

Grading The Green Bay Packers Offense:

Aaron Rodgers finds winning touch

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Quarterbacks

Aaron Rodgers – A

Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers went from stat-sheet filler to playoff-caliber starter to champion in his three seasons as the starter.

Super Bowl XLV MVP didn't make a major mistake in title game against the Steelers to cap a postseason with nine touchdowns, two interceptions (both in the NFC championship game at Chicago) and a passer rating of 109.8.

Narrowly missed his third straight 4,000-yard regular season and would have reached that mark had he not missed 1½ games because of his second concussion of the season.

Still ranked seventh in the NFL in yards (3,922), sixth in completion percentage (65.7) and fourth in touchdown passes (28) while throwing 11 interceptions (nine of which came in the first seven games).

Had the third-best passer rating (101.2) in the NFL and also was third in quarterback rushing yards (356) behind Philadelphia's Michael Vick and Tampa Bay's Josh Freeman. Was sacked 31 times in the regular season, down from 50 in 2009, in part because he didn't hold the ball as long or as much. Next step: NFL MVP.

Matt Flynn -- C+

Flynn played 1½ games of full-time duty. Could not rally the Packers to victory in either game (at Detroit on Dec. 12, at New England on Dec. 19) but nevertheless looked like he belonged.

In first career start against the Patriots, threw for 251 yards, three touchdowns and a rating of 100.2. Had costly interceptions in both games, including one that was returned for a touchdown against the Patriots.

Under contract for one more season but might be attractive to a team in need of a starter.

Graham Harrell -- I

Harrell was promoted to the active roster on Dec. 18 after spending first 14 weeks on the practice squad. Showed surprisingly good arm strength and poise during the summer. Desperately needs an offseason in the quarterback school to develop. Too soon to say whether he could be a number two..

Running Backs

James Starks -- C

Promising rookie prospect after averaging 3.8-yard per carry in limited duty late in the regular season and the playoffs, highlighted by a 123-yard performance in the wild-card playoff game at Philadelphia. Had best yards-after-contact average (2.4) among all backs on the team. Still needs to prove durability after missing entire senior season of college (shoulder), all of rookie training camp and the first 11 games of this season because of a hamstring injury.

Brandon Jackson -- C-

Proved once and for all he's not an every-down back. Lacks instincts and decisiveness. Excels as a third-down back in blitz pickup. That alone might make him a valuable commodity worth re-signing.

Dimitri Nance -- D-

Never was able to get into regular rotation among the halfbacks after being signed off Atlanta's practice squad in Week 2. Averaged just 2.6 yards per carry on 36 regular-season attempts with a long of 11 yards and was inactive for three of the four postseason games.

John Kuhn -- C+

Reached cult-hero status for prowess in short-yardage situations. Had four rushing touchdowns in the regular season and one in the playoffs after scoring just two in his first four NFL seasons.

Also had two touchdown catches in the regular season and another in the playoffs. Valuable special teams player, too, especially as the personal protector on the punt team.

Korey Hall -- C-

Led the team in special teams tackles despite being limited by injuries for third straight season. Hasn't played in more than 12 regular-season games since his rookie year of 2007.

Quinn Johnson -- D

In and out of the lineup all season, played in 11 regular-season games and the first three playoff games but was a healthy scratch for the Super Bowl in part because he's a liability on special teams. That and the Packers' lack of reliance on the running game could spell the end of his tenure.

Ryan Grant -- I

Season ruined by an ankle injury sustained in the second quarter of the season opener at Philadelphia, where he had gained 45 yards on eight carries.

Probably would have been able to make a late-season return had he been kept on the roster but instead was placed on injured reserve. Should return for another season despite a base salary of \$4.5 million in 2011.

Receivers**Greg Jennings -- A-**

After a slow start, became focal point of the offense following the loss of tight end Jermichael Finley to a knee injury in Week 5. Voted to first career Pro Bowl and led the team with 72 catches for 1,265 yards and 12 touchdowns (which matched a career high).

Most of that production was in the last 11 games, when he had 62 catches for 1,082 yards and nine touchdowns. Average of 98.4 yards per game led the league in that span. Added another 21 catches, 303 yards and two touchdowns in the postseason.

Had just four regular-season drops (and a drop percentage of just 3.2) after dropping five last season (4.2 percent) and eight in 2008 (5.7 percent), although one of his drops would have been a touchdown in the 7-3 loss at Detroit.

Donald Driver -- C+

Team-record streak of 133 straight games with a reception ended on Oct. 24 against Minnesota and then battled a quadriceps problem, an injury that kept him from dressing for a game for the first time since 2007.

Still finished second on the team with 51 catches in the regular season but slipped to third in the postseason. Remained an inspirational leader during the postseason despite being unable to finish Super Bowl because of an ankle injury.

Regular-season totals for catches and yards (565) was lowest since 2001 and touchdown total (four) was second-lowest. Dropped seven passes for a drop rate of 8.1 percent (his highest in three years). Still has some football left in him but has started to decline.

James Jones -- C-

Another wildly inconsistent season. Was targeted the second-most times and finished third on team in receptions with 50, a career high. Also had career high in yards (679) and matched career best with five touchdowns.

Added 11 catches for 144 yards and two touchdowns in playoffs but had a bad drop in the Super Bowl. Drops continued to be a problem with six (6.9 percent), the same number as last season after dropping just one in 2008. A free-agent to be who might not be re-signed.

