

2017 Packers Individual Report Card:Defense

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SPECIALISTS (5)

Mason Crosby: It was a forgettable year for the team's all-time leading scorer. He was hardly a factor as the offense sputtered under backup quarterback Brett Hundley. His streak of 10 straight seasons with 100 or more points ended. The most critical kick he missed came at Pittsburgh when McCarthy asked him to do what no kicker ever had done: hit from 57 yards at Heinz Field. Crosby missed and the Packers went on to lose a winnable game. He did hit a critical 50-yarder in the victory at Chicago and a game-winning 27-yarder in overtime against Cincinnati. Crosby deserves to have a long snapper ready to go come training camp so that he has time to work with him. On kickoffs, Crosby ranked 20th in touchbacks with 36. His onside kick at Detroit in Week 17 was a thing of beauty. It was his seventh successful onside kick since 2010, the most in the NFL during that time. **Grade: C+**

Justin Vogel: The prospect of punting in the NFL never fazed the rookie free agent from Miami and he showed from the beginning that he had the leg and the mind to make it. The most encouraging part of his performance was his ability to handle the cold weather. It's one thing to turn balls over on a 70-degree day and another to do it on a 10-degree day. That's not to say Vogel did it consistently. He had his share of clunkers. But his gross average was the highest by a Packers punter since Tim Masthay averaged 44.6 in 2013, and he registered just two touchbacks, the fewest by a Packers punter with at least 70 attempts in a season. Vogel benefited tremendously from Janis' coverage, which covered up his tendency to leave the ball too far in the middle of the field. He can't count on the coverage being that good next season and must work on his directional punting. **Grade: B-**

Brett Goode: Played in 10 games and did a solid job with his long snaps. Proved to be a warrior when he badly pulled a hamstring early in the Cincinnati game and continued to play. He limped down the field in coverage, but still managed to complete his snap on Crosby's game-winning field goal against the Bengals. After being put on injured reserve, he was released, then re-signed Nov. 14. At 33, he doesn't get down the field like he used to (he didn't make a single tackle). But if the coverage unit continues to play this well, maybe it doesn't matter. **Grade: C**

Taybor Pepper: Played in four games after Goode got hurt and was shaky. His inaccuracy caused problems for Crosby and Vogel. Eventually was put on injured reserve after breaking his foot in practice. At 6-4, 245 pounds, he would be an ideal athlete running down the middle of the field in punt coverage. The Packers are hoping he finds himself the way former long snapper Rick Lovato did after being released in 2016. Lovato hooked on with the Philadelphia Eagles and now owns a Super Bowl ring. **Grade: F**

Jacob Schum: After serving as the Packers' punter in 2016, he was waived injured last summer because of a back problem and spent the 2017 season on injured reserve. **Grade: Incomplete**