the Eagles by turning the ball over, and yet they again lost the turnover battle. Osweiler's first interception came on first-and-10 from the Denver 25-yard line, and it set up Philadelphia to take a 17-3 first-quarter lead.

Following the loss, Osweiler seemed relatively pleased with his read on the play, which he said was similar to the game's first completion to Thomas. After a play-action fake, Osweiler turned to read the linebacker, who was up at the line of scrimmage. That key told Osweiler to fire the ball to Thomas, but the defensive back stepped in front of Thomas and put the Broncos in another hole.

"Any time you put your team in a position like that, it's horrible," Osweiler said.

He avoided another for most of the game until he felt compelled to take a chance with the Broncos down 38-9 in the third quarter. At that point, Osweiler said, he was just aiming to keep his teammates "fired up" and to remind them the team could still have a chance if it began to convert its chances.

And that's what led to the second interception, which floated on Osweiler and fell to an Eagles defender. As he said to his coaches after the game, though, that's a chance he's not opposed to take. When he reviews the film Monday, he'll evaluate the situation with his coaches to decide when the timing and score dictate he should take a chance.

"It just seemed like it was kind of that time to throw up one and see if we can get a big play downfield, maybe a pass interference call," Osweiler said. "I was throwing it blind, I had to slide to my left, but bottom line: we can't turn the ball over. And when we do that, it's just going to be hard to win football games and we've got to clean it up."

Head Coach Vance Joseph preached that message all week long, and he wasn't pleased with Osweiler's two turnovers. Joseph said he would wait to evaluate the film before naming a starter for Sunday's game against New England, but he wasn't entirely down on Osweiler's performance.

"I thought Brock did a fine job," Joseph said. "Obviously we had two more interceptions that I don't like. I have to go back and watch the tape to really get a feel for how Brock played."

Whatever problems Joseph finds, Osweiler will be ready to fix. And there's no question who he'd like to see under center when the Broncos welcome the Patriots this coming weekend.

"I think every player in the National Football League plays this game to be the starter, to contribute to his team and help his team win games," Osweiler said. "So I would love to be the starter of this football team. I can promise you, this game is not going to discourage me. I'm going to work harder than ever to clean up these problems and get us back in the win column."

# Injury updates: Broncos vs. Eagles

By Aric DiLalla

DenverBroncos.com

November 6, 2017

The following is a running list of updates regarding the Denver Broncos players who suffered injuries during Sunday's game against the Eagles.

**1:28 p.m. ET:** Running back C.J. Anderson was attended to on the field after he took a big hit from defensive end Vinny Curry with 6:02 to play in the first quarter. Trainers evaluated Anderson for a couple minutes and then helped him to his feet. He was able to walk off the field under his own power, and headed to the Broncos' bench.

**1:33 p.m. ET:** The Broncos announced Anderson's return is probable.

# Broncos inactives vs. Philadelphia Eagles

By Staff

DenverBroncos.com

November 6, 2017

Linebacker Todd Davis was ruled inactive Sunday for the Broncos' game against the Philadelphia Eagles, but wide receiver Emmanuel Sanders will make his return after missing the last two weeks.

The entire list can be seen below:

**FL FOOTBALL OPERATIONS**

**WEEKLY DEACTIVATION REPORT**

DATE: 11/5/17

TEAM: BRONCOS

NUMBER OF PLAYERS ON ACTIVE LIST: 53

NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED TO DE-ACTIVATE: 7

PLAYERS PLACED ON INACTIVE LIST FOR TODAY'S GAME:

Uniform #	Name	Pos
12	DAXTON LYNCH	QB
33	DE'ANGELO HENDERSON	RB
37	LORENZO ROSS	RB
51	TODD DAVIS	LB
57	DEMARCUS WALKER	LB
71	DONALD STEPHENSON	OL
87	JORJAN TAYLOR	WR

**PREGAME INTRODUCTION DESIGNATION REPORT**

INDICATE HOW TEAM WILL BE PRESENTED FOR PREGAME INTRODUCTIONS  
(If selecting "Individual" or "Group", please circle a choice on line 2)

1 Individual                      Group                      Team

2 Offense                          Defense

# Paul Klee: Brotherly Drubbed: Eagles smash Broncos in painful end to an era

By Paul Klee  
Colorado Springs Gazette  
November 6, 2017

This is an entire rebuild.

The Broncos must treat it that way.

Sunday at gray, gloomy Lincoln Financial Field, the Eagles wore black to the end of an era. Classy touch, Philly. By smashing the Broncos 51-23 and in every possible way — offense, defense, special teams and, most definitely, in the coaching department — the Eagles actually did them a favor.

It's time to stop pretending, hoping and praying this formula can work again. The rebuild can start now. That old notion that Denver's defense is still Super Bowl-caliber and the offense is just there to not screw it up? Well, that theory imploded when the Eagles scored so often "The Linc" ran out of fireworks. Yep, that happened. Instead of lighting up the city's skyline each time Carson Wentz threw another touchdown, the Eagles were forced to celebrate the old-fashioned way — by laughing at the opponent's expense.

"We got our ass kicked," Broncos defender Derek Wolfe said. "What else needs to be said?"

Plenty, to drive home the point: the expiration date on Denver's unusual formula of winning with defense was Nov. 5, 2017. Remember when Peyton Manning hit the proverbial wall, forcing the Broncos to overhaul their approach for Manning's final season-and-a-half as the quarterback?

This felt like that, only this time for the Broncos defense. In the NFL, the wall moves as quickly as a cornerback. And with the Eagles' steel-toed boot stuck in their backside, the Broncos were given undeniable proof a golden era of winning football is dead to rights.

Time to bury it. Time to move forward. No job's safe.

The defense's utter dominance became a warm, distant memory right when Wentz, the Eagles quarterback, faced a fourth-and-1 near the goal line — and, instead of running the ball to burn clock with a 22-point lead, threw a pass straight into the teeth of the "No Fly Zone" for a first down. A defense that routinely swamped the likes of Tom Brady and Aaron Rodgers looked more like a practice squad for Wentz and the Eagles.

"That's the first time I've ever seen this defense give up yards and points like that," linebacker Brandon Marshall said in a losing locker room that emptied quicker than a subway train during rush hour.

"We couldn't do anything," Marshall said, his voice trailing off.

Broncos coach Vance Joseph was right for once. He's said for weeks the issues that plagued the Broncos in lopsided losses to the Giants, Chargers and Chiefs were more than Trevor Siemian. The Broncos have 99 problems and a quarterback is only one.