Jordy Nelson -- C

Targeted 13 fewer times than Jones but had career-high 45 catches. Also set career mark for yards (582) and had two touchdowns for third straight season. Dropped four passes (6.3 percent) in the regular season after posting the highest-drop percentage (9.7) among the receivers and tight ends last season.

Matched Jennings with 21 postseason receptions for 286 yards and two touchdowns, including a monster day in the Super Bowl (nine catches, 140 yards and one touchdown) that could have been even better if not for three drops.

Brett Swain -- D

Core special teams player who still hasn't been able to assimilate into the offense. Was targeted just nine times and had six regular-season catches for 72 yards but had a drop in the Super Bowl.

Tight Ends**Tom Crabtree -- C-**

First-year free agent and long shot to make the roster at the start of training camp became the best blocker among his position group and a key special teams player, tying for second with 12 special-teams tackles.

Only targeted seven times in regular season and had four catches for 61 yards, 33 of which came on one reception against Miami on Oct. 17, and one drop. First career touchdown catch came in wild-card game against the Eagles.

Andrew Quarless -- D

Has the size, speed and athleticism to be a big-time playmaker in mold of Jermichael Finley but has a lot to learn about being a pro. Numerous assignment errors, some of which forced Rodgers to burn timeouts.

Regular-season production (21 catches, 238 yards, one touchdown) was far better than Finley's rookie season (six catches, 74 yards, one touchdown) and added five catches for 46 yards in fairly unproductive postseason. Dropped two passes in 33 times targeted (6.1 percent).

Donald Lee -- D-

Is in rapid decline and might have played his last football with the Packers and in the NFL. Limited role but caught just about everything thrown his way with 11 receptions in 12 times targeted and no drops.

Jermichael Finley -- I

Focal point of the passing game going into the season and had two monster games in the first four weeks before a knee injury in Week 5 ended his season.

Had games of 103 yards and 115 yards in consecutive weeks against Buffalo and Chicago and averaged 14.3 yards on 21 catches in those four games. An infection slowed his rehab but is expected to make a full recovery by next season.

Spencer Havner -- I

Couldn't beat out Crabtree in training camp and was a surprise cut but was re-signed on Nov. 12 after a brief stint with Lions ended in an injury settlement (hamstring).

Played in just one game (vs. Atlanta on Nov. 28) on special teams, reinjured his hamstring and was placed on injured reserve.

Offensive Line

Chad Clifton -- C+

Left tackle hit rock bottom in Week 2 against Buffalo with one of the poorest performances of his 11-year career that was caused in part by a knee injury. Somehow bounced back the next week, didn't miss a start, played in all 16 games for the first time since 2007 and finished the season strong. Was charged with 8½ sacks (11th most in the NFL) and more than double the 3¾ he allowed last season, but was rock solid in the playoffs. He allowed just one sack — to Atlanta's John Abraham — in the four playoff games. Reduced penalty total from 10 last season to seven in the regular season (three of which came in the same game vs. Chicago). Could drop off at any time but appears to have at least another year in him.

Daryn Colledge -- C

Had the benefit of staying at left guard all season and had his most consistent year but still got blown up in the running game too often. Was charged with only three sacks after allowing 8¾ last season. Committed six penalties — double his total from last season — plus two in the playoffs, a hold and a false start. A free agent who might not be re-signed for next season.

Scott Wells -- B+

Performed as well or better than last season, when scouts said he had his best year. Responsible for much of the line communication that helped reduce the sack total to 38 from 51 the previous season. Allowed only 1½ regular-season sacks but gave one up in the Super Bowl. Committed just two penalties — both holds — in 20 games. No reason to think he's not the starting center for the foreseeable future.

Josh Sitton -- A-

Elevated game to elite level among right guards in just his third pro season and was named the NFL Alumni Association's offensive lineman of the year despite not making the Pro Bowl. The only Packers' player who hasn't missed a snap the last two seasons. Did not allow a sack in the regular season (after giving up four last season) and committed just three penalties (two false starts and a hold).

Bryan Bulaga -- C+

Rookie first-round pick had his ups and downs after taking over at right tackle in Week 5. Started the rest of the way and gave up a team-high 11 sacks (fourth-most in the NFL in the regular season). Also committed 10 penalties (including four in the regular-season finale vs. Chicago) but was penalty-free in the playoffs. Proved to be a quick learner and rarely made the same error twice. Still seen as heir apparent to Clifton at left tackle.

Jason Spitz -- D-

Was abysmal in relief of Colledge in the Dec. 12 loss at Detroit and was benched after 1½ quarters in favor of T.J. Lang. Free agent who may not be re-signed for next season.

T.J. Lang -- I

Season derailed by wrist surgery in April that prevented him from competing for either the left guard or right tackle spot. Played OK in relief stints at left guard and left tackle. Didn't allow a sack or commit a penalty. Depending on what happens with Colledge, could be in mix for left guard spot next season or could be a candidate at right tackle when Bulaga eventually replaces Clifton.

Nick McDonald-- I

Undrafted rookie was inactive entire season but viewed as promising prospect, perhaps even as possible starter at left guard next season.

Evan Dietrich-Smith-- I

Waived at the end of training camp, re-signed on Dec. 31 but never appeared in a game.

Marshall Newhouse-- I

Rookie was inactive for every game until being placed on injured reserve on Dec. 31 because of a back injury. A prospect at guard and tackle.

Mark Tauscher-- I

Veteran right tackle lasted just four games before a shoulder injury ended his season. Allowed two sacks and had one penalty in those four games. With a salary of \$4.1 million next season, it's unlikely he will return.