

# 2017 Packers Special Teams Report Card

By *Bob McGinn* JANUARY 18th, 2018

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This is a nine-part position-by-position series in which the 67 players on the Green Bay Packers' 53-man roster and injured-reserve lists at the end of the season are graded. Playing-time percentages are from offense and defense only.

## SPECIALISTS (5)

**MASON CROSBY (29.2%):** The numbers didn't look good but underlying factors generally served to exonerate Crosby. After six years (2010-'15) of teaming with just one snapper (Brett Goode) and one holder (Tim Masthay), he has had to deal with erratic help for two years. His field-goal mark of 78.9% ranked 25th; it was Crosby's worst accuracy since his one awful year (2012). Of his four misses, however, one was blocked from 38 because of Derek Hart's lousy snap and the other had no chance because Justin Vogel fumbled the snap. His other misses were short from 59 and wide left from 57. Of his two missed extra points, one was Crosby's fault off the right upright and the other had no chance because Taybor Pepper's poor snap and Vogel's bobbled hold. His best kicks were from 27 to beat Cincinnati in overtime and from 50 in the rain at Soldier Field. Even more impressive were his successful, perfectly-placed onside kicks in Carolina and Detroit. For years, left-footed Joe Nedney was regarded by special-teams coaches as the king of onside kickers. Crosby has become the latter-day Nedney. On his 65 kickoffs for distance, Crosby averaged 68.4 yards and 3.92 seconds of hang time. That hang time was his best since 2010. **Grade: B.**

**BRETT GOODE (18.2%):** The Packers tried to replace the aging Goode during the off-season, failed and brought him back Aug. 12 when Derek Hart flopped. Goode promptly suffered a hamstring injury in Game 3 and missed six games before the SOS call went out again. Performed adequately in the final seven games but, at 33, his snaps weren't as accurate or fast as in the past. Never made a tackle, either. The season was only 48 hours old when the Packers announced the signing of another long snapper. Goode, an unrestricted free agent, probably will rest in the bullpen for another off-season. **Grade: D.**

**TAYBOR PEPPER (8.3%):** Former Michigan State player spent 3 ½ months on the 90-man roster last winter-spring before he was re-signed to replace the injured Goode for Games 4-7. Suffered a fractured foot in practice Nov. 2 and went on injured reserve. He had two poor snaps on conversions, one of which led to a miss. Time to move on. **Grade: F.**

**JACOB SCHUM (0.0%):** Put together a serviceable season in 2016, his only one in Green Bay. Gross average of 43.2 ranked 27th, net average of 39.1 ranked 24th. Suffered an undisclosed injury in the offseason and spent the season on injured reserve. Talented enough to find work somewhere else in 2018. **Grade: Incomplete.**

**JUSTIN VOGEL (30.4%):** Best of the Packers' 25 undrafted rookies in 2017. Selected Green Bay over offers from Tennessee, Miami, Philadelphia and Kansas City. Flashed Pro Bowl potential in a tough place to punt. Gross average of 44.4 ranked 23rd, net average of 41.6 ranked seventh. His gross of 44.4 tied for seventh best in club history. His net of 41.6 broke Tim Masthay's club record of 40.2 set in 2015 and the seventh-place ranking was the highest for a Packer since David Beverly tied for sixth in 1979 (34.8). In the last 18 years Vogel's average hang time of 4.31 seconds was the team's second best behind Masthay's 4.35 in '12. Ten of Vogel's 71 punts had at least 5.0 hang time. His touchback percentage of 2.8% (two of 71) ranked fourth in the league. However, his inside-the-20 percentage of 26.8% (19 of 71) ranked just 31st. Marginal holder. Floridian did OK in first exposure to rough weather. **Grade: B**