The last time the Broncos allowed more than 50 points was Oct. 24, 2010 — 59-14, Raiders. Six weeks later, Josh McDaniels was fired as coach. It's unfair to pin a 3-5 start and one big, ugly signature loss all

on Joseph, the first-time head coach. But he's not the guy. Nine months into his tenure, Joseph has offered zero evidence the Broncos made a quality hire. It hasn't mattered if a player conducts a marriage proposal during a preseason game (Menelik Watson), Snapchats practice to thousands of strangers and 31 NFL teams (Will Parks) or drops touchdown pass after first-down pass (Bennie Fowler). The response from Joseph has been the same: Get back out there, fellas!

Von Miller's one of the kindest dudes and hardest workers you'd be lucky enough to meet. But when the lineup of team captains include a prankster like Vonnie Football, the kicker, the benched quarterback and Aqib Talib, Mr. Eye Poke himself, how did you expect this movie was going to end?

"It starts with me. I'm the head coach here. I've got to fix this," Joseph said.

Combined with a talent deficit that was on full display against the betting favorites to escape the NFC and reach the Super Bowl, a lack of accountability in Joseph's locker room led directly to Sunday. The Broncos had 14 penalties. The first quarter stood as a comedy of errors without a punchline. Offense, holding. Defense, holding. Special teams, block in the back.

"Undisciplined," Wolfe said before adding "fighting with each other" to a list of the mistakes.

What does rock bottom look like? Midway through the first half, 16 Broncos sat on the bench, dejected. Another six took a knee on the sideline. I imagine most of Colorado flipped off its TVs to walk the dog or rake that last pile of leaves. Meanwhile, if these were the same fans who once infamously booed Santa Claus, ol' Santa must have deserved it. The Philly fanatics had a jolly good time, especially in Section M9, where 20 locals serenaded a longtime season-ticket holder with a giddy rendition of "Happy Birthday."

The contrast in the state of the franchises was enough to make Broncos Country shed a tear. One team reveled in a bright future that comes with a franchise quarterback. Wentz threw four touchdowns and will have a statue alongside Rocky Balboa's if this continues. The other team threw Brock Osweiler against the wall to see if he would stick. Two interceptions later, it was more of the same slog for the Broncos offense.

If Paxton Lynch is healthy enough to play, he should start next Sunday against the Patriots. Not because Lynch is the answer (he's still the guy who lost two quarterback competitions), or because it will impact the outcome (Handsome Tom and the Patriots can wear their favorite Uggs and still own Mile High).

This season was cooked before Sunday. Now's the time to find out what you've got at every position and, more important, who's still playing through the whistle. "A self-check," Joseph called it. When the opponent scores so often the stadium runs low on fireworks, it's time to reconsider the entire operation, no matter how many Super Bowl rings the defense brought home.

"They had a great plan in the run and in the pass," Joseph said. "They exposed us."

The great Broncos defense as we knew it is no longer.

Long live the great Broncos defense.

# David Ramsey: Denver Broncos, led by Brock Osweiler, hit bottom in humiliating surrender to Eagles

By David Ramsey  
Colorado Springs Gazette  
November 6, 2017

A group effort in futility.

Just when it seemed the Broncos had fallen as far as they could fall, they fell even deeper into the NFL abyss. For the past month, the Broncos offense has been asleep, but a violent, aggressive, stubborn defense allowed fans to retain hope.

Maybe the offense could start doing practical, important things like moving to first downs and scoring points. Maybe the season could be salvaged.

Goodbye, maybe.

The Broncos defense joined the offense in a frightening degree of awfulness during Sunday's 51-23 loss to the Eagles. It was bad, really bad, even worse than the loss to the Chargers two weeks ago.

Here are three reasons why the Broncos got trashed by the Eagles:

## **One – The defense**

We can wave goodbye, at least for a week, to the angle of the defense being martyrs. On Sunday, the Broncos defense was shredded by Philadelphia quarterback Carson Wentz.

Wentz was seldom bothered by pressure. Wentz was able to torment Denver's proud and stingy secondary.

Remember the fun of watching the Broncos offense when it was led by an elite quarterback? That's where Eagles fans are now. Wentz is special. The Broncos collection of quarterbacks is, well, not so special.

Which brings us to another problem:

## **Two – Brock Osweiler**

I wondered if the Brock of 2015, the one who led the Broncos to a 5-2 record, the one who played a vital role in Denver's march to a Super Bowl title, would suddenly return to revive the offense.

Instead, we saw the Brock of 2016, the one who inspired the Texans to dump him less than a year after handing him \$37 million guaranteed cash.

Brock was not an improvement over Trevor Siemian, benched last week. But he was not a drop from Siemian, either.

The Broncos have a serious quarterback problem that is unlikely to be solved this season, or maybe even this decade.

## **Three – Penalties**

The Broncos had zero chance in the madness that is the Eagles home field.

They will have a chance later in the season. The Broncos could still finish, say, 8-8.

But sloppiness could send the Broncos to a truly atrocious season. On Sunday, the Broncos collected 14 penalties.

Vance Joseph faces a mountain of problems as his rookie season tumbles into chaos.

Discipline is near the top of those problems.

# Woody Paige: Broncos have nothing going for them at the moment

By Woody Paige  
Colorado Springs Gazette  
November 6, 2017

The Super Bowl 50 champion has morphed into a nonconference directional team, a homecoming opponent, a Hostess CupCake on the schedule.

Eastern Colorado State Plumbers Institute lost in Philadelphia on Sunday, 51-23. It was over long before it was over.

On the road this season the Broncooids are 0-4 after being scorched for 127 cumulative points (30.7 average) while scoring a meager 58 (14.5). In their past six games away from home (since Dec. 11 of last year) they have averaged 13 points and been beaten in all.

Denver has terrible travel troubles.

One week the Broncos are shut out for the first time since 1992. Two weeks later they are trampled on for more than 50 points for the first time since 2010. In between they were barely competitive.

The Broncos have been forced to endure more points than the Eagles' 51 only 10 times in franchise history, and seven of those debacles occurred in the first decade when the Broncos were among the worst teams in the scoring-berserk AFL.

Philadelphia probably could have put up 70 against what was reputed to be the league's No. 1 defense. The Broncos, one of the most offensive offenses, was fortunate to score more than 9 because of two touchdowns in dumpster time.

Who's got next? Paxton Lynch? Chad Kelly or Wyoming's Josh Allen in 2018? What's Peyton's telephone number in Cherry Hills Village? Dare I mention a free agent quarterback the Broncos once tried to sign? Oh, Romo, oh, Romo, where art thou, Romo? How do you like Kyle Slotter now?

On Sunday, Brock Osweiler played a lot like Trevor Siemian, completing just 50 percent of his passes, with one touchdown and two interceptions.

"Ball security is job security," Osweiler said upon learning he was the new quarterback last week. Osweiler should keep renting.

The No-Fly Zone was atrocious as the Soaring Eagles scored six touchdowns.

The Broncos were penalized 14 times for 105 yards. The lack of discipline was despicable.

The Broncos are on to the New England game. Ugh.

