

## Special Points

### of Interest:

- Broncos own best record in ISFL at 10-1
- Freeman throws two TDs, and one pick in 18 passes
- Defense surrenders just ten points
- Bronco running game picks up 177 yards

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## BRONCOS HOLD OFF EAGLES RALLY, WIN 20-10

### Bowe 68-Yard TD Catch Biggest Play

November 6th, 2011: The Broncos took a 17-0 lead in the third, then nearly gave away the game on multiple miscues as the Eagles rallied with two scores before Denver finally held off the Eagles to win, 20-10. With the win, the Broncos remain atop the AFC East with a 10-1 record, one game ahead of the defending Super Bowl Champion New York Jets, who are 9-2. The Broncos also hold the best record in the AFC for another week, with the Jets and Cowboys with two losses as of this writing. The Eagles lost for a second time in a row, and their fourth time in their last seven

games after winning their first four to start the season.

Rookie defensive end Jason Pierre-Paul had a big game for the Broncos with two sacks, both in the fourth quarter, and both stopped Eagle drives. On the offensive side of the ball, Dwayne Bowe continued his stellar play this year, earning MVP of the game honors for his four receptions and 120 yards, with one big 68-yard touchdown that gave the Broncos a 17-0 lead early in the third quarter.

With a 17-3 lead entering the fourth quarter, the Denver defense and special teams saved the day, for as many big

plays as they made, the Denver offense made almost as many in trying to give the game away. Jason Pierre-Paul got the first of his two sacks early in the fourth quarter with the Eagles moving from their own ten in a drive that started late in the third quarter. His sack of rookie quarterback Sam Bradford for an eight-yard loss on first down from the Eagles 33 put the Eagles in a 2nd-and-18 hole they could not climb out of, and eventually forced the Philly punt.

But the Broncos gave the ball right back, when from his own 30, Josh Freeman scrambled for

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## Game and Season Notes

Rookie second round pick Jason Pierre-Paul now has five sacks on the season, and four in his last three games. He is second on the team in sacks, one behind linebacker Will Witherspoon, who has six. The Broncos are undefeated on the road this year, with a 6-0 record. They won in Seattle to close out the 2010 season, so their last road loss was in Cleveland in their 14th game of 2010, when they dropped a 34-17 loss to the Browns.

Ryan Torain, sixth in rushing on the team just four weeks ago, has moved to second on the team in rushing with his second one-hundred game since returning

from injury. Torain has 377 yards on the ground in five games and is averaging 5.1 per carry, while Ricky Williams has 559 in eleven games. With Torain back, Anthony Dixon and Dimitri Nance combined for just three carries for four yards, as the two rookies are not being used near as much as when Torain was out.

The Eagles controlled the ball for most of the game, but were held scoreless for the first 40 minutes of the game. They had 72 plays to the Broncos 51, and had a ten-minute edge in time of possession.

Sam Bradford completed 30 of 42 for 281 yards and two picks,

with no touchdowns. He finished with a 69.6 passer rating. Josh Freeman threw only 18 times, completing 11 for 176 yards and two scores, with one interception (107.6). Freeman also added 41 yards on the ground, but lost one fumble.

Jacob Tamme was the Eagles leading receiver, with ten receptions for 73 yards. Brandon Pettigrew (4-31) and Dwayne Bowe (4-120) shared the Bronco team lead in receptions, but Bowe did far more with his opportunities. Green-Ellis led Philly in rushing with 17-64 (3.8), and scored once, while the Broncos Ryan Torain had 16-104 (6.5).

**"That pick is on me [Sienzant said]. I should have been more conservative in that situation ..."**



Denver's win now gives them a 10-1 record and an incredible turnaround from last season when they were 2-9 at this time

## Hold Off Eagles Rally (continued from page one)

a nine-yard gain but fumbled instead of trying to avoid the hit and slide. Set up at the Bronco 39, the defense bailed out the Broncos again, this time when linebacker Will Witherspoon dropped into coverage and picked off Bradford's pass intended for Calvin Johnson at the Denver 24 to stymie the second Eagle possession of the quarter.

