



GAME NOTES

New England Patriots vs. St. Louis Rams - August 26, 2010

***QB Tom Brady** started the game and played through the first series of the fourth quarter. He finished 18-of-22 (81.8 percent) for 273 yards with three touchdowns and no interceptions for a passer rating of 158.0. In his regular season career, Brady has only had a better passer rating once – on Oct. 21, 2007 at Miami, when he posted the only perfect rating of his career (158.3).

***Brady** completed a 65-yard touchdown pass to **WR Randy Moss** in the third quarter. Last season, Brady had three touchdown passes of 60 or more yards, including a season-long of 81 yards to WR Sam Aiken at Miami (12/6/09).

***Moss** caught three passes for a team-high 74 yards, including a 65-yard touchdown pass. In 176 career regular season games, Moss has 16 touchdown catches of 60 or more yards and 22 receptions of 60 or more yards. Last season Moss had a 71-yard touchdown vs. Miami (11/8/09) and a 63-yard touchdown at Indianapolis (11/15/09).

***WR Brandon Tate** opened the game with a 97-yard kickoff return for a touchdown. The last time the Patriots returned the opening kickoff for a touchdown in a regular-season game was on Dec. 5, 2004, when WR Bethel Johnson had a 93-yard kickoff return at Cleveland. The last time the Patriots returned a kickoff for a touchdown in the regular-season was when CB Ellis Hobbs had a 95-yard kickoff return at Oakland on Dec. 14, 2008. Tate holds the NCAA career record in combined kick and punt return yards. He also holds the ACC career records for career kickoff returns and kickoff return yards.

***Tate's** 97-yard kickoff return is the third return of 50 yards or more for New England in the 2010 preseason. Rookie CB Devin McCourty had a 52 yard return and a 50 yard return in the first preseason game vs. New Orleans (8/12).

*Rookie **TE Rob Gronkowski** finished the game with two touchdown receptions and leads the team with three touchdowns in the 2010 preseason. He caught a touchdown pass for the second straight week when he caught a short pass from Tom Brady in the second quarter and dragged a defender the final five yards to the end zone for a 14-yard touchdown. He also had a 20-yard touchdown catch from Brady in the fourth quarter. Last week at Atlanta, Gronkowski caught a 24-yard pass from backup QB Brian Hoyer in the fourth quarter.

***Gronkowski** is the first Patriots rookie to have multiple touchdowns in a single preseason since 2006 when RB Patrick Cobbs had four touchdowns (3 rushing and 1 receiving).

*Prior to **Gronkowski's** two touchdowns tonight, the last time a Patriots rookie caught two touchdown passes in a preseason game was on Aug. 29, 2002, when TE Daniel Graham caught two touchdown passes at Washington.

***S Brandon McGowan** intercepted a pass by Rams QB Thaddeus Lewis in the fourth quarter and returned it 38 yards to give the Patriots possession at the Rams' 10-yard line, setting up a short New England touchdown drive. McGowan has two career interceptions in regular season play, both while playing for Chicago in 2007.

*Backup **QB Brian Hoyer** entered the game in the fourth quarter and completed one of three passes for five yards and a touchdown. Hoyer hit **WR Sam Aiken** for a 5-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter to give the Patriots a 35-27 lead.

*The Patriots scored touchdowns on four consecutive drives, reaching the end zone on their final full offensive possession of the first half and scoring touchdowns on their first three drives of the second half.

*New England put together its longest drive of the day on a 10-play, 98-yard touchdown drive that took an efficient 2:45 and ended in a 20-yard touchdown pass from Brady to Gronkowski that gave the Patriots a 28-27 lead with 13:59 left in the game.

*For the third straight week first-round pick **CB Devin McCourty** and second-round pick **LB Brandon Spikes** started on defense.

***WR Wes Welker** returned to the starting lineup against the Rams and caught two passes, including a 39-yarder. Welker made his 2010 preseason debut last week at Atlanta.

***CB Leigh Bodden** and **LB Gary Guyton** made their 2010 preseason debuts after missing the first two preseason games.

*Newly acquired **OL Quinn Ojinnaka** made his Patriots debut after joining the team via a trade with Atlanta earlier in the week.