Before the season I predicted the Broncos would finish 8-7-1. They aren't headed back to the Super Bowl. They may not even win enough games (6) to qualify for a minor NCAA postseason game. The Bad Boy Mowers Gasparilla Bowl in St. Petersburg wouldn't invite them.

Vance Joseph stands and suffers on the sideline.

At one point in the third quarter, as Osweiler flung another wild pass, Joseph crossed his arms, as if he were trying to pass a kidney stone.

Joseph is in danger of finishing with the least number of victories for a Broncos first-year coach since 1972 – when John Ralston compiled a 5-9 record.

The last seven head coaches won at least eight in the inaugural season in Denver. Two had 12, another 10.

When Joseph accepted this job, he said the Broncos weren't rebuilding; they were retooling.

They are regressing.

Both Bill McCartney, who coached Joseph at Colorado, and Gary Kubiak, who hired Joseph with the Texans, described him as a "leader of men."

He's not leading these men and a team with half the Super Bowl roster remaining.

Joseph's Technicolor Dreamcoat has faded badly after a 3-1 start.

The coach's dilemma is reminiscent of Josh McDaniels winning his first six games in 2009. Then, the Broncos lost eight of 10. Like Joseph, McDaniels suffered through a four-game losing streak – twice. He never reached five because, in his second season, McDaniels was fired.

Can Joseph survive the four seasons of his contract? Or even two?

John Elway is not a patient, passive president of football operations. He fired a coach who went to the playoffs four consecutive seasons and reached a Super Bowl.

Three of the past five Broncos head coaches didn't make it to a third season.

Joseph's role during a game is not very obvious. He failed to challenge on one offensive play call that should have been overturned. When he did issue a challenge, it was way too late to affect the outcome. Joseph doesn't have to scream, shriek or squawk, but the occasional emotional, passionate response to the game and his players is necessary.

As the coach was standing by idly Sunday, the Broncos got kicked in the grass again.

# Carson Wentz, Eagles carve up reeling Broncos in rout

By Mike Jones

USA Today

November 6, 2017

It shouldn't have looked that easy. Not against the top-ranked defense in the NFL.

But there they were, Carson Wentz and the Philadelphia Eagles offense: passing at will, running at will and lighting up the scoreboard in a 51-23 rout Sunday at Lincoln Financial Field to improve their league-best record to 8-1 as they enter their bye.

The matchup should have presented Wentz & Co., with one of their toughest tests of the season, but instead, the Eagles – tired of repeated reminders of the Broncos' greatness – attacked the visitors with a vengeance, and Denver offered little resistance.

The Broncos (3-5) entered the game having never allowed more than 29 points in a contest this season. But the Eagles found the end zone seven times. Denver hadn't allowed more than 278 yards to an opponent, but Philly and racked up 419.

Wentz recorded another four-touchdown outing (his second in three weeks), and the Eagles' running backs combined for a 197-yard, three-touchdown rushing day.

"That's a good defense and that's a good rushing defense, and they are that way for a reason," Eagles coach Doug Pederson said after his team's seventh consecutive victory. "I just think that when you hear that all week – everybody's got a lot of pride. They want to do their jobs and do them right. It's a good test for our offensive line, and they really stepped up to the occasion, and gosh, they rose up and did a nice job today."

Indeed, the Eagles players hear from the outside that they would likely struggle against the Broncos. But in their meetings and on the practice fields, they heard repeatedly about how they could use Denver's aggressive style of play to their advantage.

So, when the Eagles gave them the look they wanted and Wentz & Co. lined up and ran an option play where the quarterback first faked the handoff, scrambled to his right as if to run, sucking defenders toward him, and then floated a 32-yard touchdown pass to Alshon Jeffery for their first score of the game, the success came as no surprise.

"I think we felt really confident in our plan and the looks that they were showing," said Wentz, who further strengthened his case for MVP and extended his league-leading touchdown total to 23.

Said Jeffery, "It's just something the coaches seen and something we've practiced all week. (Eagles cornerback Ronald) Darby can tell you, all week we practiced it and it worked on him, so that's something that we did a good job of scheming the game plan of. Carson did a great job. We practiced it: If he pulls it you take off running, and that's what we done."

The Eagles also let the over-aggressive Broncos' pass rush to work to their favor in the run game, with defenders out of place and off-balance, the backs gashed Denver for runs of 46, 28 and 26 yards. New

addition Jay Ajayi gained 77 yards and a touchdown on eight carries, and Corey Clement ran for two touchdowns to lead the way.

Broncos players lamented after the game that it felt as if the Eagles knew exactly what was coming on defense and how to attack. Wentz, Jeffery and their teammates said that basically was the case, and praised their coaches' game-planning.

Meanwhile, the Eagles defense had equally as impressive a day. All game long they harassed newly installed Broncos starter Brock Osweiler, sacking him three times, hitting him seven more times and intercepting him twice.

Denver found the end zone just once offensively – a fourth-quarter connection between Osweiler and Demaryius Thomas. And the Broncos defense tacked on a garbage time touchdown after Eagles backup Nick Foles fumbled on a Von Miller sack that Brandon Marshall returned 19 yards.

But the Eagles didn't even care after the game. Considering their record entering their bye week, they had reason to smile.

"It's hard to win in this league. It really is," safety Malcolm Jenkins said. "Every single one of them, you get excited about and cherish. With everyone you stack up, you know the opponent is going to come at you that much harder. We embrace that. ... Obviously, we're happy going into the bye at 8-1. That doesn't happen many times. ... Having a start like this sets us up for where we want to go."

# Broncos' Chris Harris says Carson Wentz runs 'college offense' after Eagles drop 51

By Sean Wagner-McGough

CBS Sports

November 6, 2017

Carson Wentz's MVP campaign continued along unimpeded when he threw four touchdowns in a 51-23 win over the Broncos on Sunday, pushing the Eagles' record to an NFL-best 8-1. The result wasn't necessarily a surprise given the state of the Broncos' offense (QB1: Brock Osweiler) and the location of the game (Philadelphia). But the final scoreline was somewhat surprising given the Broncos' defense is usually among the best in football.

So what happened? According to Broncos All-Pro cornerback Chris Harris, they got torched by a "college offense."

"They run this college offense," Harris said, per NJ.com. "They run kind of like what the Chiefs do. They have options to run, options to pass, they run read-option, they run real option. Carson's checking to a lot of things. It's a college offense. He's just executing it really good."

To be clear, Harris probably didn't intend for his description of the Eagles' offense to be construed as a criticism. He meant it as a compliment. He even called the Eagles' offense the "best offense" they've played so far.

"They knew everything that we were going to be doing [on defense]," Harris said. "They had a great game plan. Carson Wentz is a great quarterback. It seemed like the Chiefs' offense. They just executed a lot better. We played a great offense. It's the best offense we've seen."