When the Eagles defense stopped the Broncos on a quick three-and-out, Philadelphia came right back with a touchdown run by Ben-Jarvus Green-Ellis from five yards out with 6:36 remaining in the contest to punctuate their five-play, 68-yard scoring drive with Calvin Johnson's 44-yard reception one play before the touchdown the big play in the march. The Green-Ellis touchdown run cut the Broncos lead to 17-10 and gave the momentum to the Eagles.

But rookie return man Deji Karim silenced the crowd when the Broncos special teams took the game back over with a 58-yard kickoff return to the Eagle 30. A 14-yard completion to Bowe put the Broncos in chip-shot field goal range which could give them a two-score lead, but with just over five minutes remaining in the game Josh Freeman nearly gave the game away when he threw an ill-advised pass that was picked off by safety Patrick Chung and returned 33 yards to the Eagle 38 yard line, setting the Eagles up with an opportunity to tie the game with

5:07 left in the contest. Bronco head coach Hank Sienzant defended his young quarterback, saying, "That pick is on me. I should have been more conservative in that situation, but I was in attack mode and should have changed up to protect-the-lead mode. Our failure to put three points up on the board could have come back to bite us, but thankfully it didn't."

Second-year quarterback Josh Freeman wasn't buying it. He said "The call was a good one, I just need to execute better. We had a chance to go up 14 with a well-thrown ball, but I just didn't put it where I should have."

All's well that ends well. After one first down moved the ball to the Eagle 48, Jason Pierre-Paul made a curtain call, sacking Bradford for a eleven-yard loss on second-and-ten, thwarting the Eagles march to the tying touchdown. The sack left the Eagles in a third-and-21 deficit, with two subsequent Bradford completions picked up only sixteen yards and turning the ball back over to Denver on downs.

The Broncos took over at their own 47 with 3:17 remaining in the game, determined to take some time off off the clock and put some points on the board. They accomplished both in their nine-play, 48-yard drive that took 2:47 off the clock and put up the final three points of the game behind Mason Crosby's 23-yard field goal that gave the Broncos their two-

score lead at 20-10 with 27 seconds left on the clock.

Three Bradford passes all fell incomplete as the final seconds ticked off the clock and the Broncos got their 10th win of the season, putting them one step closer to clinching a playoff spot.

The Broncos first 33 minutes on offense was as good as their fourth quarter offense was dismal. They scored a touchdown on a five-yard connection between Delanie Walker and Josh Freeman to close out their first possession, an excellent 91-yard drive that took a tick under seven minutes off the clock in 13 plays. The big play in the possession was an 18-yard run by Ryan Torain on his first carry, and a 29-yard pass catch by Dwayne Bowe a bit later that came off a third-and-one fake run. Denver took over at their own nine-yard-line because Terrell Thomas picked off a long Bradford pass intended for Calvin Johnson that stymied the Eagles first possession, after they took nearly six minutes off the clock to start the game.

After an exchange of punts, the Eagles had another good drive (eight plays, 47 yards, 4:29 time of possession) stopped by another turnover, this time with running back Mike Goodson fumbling when hit by B.J.Raji, with Denver's Dawn Landry recovering at the Denver 34.

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### Bronco Report Card

Overall Grade: **B-**

**QB: A-** Freeman leads the league in passer rating, but he also threw his 6th pick in his last five games, too many and bears watching. Rushed six times for 41 yards.

**RB: B** Running backs gained 136 yards rushing on 27 carries (5.0) and caught just one for five (and a touchdown).

**REC: B-** Bowe was the big gun today with four for 120 and a score (30.0). Pettigrew, Washington, and Louis Murphy contributed, but Freeman threw sparingly (18 times, completing 11, limiting the receiver's opportunities).