Harris isn't wrong. The Eagles' offense does borrow concepts that many prolific offenses use at the college level. And as a result, Wentz is thriving. That doesn't mean Wentz is a #SystemQuarterback. It just means he's being put in a position to succeed with clever play-calling, and he's taking full advantage of his opportunities.

Take the Eagles' first touchdown against the Broncos:

@NFL

.@cj\_wentz + @TheWorldof\_AJ...

It's an @eagles TOUCHDOWN! #FlyEaglesFly

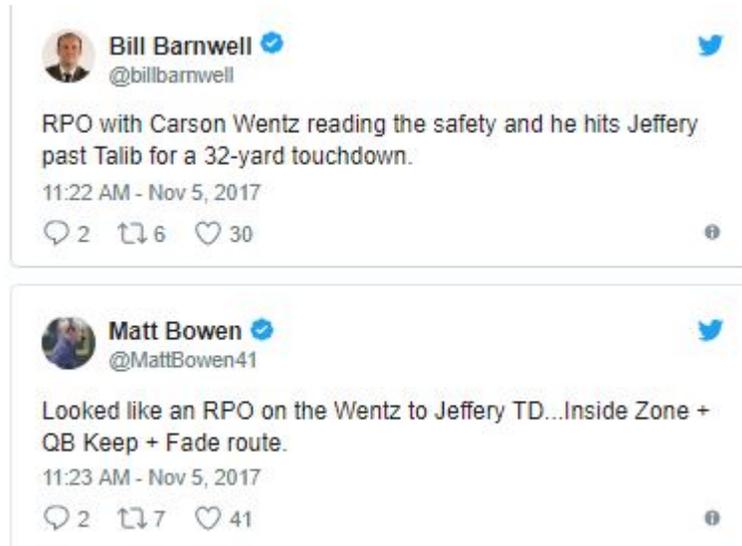
11:26 AM - Nov 5, 2017

32 Replies 543 Retweets 1,369 likes

At first glance, it looks like a simple play-action pass to Alshon Jeffery. But a closer look reveals a run-pass option (RPO). Wentz first had to decide if he wanted to hand the ball off the running back or keep it. After keeping it, he looked for Jeffery, who barely moved after the snap like he was waiting for a quick pass. Complicating matters was Broncos outside linebacker Von Miller, who barely bit on the play-fake

and kept contain. So, Wentz had to beat Miller to the outside to give Jeffery time to beat Aqib Talib by getting vertical.

Two experts, who know more about football than I do, explain:



So, that's not just an example of good play-calling. It's also an example of how good play-calling also requires good players to execute the plays to perfection. That's exactly what the Eagles have in Wentz.

Their second touchdown was just as pretty. Wentz faked a handoff to Corey Clement before setting up a screen to Clement. The Broncos' defensive front bit on the screen, Clement caught the pass with three blockers ahead of him, and he coasted into the end zone.

**@Eagles**

**Wentz, Clement, six. #FlyEaglesFly**

**11:51 AM - Nov 5, 2017**

**13 Replies 708 Retweets 1,454 likes**

Wentz is the frontrunner for MVP, but don't forget about Doug Pederson, who might deserve to be considered the front-runner for Coach of the Year. Together, through clever play-calling and flawless execution, Pederson and Wentz have the Eagles atop the NFL through the first nine weeks of the season.

# Paxton Lynch under consideration to start for the Broncos by Week 10

By Jason La Canfora  
CBS Sports  
November 6, 2017

Broncos former first-round pick Paxton Lynch continues to make strides in his recovery from a shoulder injury and could start as soon as Week 10, according to team and league sources, with Brock Osweiler's time under center perhaps as short as one week.

Osweiler will start Sunday after Trevor Siemian's struggles forced a quarterback change, but the front office very much wants to evaluate Lynch this season and he is increasing his practice workload each week. Lynch began throwing late last month after missing several months due to injury, and the Broncos want to make sure he is 100 percent before turning the offense over to him. Lynch missed considerable practice reps during his time away and was still struggling to pick up the intricacies of the NFL game this summer, making the leap from a rudimentary college scheme at Memphis which takes time.

His mental growth will be a considerable factor in how he performs after being forced into a few starts last season as a rookie, but John Elway remains intrigued by the quarterback's athleticism and arm strength and raw ability and the Broncos plan on tapping into that this season. Osweiler, who won games with Denver two years ago but has struggled mightily in Houston and Cleveland since (the Browns paid him \$16M to leave the team), is a stopgap measure at this point, the sources said, buying time until Lynch is fully ready to go.

If Denver's offense continues to look anything close to what it has in recent weeks--- the Broncos face the surging Eagles in Philadelphia on Sunday -- then the move to Lynch could very well happen in Week 10. The hope is that Lynch could excel on bootlegs and with a moving pocket -- tenets of the game that Elway espouses -- and that his mobility would help out a slumping offensive line. The Broncos are trying to keep their defense -- which has the capacity to dominate on any given week -- from growing frustrated with the other side of the ball, with Denver's offense in decline for several years now since Peyton Manning's physical decline.

# Former Broncos head coach Gary Kubiak open to a return as an offensive coordinator

By Jason La Canfora  
CBS Sports  
November 6, 2017

Former Super Bowl-winning coach Gary Kubiak retired from the sidelines after the 2016 season due to mounting health concerns, but several sources close to him believe the esteemed coach will consider running an NFL offense in 2018 if the right opportunity arose. Several of Kubiak's coaching assistants believe a return is hardly out of the question, and, given the dearth of coordinator candidates around the league, he would surely be in demand.

The rigors of head coaching and the stress and strain from being the daily face of the franchise are not appealing to him at this point, but the opportunity to work with the right quarterback and help an offense for a contending team would have allure, the sources maintain. Some of Kubiak's longtime assistants, like Rick Dennison in Buffalo, are having success implementing his offense and Denver's offense, frankly, has regressed since Kubiak's departure (with quarterback Trevor Siemian losing his starting job this week).

Kubiak is held in very high regard by his coaching peers as well as the various owners he has worked for, and with the next wave of young offensive minds perhaps a ways off (with young coaches Sean McVay, Kyle Shanahan and Adam Gase all becoming first-time head coaches in recent years), landing an established offensive mind with a proven system will appeal to no shortage of head coaches, especially given how many clubs are struggling to score points and sustain drives this season.

# Powerhouse Eagles devastate struggling Broncos

By Marc Sessler

NFL.com

November 6, 2017

1a. Let's start right here: The Eagles are a legitimate threat to glide right into the Super Bowl if they continue to blast through opponents with the power and might we witnessed on Sunday. Denver's season, meanwhile, feels completely over.

1b. Jay Ajayi saw snaps right away for an Eagles squad now stocked with one of the league's most versatile backfields. The former Dolphins runner, acquired Tuesday, combined with Wentz on a well-orchestrated fake handoff that caught Denver off guard and set up the quarterback's beautiful 32-yard first-quarter touchdown strike to Alshon Jeffery. That marked Wentz's league-leading 20th scoring pass, but he wasn't done, throwing for 199 yards and four touchdowns before Nick Foles took over in the fourth. Forget the numbers: We're seeing Philly's young quarterback evolve weekly with pristine touch passes and gutsy downfield lasers, but it's more than just the physical gifts. Wentz repeatedly drew the Broncos offsidelines with pre-snap cadence and showed next-level vision against Denver's talented secondary. Already known as one of the game's top students under center, his preparation shows every Sunday.

2. Exactly what did the Broncos expect to see from Brock Osweiler? Something exciting and new? Try again. Guiding the league's worst scoring offense since Week 3, Trevor Siemian's replacement threw a disastrous pass near end of the first quarter that landed in the arms of Eagles cornerback Patrick Robinson. Three plays later, Corey Clement caught a screen from Wentz and raced 15 yards into the end zone to put Philly up 17-3. With Osweiler at the wheel, this unbalanced romp felt over after the first quarter. I wouldn't be surprised to see second-year passer Paxton Lynch take over when he's healthy for Osweiler (19 of 38 for 208 yards), who unfurled two picks and an array of airy duds before generating meaningless points in garbage time. This all came against a rugged Philly defense, but Denver has loads of work to do on this side of the ball come the offseason.

3. One more note on this Eagles backfield: Mimicking what we've seen from the uber-creative Patriots, Philly seamlessly mixed Ajayi, LeGarrette Blount and Clement into the scheme with a rash of unique looks. All three backs saw their share of carries -- combining for 189 yards at 5.3 yards per rush -- with Ajayi closing the first half with 46-yard touchdown gallop that put the Broncos on ice. Come the second half, Philly settled in and punished Denver's defense with blistering runs from Blount, speedy dashes by Clement and violent hammer drops from the newly acquired Ajayi. When this formula clicks, the sky's the limit.

4. The Eagles didn't exactly miss productive tight end Zach Ertz, who was ruled out just before kickoff with a banged-up hamstring. Brent Celek and Trey Burton reliably combined for 80 yards off five grabs. Celek showed great chemistry with his quarterback, while Burton caught a 27-yard touchdown and fit right in from wire to wire.

5. Denver's defense has to be frustrated with the team's inept attack, but they committed mistakes of their own with a disastrous pair of penalties on first-and-10 from Denver's 42-yard line. Safety Darian Stewart was nabbed for unsportsmanlike conduct after kicked the ball following a Wentz incompletion, a play that also saw defensive end Zach Kerr flagged for roughing the passer. The gaffes put Philly at the

27-yard line, where Wentz unfurled his pretty scoring pass to Burton to put Philly up 24-6 just 20-plus minutes into the game. That wouldn't be the defenses last mistake.

# Eagles' demolition of Broncos shows Brock Osweiler is not the answer in Denver

By Mark Maske  
The Washington Post  
November 6, 2017

The Denver Broncos came to Philadelphia with their season unraveling. Their desperation was so great that they were turning to Brock Osweiler, their prodigal son of a quarterback, as their starter and asking him to save their season against the team with the NFL's best record.

The results were predictably ugly.

By day's end, the competitive portion of the Broncos' season was all but done. Their problems were more widespread than their quarterback dilemma. And they were licking their figurative wounds from a spirit-crushing 51-23 defeat to the Eagles on Sunday at Lincoln Financial Field.

"You're always learning," Osweiler said afterward. "The more game experience you get, the better you're going to get. So that's where we are."

Is it a problem that John Elway probably still could outplay every quarterback on the Broncos' roster?

That is overstating things, of course. But Elway has not had his usual golden touch, as the Broncos' Hall of Fame quarterback turned Super Bowl-winning roster architect, with his post-Peyton-Manning quarterback moves or with this season's version of his Denver team.

Elway and the Broncos failed to re-sign Osweiler following a 2015 season in which Manning reclaimed his job from Osweiler for the playoffs and was led by the powerful Denver defense to a Super Bowl title. Osweiler signed a big-money deal in Houston, was a bust last season for the Texans, was traded to Cleveland and returned to the Broncos as a backup this season after being released by the Browns.

The Broncos made former seventh-round draft choice Trevor Siemian their starter. He had some decent moments last season but hasn't been the answer in 2017. Second-year pro Paxton Lynch, a first-round pick last year, hurt his shoulder during the preseason and hasn't been available to take over. Tony Romo opted for retirement and the CBS broadcast booth last offseason rather than exploring job opportunities in Denver and Houston.

So Coach Vance Joseph turned last week to Osweiler, benched Siemian, and hoped for the best.

That's not what he got. Far, far from it. Osweiler threw two interceptions Sunday in a 19-for-38, 208-yard passing performance. He had a passer rating of 53.4. He did throw a fourth-quarter touchdown pass, but by then, the Broncos were facing a 44-9 deficit.

"When they did have to drop back and pass, we had people in the quarterback's face," Eagles safety Malcolm Jenkins said. "We've got guys on the back end that can make plays. That always plays to our advantage when teams have to play us one-handed. That's really been the formula all year: Stop the run. Make people pass the ball against us. Guys on the back end are making plays on the ball. Up front,

they're getting pressure and getting sacks. If we continue that formula, it obviously puts us in a great spot for every game."

Oswelier was asked about the most frustrating part of his performance and said: "Losing."

Why was that?

"Because we play this game to win," he said.

But Oswelier's misery had plenty of company. The Eagles, in upping their record to 8-1, embarrassed the usually formidable Broncos defense. Quarterback Carson Wentz boosted his league MVP candidacy by throwing four touchdown passes. He had three of them six minutes into the second quarter. Tailback Jay Ajayi, obtained last week in a trade-deadline deal with the Miami Dolphins, raced for a 46-yard touchdown on his fifth carry for the Eagles.

The Broncos' record dropped to 3-5. They have lost four straight games since a 3-1 start. They surely aren't catching the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC West. Contending for even a wild-card playoff spot is becoming far-fetched. Thoughts now should be turning to merely regaining respectability. Lynch will be given a look as the starter at quarterback once he is physically ready and gets some practice experience. If that's not immediately, Joseph will have to choose between sticking with Oswelier or going back to Siemian.

It very quickly has become a lost season for the Broncos. They can only hope that Sunday was the low point.

# Atrocious Denver Broncos fall to 3-5, get stomped by Eagles

By Staff

FronteirsMan.com

November 6, 2017

The Denver Broncos' problems are now bigger than Brock Osweiler.

No, we're most certainly not recusing the replacement starting quarterback for his poor performance in Week 9. But we're pretty certain this looks like a team in free fall following Sunday's embarrassment of a 51-23 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles.

This one had everything imaginably bad in it if you're a Broncos fan. Bad QB play. Bad blocking. Dropped passes galore. And, what's this? A defense that apparently has been decawed.