**OL: A** The Broncos offensive line has allowed only two sacks of

Freeman in the Broncos past seven games (none against Philly) and Denver ran for 177 yards, averaging 5.4 per rush.

**DL: C** The Eagles rushed for 105 yards on 27 carries (3.75) but the line allowed the Eagles offense to dictate the pace of the game and hold the ball for 35 minutes, which would have been disastrous against a more-potent offense. Jason Pierre-Paul stood out with two fourth quarter sacks.

**LB: B-** Witherspoon is playing off the charts at LB. His 12 tackles led the team and he also contributed a stuff and a hurry. His fourth quarter interception was a

very big play. Goff and Ayers contributed six more tackles. Sims did not appear on the stat sheet.

**DB: C-** Played without Tracy Porter and Nate Allen for most of the game, the DBs were picked apart on short passes by Sam Bradford (30 completions for 281 yards) but did not surrender an TD pass and picked off one.

**Special Teams: A** Special teams play helped save the day, with Karim's long return just the most obvious of many big plays. Coverage unit allowed just 15.3 per KO return, while Mason Crosby was perfect on kicks and Gano had two touchbacks.

## Bronco Report Card

## Injuries, Transactions And a Look Ahead

### Injury Report

The Broncos lost rookie safety Nate Allen to injury just a quarter into the game and newly-signed safety Jarrad Page jumped into a starting role and played well in relief, making two tackles and getting credit for one tackle for loss. Page is the fifth Bronco player this year to see action at the strong safety spot.

The Eagles are already shy safety LaRon Landry and linemen Gerald McCoy and Tyson Jackson on defense, and veteran running back Clinton Portis on offense.

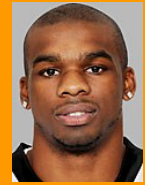
### A Look Ahead

The 10-1 Denver Broncos get no respite as they travel next to Buffalo to face their AFC East opponent who is currently at 6-4. The Broncos edged the Bills in week seven in Denver by the narrow 24-20 margin. At the time, it was the Broncos ninth win in a row, and left them as the lone undefeated team in the league.

The Eagles go on the road to New Orleans, where they will face a 6-4 Saints squad that would like to beat Philadelphia to gain an leg up in the NFC playoff hunt.

### Player Transactions

The Broncos signed safety Jarrad Page as a short term solution when they lost cornerback Tracy Porter and safety Anthony Smith for the next few weeks. Nate Allen returned to active duty but got dinged early, forcing Page into fulltime duty. Normal starting safety Malcolm Jenkins was seeing action at cornerback, where he played some as a rookie and in the Broncos nickel and dime roles, and had his hands full with Eagles wideout Calvin Johnson (5-81, 44 long).



**Cornerback Tracy Porter (above) will miss the next few weeks but safety Malcolm Jenkins will slide into his spot while rookie Nate Allen takes over at safety**

### Hold Off (from page two)

The Broncos took advantage of the turnover by putting three points on the board to go up 10-0 with 4:08 left in the first half, with the key play Torain's 17-yard gain on a draw play on third and six getting the ball into field goal range for Mason Crosby.

The Eagles wasted a excellent 14-play, 74 yard drive to close out the half when they mis-managed the clock at the end, leaving one timeout in their pocket, but Jacob Tamme's failed to get down or out of bounds in time to stop the clock timeout and the half expired as Tamme was tackled at the Denver nine yard line.

That meant of the Eagles four first half possessions, the three best took 32 plays, gained 168 yards from scrimmage, took over 14 minutes in time of possession, and scored zero points.