There's no shame in losing on the road to the now 8-1 Eagles, who look as good as any team thus far this season. But the Broncos were not even competitive in this one. Following a respectable field-goal drive on their opening possession, the Eagles throttled them — it was 17-3 before the first quarter was over and it only got worse.

At some point in the past 22 days, everything has fallen apart for the Broncos. They were 3-1 heading into their bye, and they came out of it with a dream matchup: facing the 0-5 New York Giants who had faced two seasons' worth of turmoil leading up to the game.

The Broncos got stomped. Then came back-to-back road losses to the Los Angeles Chargers and Kansas City Chiefs — both by double digits. That turned the Broncos' 2-0 division record into 2-2 and put them below .500 for the season.

Sunday's loss did far more than drop Denver two games in the hole. It basically made them look like a team that's far more likely to draft in the top 10 than one that could make a run at the playoffs. In a terrible week of football, CBS bailed on the Broncos blowout before the fourth quarter hit. Ouch.

Head coach Vance Joseph isn't in trouble, is he? It's too soon to go anywhere close to there. But John Elway isn't afraid to make bold moves, and Joseph certainly was a surprise choice — especially when Kyle Shanahan was at the facility interviewing for the job before Joseph was.

The move from Trevor Siemian to Osweiler clearly didn't pay off. He did not play well, burning a timeout and almost getting picked on the first drive, going three-and-out on his second drive and throwing a pick on the third drive. The interception was bad, but Demaryius Thomas let Eagles DB Patrick Robinson easily cross his face on the play.

The lack of effort and execution was evident everywhere, even on defense. This was a unit that came into the game ranked in the top five in many key categories. But the Eagles did almost whatever they wanted for the first three quarters before calling off the dogs and replacing Carson Wentz with Nick Foles midway through the fourth. It was the most points the Broncos had allowed since 2013 in a wild shootout against the Dallas Cowboys and Tony Romo. (The Broncos won that game, actually.)

So with a bad quarterback situation, shaky special teams, a defense that just got undressed and a game looming against the Patriots (who are coming off a bye) ... is there anything else we should know about here?

The Broncos are 3-5 and have no clear path to rebound. A QB change to Paxton Lynch or Chad Kelly or back to Siemian likely isn't going to make a big difference. The defense clearly can't carry the weight every week. There are other shaky elements that keep this team from winning.

Expect big changes at some point. We don't know what they are, or when they're coming, but those wheels are already in motion.

# Carson Wentz tosses 4 TD passes, Eagles beat Broncos 51-23

By Staff

FOX29

November 6, 2017

Carson Wentz tossed four touchdown passes, Corey Clement had three scores, and the Philadelphia Eagles routed the Denver Broncos 51-23 on Sunday.

The Eagles (8-1) dismantled the league's top-ranked defense, racking up 419 yards, to win their seventh straight game and head into a bye week with the best record in the NFL.

Brock Osweiler couldn't get the Broncos (3-5) on track in his first start since rejoining the team in September. He threw two interceptions. Denver has lost four in a row and five of six.

Wentz was 15 of 27 for 199 yards before giving way to Nick Foles. He has three four-TD performances in the last five weeks.

Clement had two TD runs and one TD catch, and newcomer Jay Ajayi ran for 77 yards and one score.

Wentz flipped a 32-yard TD pass to Alshon Jeffery to give the Eagles a 7-3 lead after a holding penalty on Broncos cornerback Aqib Talib extended the drive. Talib bit on a faked inside handoff to Ajayi and Jeffery ran past him to make the catch and score.

After Osweiler threw a pick right to Patrick Robinson later in the first quarter, Wentz threw a short catch-and-run TD pass to Clement on third-and-10 from the 15.

A roughing-the-passer call on Denver's Zach Kerr kept another drive alive for Philadelphia. Wentz connected with Trey Burton on a 27-yard TD pass on the next play, giving the Eagles a 24-6 lead.

Ajayi burst through for a 46-yard TD run to put Philadelphia ahead 31-9 in the second quarter. Ajayi, a 2016 Pro Bowl pick with Miami, was acquired in a trade Tuesday. The Broncos hadn't allowed 30 points in a game this season, nor any TD runs.

Clement, an undrafted rookie free agent, ran in from the 2 in the third quarter, and Wentz connected with Jeffery on a 6-yard pass to make it 44-9. Clement's 4-yard TD run capped the scoring.

The Eagles hadn't scored 50 points since a 54-11 victory over the Bears on Dec. 22, 2013.

The last time the Broncos allowed more points, they beat the Cowboys 51-48 on Oct. 6, 2013. But Peyton Manning isn't around anymore.

## FLASHBACK

For one play, Denver's defense looked like its old self. Von Miller stripped Foles and Brandon Marshall scooped up the fumble and ran it back 19 yards for a TD.

## **GROUND AND POUND**

Clement had 51 yards rushing, LeGarrette Blount added 38 to go with Ajayi's 77, and the Eagles got 197 on the ground.

## **DROUGHT OVER**

Broncos receiver Demaryius Thomas caught his first TD pass this season, a 1-yard grab in the fourth quarter. It was the first TD catch for the five-time Pro Bowl receiver since Nov. 13, 2016.

## **STRONG LEG**

Denver's Brandon McManus kicked field goals of 52, 53 and 24 yards. He was only 10 for 15 coming in and 8 for 17 in his career beyond 50.

## **INJURIES**

Broncos: WR Emmanuel Sanders started despite being listed as questionable with an ankle injury.  
Eagles: TE Zach Ertz didn't play because of a hamstring injury sustained in practice.

## **UP NEXT**

Broncos: Host the New England Patriots (6-2) next Sunday.  
Eagles: Have a bye before visiting Dallas (4-3) on Nov. 19.

# Broncos Have Lost Winning Formula

By Jason B. Hirschhorn

Sports On Earth

November 6, 2017

Fewer than two years have passed since the Denver Broncos won their most recent championship, a tour de force orchestrated by team legend turned general manager John Elway. Perhaps no sports figure has engendered as much goodwill with a city as Elway, who has played a role in seven trips to the Super Bowl and three Lombardi Trophies.

But how far does goodwill go when the winning stops?

After Sunday's 51-23 loss to the Eagles, Denver is in dire straits, and the team's performance since that Super Bowl title has dipped considerably. The offseason following their championship proved to be a brutal one. Saddled with over \$8 million in dead money from Elway's spendthrift approach during the Peyton Manning era, the team saw nearly a third of its Super Bowl starters leave as unrestricted free agents or cap casualties, including budding star Malik Jackson, All-Pro guard Evan Mathis and veteran linebacker Danny Trevathan.

But Manning's departure left the biggest hole in the Broncos' roster. While the decorated quarterback looked like a shell of himself during his final season, Manning's retirement left Elway with two options: pay through the nose to re-sign Brock Osweiler or scour the trade market, free agency and the draft for Manning's successor.