The Broncos started the second half with two runs picking up nine yards, then Freeman hit Bowe for nine for the first down on a third-and-one play again, then came back to Bowe for a big 68-yard long pass connection that gave Denver a 17-0 lead just 2:22 into the second half. The Eagles finally got on the scoreboard on their fifth possession of the game, a 15-play march that took nearly

nine minutes off the clock and gained 66 yards, with the big play a second-and-22 short completion to Roscoe Parrish that the little wideout jitterbugged his way into a 20-yard gain, turning an unmanageable situation into a easy third-and-two conversion on a seven-yard run off tackle by Green Ellis that kept the drive alive. But it bogged down at the Denver 19 when the Bronco defense stiffened, forcing two Bradford incompletes before Bradford, with his primary receiver covered, settled for a check-down five-yard gain on third and ten and got the three points from Nick Folk to make it 17-3 heading into the fourth quarter.

### Raji (from back page)

of the skill set that he brings at the position he plays. There aren't that many big men on the planet with skills like his. Other things being equal, we value big people on the offensive and defensive line," summed up Sienzant. "It gets to be a supply and demand thing, and so when one comes along with his ability, you have to do everything you can to acquire him."

Raji missed two games as a rookie with a high ankle sprain, and was limited over the second half of his rookie season with that injury, but playing defensive end early in the season he impressed with three sacks in his first three games, before moving inside and

playing defensive tackle for most of the second half of the year. His opportunities for sacks declined once he moved inside, but his play did not, as Raji finished with 49 tackles, eight stuffs, and five sacks on the year.

This year he has played on the interior all season, and as the best player on the Broncos front line, has commanded double-teams more often than not. And while his numbers aren't up to the level of his rookie year, his play is even better. "B.J.'s numbers are down because teams are not running right at him anymore. He hasn't had the same opportunities to make plays that he did as a rookie," says one Bronco insider. But Raji is still getting the accolades,

and as the best run-stuffer on one of the best run-stopping defenses in the ISFL this year, Raji is being mentioned more-and-more as a legitimate All-Pro candidate.

Raji dismisses such talk, in lines reminiscent of those echoed by half the young Bronco team, or more. "We haven't done anything yet. We haven't made the playoffs, we haven't won a playoff game, we haven't even won our division. We are still playing the games. Let's talk about who's the best when the season's over."

Despite such dismissals, many observers believe Raji is already one of the best young defensive tackles in the game today, and think the Broncos got a real prince of a player in Raji.

**Denver Bronco  
Fast Fact:  
The Broncos  
have now won 12  
of their last 13  
games extending  
back to last  
season**

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## B.J.RAJI BIG MAN IN MIDDLE

B.J.Raji expected to go high in the first round of the ISFL draft, and sitting in the green room, expected to be one of the first five players off the board. He had just come off a sensational career at Boston College, and his play almost guaranteed him being high on every team's boards. A legitimate run-stuffing nose tackle at BC, the -1, 337-pound Raji also has the ability to mount an interior pass rush

But then he started dropping. And dropping. And dropping. Instead of being a top-5 or top-10 pick, he fell all the way to the second round where the Broncos selected him up with the first pick in that round, the 29th player drafted overall. Raji learned later that the night before the first round of the ISFL draft was about to start, rumors had spread like wildflowers that he had tested positive for a banned substance at the ISFL combine. With no time the morning of the draft to determine the accuracy of the rumor, that rumor was apparently enough to scare some teams off from taking Raji in the first round, as they took a better-safe-than-sorry approach, and went in another direction.

Although the source of the rumor was never determined, another rumor spread during the draft that it was the Broncos who started the rumor, hoping Raji would fall to them. Curiously, the Broncos have never officially denied starting the rumor, but they haven't admitted to it, either. When Hank Sienzant was asked directly whether the Broncos started the rumor during the draft, he just smiled and said, "A lot of subterfuge goes on leading up to the draft, and I think Raji's ability might justify whatever it took to get him here. But I cannot comment on the source of the rumor, no."

The Broncos are more than pleased with Raji's play to this point in his career, his second season in the ISFL. As Bronco head coach Hank Sienzant said at the time, "He's a strong, genuinely powerful big man, especially in his lower body. He can take people backwards when they are trying to move him forward. And he has the quickness to go around them when he opts to go that route. It's unbelievably hard to find the combination

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