Elway made a three-year, \$16 million offer to Osweiler, who instead signed with the Houston Texans. With his first choice off the table, Elway traded for the Philadelphia Eagles' Mark Sanchez, a veteran signal-caller but one with limited upside. The general manager also targeted Memphis' Paxton Lynch in the draft, trading back into the first round to acquire him.

In the end, all the quarterbacks Elway pursued proved to be mistakes. Osweiler flamed out epically in Houston, with the Texans sending away a second-round pick just to unload his contract. Sanchez didn't even make it that far, receiving his release from the Broncos before the regular season. Lynch entered the league raw and hasn't shown much progress since, starting only two games, both as an injury replacement.

Instead, seventh-round afterthought Trevor Siemian has started the vast majority of games in Denver since Manning left. Siemian won the job in 2016 and '17 essentially by default, as his competition largely imploded when called upon. Though he has played competently at times and has vastly outperformed expectations for a late draft selection, he remains a replacement-level passer unable to carry an offense. Siemian's play bottomed out last week against the Kansas City Chiefs, with the Broncos benching him for the since-reacquired Osweiler.

The team refused to commit to anyone as their starter for Week 10's matchup with the defending champion New England Patriots. However, one thing appears clear: Their long-term answer does not currently reside on the roster.

Few teams can compete for a title without a franchise quarterback, and the Broncos have even less margin for error given the tremendous commitment they have made in just a handful of players (eight players take up half of the team's 2017 salary cap). Had Elway hit on a quarterback, the Broncos could overcome their other holes -- offensive line, tight end, and safety chief among them -- and lack of depth. Because the front office mismanaged its hunt for Manning's replacement, the team's record stands at 3-5, worst in the AFC West.

Elway still has time to fix the Broncos. Next offseason could offer tantalizing signal-callers options in free agency -- Drew Brees and Kirk Cousins both have expiring deals -- with more possibly arriving through the draft. Perhaps the roster fills out organically as young players in whom Elway invested develop. The rest of the division could also decline in the coming seasons, opening another window for Denver to thrive.

However, for the Broncos to succeed in any scenario, Elway needs to find an answer at quarterback. If he botches his second attempt to locate Manning's successor, he may not receive a third. In a bottom-line business like the NFL, not even the all-time greats survive forever, and the fans that once cheered Elway's name could soon blame him for the team's demise.

# Sum of All Errors: Bundles of blunders finally burn

## Broncos

By Doug Ottewill  
Mile High Sports  
November 6, 2017

Different, but the same. Like the 476 Romans, the 2017 Broncos collapsed before our very eyes. The once-mighty Broncos are mighty no longer, and it's something you'd better get used to. An incredibly fun ride that began Oct. 23, 2011, when second-year quarterback Tim Tebow was hesitantly handed a starting role, then continued to roll on with four fantastic seasons behind the great Peyton Manning, has reached its pathetic end – with a trio of quarterbacks who probably shouldn't be on next year's roster.

It's over, Denver.

Alexander Demandt, a German historian (“Al Da Man” to his friends), once penned 210 reasons as to why the Roman Empire finally fell. Reading this account would surely be a long and boring endeavor, but the Cliffs Notes version probably pins blame about like this: The Romans made a series of mistakes and miscalculations, which eventually became too much to overcome.

Just like the missteps in Rome, each individual mistake made by John Elway, his scouts, his coaches and his players was not insurmountable. Combined though, the sum of all blunders finally was too much to bear. The collapse was so painfully obvious, television stations outside of Denver flipped from the Broncos game to, well, pretty much any other game being played. It was so bad, plenty of folks in Denver threw in the towel as well, missing the ugly final result: 14 penalties for 105 yards (!), a final score of Denver 23, Philadelphia 51 and a 3-5 record that feels more like 0-8.

When exactly Rome began to fall has been up for debate – Demandt and his dissenters argued like Skip and Shannon – for thousands of years. When and why the Broncos started to slip, will be hotly debated from now until the end of this NFL season. If you're interested in formulating a timeline, here's some food for thought:

You shouldn't ungratefully ask a future Hall of Fame quarterback, who's coming off three consecutive AFC West titles, a trip to the Super Bowl and three of the greatest passing seasons in the history of the NFL, to restructure his five-year contract.

And when that Hall of Famer finally hangs it up, after bringing home the Vince Lombardi Trophy with the help of a world class defense, you can't mishandle his replacement, who (at the time) appeared to be more than adequate.

When you do mishandle the successor at quarterback, you've got to come up with a solution — one that considers that narrow window inside which Super Bowls can be won.

You certainly can't move up in the draft in hopes of finding Peyton Manning's successor... and miss.

And just in case you miss, you need a backup plan, something more along the lines of Colin Kaepernick — not Mark Sanchez, and especially not Trevor Siemian.

You can't watch Siemian be average for an entire season, while the future of the position rides the pine. In that scenario, there's no way to know if you've missed or not. There's no way he gets any better, either.

You can't bank on Tony Romo and then let him become a broadcaster.

You can't have too much pride to sign a quarterback you tried to sign the year before. (Where would the Broncos be right now with Kaepernick?)

You can't waste an entire camp — splitting reps and carrying on a charade in the name of "competition" — not naming your starting quarterback.

When your starter finally appears to be the average player everyone thought he was, you can't blame the offensive line.

Well, you can actually.

That's a reminder. You can't waste second- and third-round draft picks on guys like Ty Sambrailo and Michael Schofield. You can't miss on free-agent signings like Menelik Watson, Donald Stephenson or Russell Okung.

And you certainly can't hand the entire mess to a first-year head coach who appears to be in over his head.

Come to think of it, how did that guy get Denver's most scrutinized job anyway? Why let go of your defensive coordinator — the strength of your Super Bowl winning coaching staff — and bring in a never-been-a-head-coach, defensive coordinator to be your head coach? Just months before you hired him, in fact, he "led" his Miami defense to a No. 29 ranking.

You can't do that.

If the defense is the strength of your team, and your offense is struggling, why not hire the brightest offensive mind in the game, who, by the way, has a previous tie to the organization?

You can't do that?

The head coach can't keep trotting out a quarterback who can't play. After halves of complete incompetence. After getting shut out. After it's obvious the offense is going nowhere. Not only is his football team losing, but he still doesn't know what he's got in the fellow who is supposed to be the quarterback for years to come in Denver.

You can't ask the defense to do everything. You can't cut a Pro Bowl safety, a leader of the defense, a week before the season. You can't let rumors rumble that you might trade your future Hall of Fame cornerback the week before you ask him to try to shut down one of the best offenses in the NFL. No matter how great that defense is, sometimes enough is enough.

You can't do all of that. When you do, you get 51-23.

Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither were the Broncos. Both — Rome and the Broncos — were once great, and they were both built by great men. There's no denying that.

But Rome didn't fall in a single day, either. It took years of miscalculation and the arrogance that comes with being on top for a long, long time.

Sound familiar?

This dynasty (the Broncos are as deserving of that label as any current franchise in the NFL) has collapsed. Sunday, the crumble looked complete.

The Broncos will be back — you can count on that — but it could be awhile.

Remember, Rome wasn't built in a day.

# **Brock Osweiler leads field goal drive to open game**

By Josh Alper

Pro Football Talk

November 6, 2017

The Broncos made a change at quarterback this week and started Brock Osweiler against the Eagles, but it didn't take long to get a reminder that there have been other issues with the offense this season.

Osweiler got the Broncos a first down on the foot of the red zone, but a holding penalty on left tackle Garrett Bolles pushed them back 10 yards and Denver had to settle for a 52-yard field goal try. Brandon McManus made the kick to put the Broncos up 3-0 with 10:35 left in the first quarter.

Osweiler was 2-of-4 for 33 yards on the drive and hooked up with Cody Latimer for a 19-yard first down for the longest gain of the drive. C.J. Anderson ran four times for 14 yards and the Broncos also got a first down when Jalen Mills was flagged for defensive holding.

Trevor Siemian started the first seven games at quarterback for the Broncos, but got benched this week after throwing three interceptions against the Chiefs in Week Eight.

# Eagles maul Broncos, hit bye with 8-1 record

By Josh Alper

Pro Football Talk

November 6, 2017

The Eagles will have the best record in the NFL to themselves through at least Week 10.

They guaranteed that will be the case by making a disappointing Broncos season a little bit worse in Philadelphia on Sunday. The Eagles raced out to a 44-9 lead before putting their feet up for the final minutes of what ended as a 51-23 win over Denver. That's seven straight wins for the Eagles, who have the league's best record at 8-1 and will take next week off for some well-earned rest and relaxation.

Quarterback Carson Wentz threw four touchdowns through three quarters of work to continue a campaign that's landed him in the MVP race while his team has shot to the top of the standings. Alshon Jeffery caught two of the scores, Corey Clement scored three touchdowns and Jay Ajayi broke loose for a 46-yard touchdown in his first game with a team that showed plenty of offensive balance against Denver.

The last of Clement's scores came during extended garbage time in the second half, which was the best period of the game for Denver. Brock Osweiler threw a touchdown pass and Brandon Marshall recovered a Nick Foles fumble for another score, but the rest of the day was pretty much a zero on both sides of the ball for the Broncos.

Osweiler was 19-of-38 for 204 yards and had two interceptions to go with the touchdown to Demaryius Thomas while the offensive line played as poorly as it did when Trevor Siemian was starting. The defense got put in a tough spot of two thanks to the offense, but they also gave up four scoring drives of at least 75 yards over the course of the afternoon and generally showed no resistance to what the Eagles were trying to do.

There doesn't seem to be much to do about fixing that unit on the fly and the offense's only move may be to take a look at Paxton Lynch at quarterback so they know just how hard they have to push to find one come an offseason that increasingly feels like it is starting the moment Week 17 is over.

There's no such feeling in Philly and they'll spend the next couple of weeks enjoying the way the first half of the season has played out for their Eagles.

# Vance Joseph: “We’ll see” who starts at QB next week

By Josh Alper

Pro Football Talk

November 6, 2017

The Broncos made a quarterback change on Sunday in an effort to end a three-game losing streak.

That didn’t happen and the 51-23 loss to the Eagles was as bad or worse than anything that happened with Trevor Siemian at the helm. Brock Osweiler was 19-of-38 for 208 yards, a touchdown and two interceptions and the touchdown didn’t come until the result was already well in hand for Philadelphia.

Coach Vance Joseph said after the game, via Nicki Jhabvala of the Denver Post, that the quarterback “did a fine job.” That wasn’t enough for him to commit to giving Osweiler another chance at the helm of the offense, however.

Joseph said “we’ll see” when asked about who will start against the Patriots next week. Unless Paxton Lynch is given the green light physically, it’s hard to see what change the team would make. You’ve already benched Siemian and Osweiler “did a fine job,” but Joseph will be the one ultimately making the call about who quarterbacks his football team.

# Chris Harris: Eagles run a college offense

By Josh Alper

Pro Football Talk

November 6, 2017

A popular recurring question among sports fans is whether the best team in college football in any given year could beat the worst team in the NFL.

We're unlikely to ever see a game that definitively answers that question, but we did find out what happens when a pro team running a college offense runs into a bad NFL team on Sunday. That was Broncos cornerback Chris Harris' take on the Eagles after Philly demolished the Broncos 51-23 in one of the day's early games.

Harris was asked what makes Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz so effective.

"They run this college offense," Harris said, via James Palmer of NFL Media. "They run kind of what the Chiefs do. They got an option to run, an option to pass. They run the read option, the real option. He's checking to a lot of things. It's a college offense and he's just executing it very good."

If that's a college offense, one wonders what one calls the Broncos unit?

Harris did call it the best offense they've seen, but the Eagles put up 419 yards with near balance in passing and rushing yards to move to 8-1 on the year.

The Chiefs, who beat the Broncos in Week Eight and used to employ Eagles coach Doug Pederson, entered the weekend as the only team with more points than the Eagles this season, which suggests a trip back to school might be in order for the league's defenses if they're going to stop two of the most impressive teams in the league this season.

# Osweiler on track to start Sunday night, for now

By Mike Florio

Pro Football Talk

November 6, 2017

As the Broncos deal with the first four-game losing streak of the John Elway era (front-office version), they continue to have an offense that continues to fail to get it done. But while, per a source with knowledge of the situation, Elway and coach Vance Joseph will consider all options, the initial thinking is that the Broncos will stick with Brock Osweiler.

Osweiler, generally speaking, received a surprisingly good assessment from Joseph for the quarterback's first start with the team since late in the 2015 regular season. And if the goal, as Joseph suggested this week, was to cut the turnovers from four to two, mission accomplished; Osweiler had only two interceptions on Sunday.

Apart from the question of whether Osweiler should be benched is whether he'd be replaced by Trevor Siemian or Paxton Lynch. Siemian had a horrendous showing only six nights ago, which makes Lynch the more likely option.

But keep this in mind: Lynch has been back at practice for little more than a week after missing two months with a shoulder injury. Lynch has had no first-team reps since returning.

Then there's this. The next opponent for the Broncos is the Patriots, in Denver. Two years ago, in Osweiler's second career start, he beat the Patriots on a Sunday night. In Denver.

Yes, much has changed since then. But with the Broncos reeling and the team returning home and the Patriots typically struggling in Denver and no solid alternatives on the roster, the best bet could be the guy the Browns are paying nearly \$900,000 per week to play for the Broncos.