

# Notebook

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Last week against the Houston Texans, McDaniels took some of the pressure off Brissett by calling an option (13 yards) and a bootleg (a 27-yard touchdown run) for the rookie. The Patriots also called three handoffs to Edelman and a tight end reverse by Martellus Bennett.

The Bills lost to the Baltimore Ravens and New York Jets before, with new offensive coordinator Anthony Lynn, surprising the Cardinals 33-18.

“I think the Arizona game really highlights how good they are, how tough it’s going to be and how much work we have ahead of us,” said Belichick.

Ryan and his defensive coordinator brother, Rob, changed up their defense, bringing more pressure on Carson Palmer than they had brought on Ryan Fitzpatrick the previous game. It worked well — and you have to think they’ll bring it again this week.

The Patriots have won 28 of the last 32 games against the Bills and are 72-21 against other AFC East teams in the regular season since 2001. Buffalo has won only once at Gillette Stadium, and that was the final game of the 2014 regular season, with the Patriots resting players for the playoffs.

LeGarrette Blount has been dynamic running the ball for the Patriots, who have also had to survive with a rebuilt offensive line. On the other side of the ball, they’ve been without Chandler Jones (traded), Rob Ninkovich (suspended, one more game) and Dont’a Hightower (knee). Hightower was listed as having limited participation Wednesday.

Blount has run for 298 yards and four touchdowns (at least one in each game), turning in the team’s first back-to-back 100-yard games since 2012.

The Patriots, lit up for almost 400 yards over the last three quarters by Ryan Tannehill, was near perfect against Houston, and the special teams produced two fumbles that led to touchdowns.

New England has seven takeaways in the last two games.

Buffalo quarterback Tyrod Taylor, dangerous with his legs, is 47 of 77 for 527 yards, three touchdowns and two interceptions but also ripped off a 49-yard run and another for 20 and a touchdown last week. LeSean McCoy has run for 227 yards and three touchdowns.

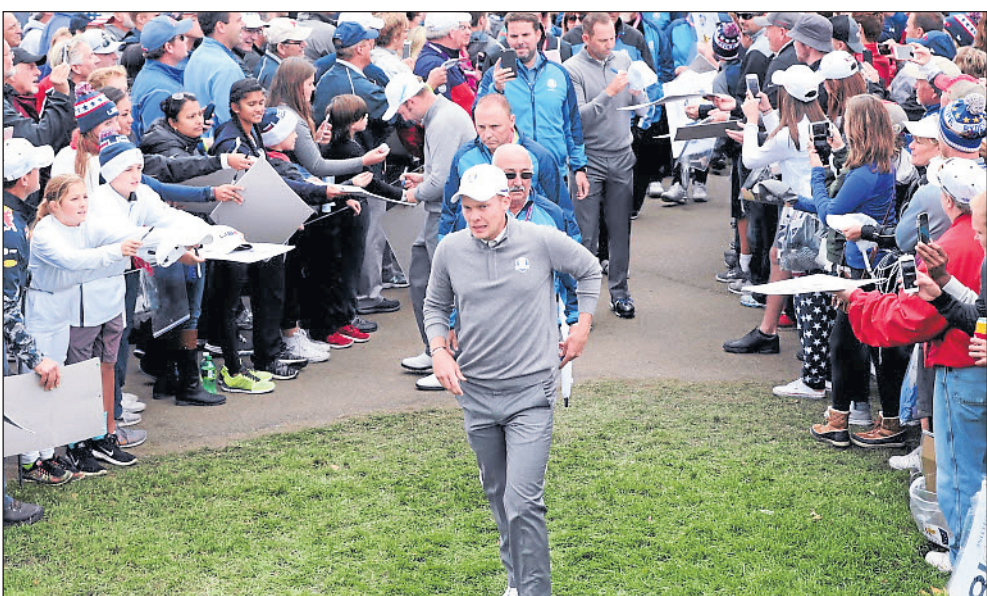
Wide receiver Sammy Watkins, who missed the Arizona game with a foot injury, was still not back at practice Wednesday. But the Bills might get massive left tackle Cordy Glenn back. He was limited Wednesday.

**Johnson on practice squad**  
The New England Patriots signed defensive lineman Anthony Johnson to their practice squad on Wednesday.

Johnson, 23, was released by the Patriots on Monday. He originally entered the NFL as a rookie free agent with the Miami Dolphins on May 12, 2014.

The 6-foot-2, 295-pound Johnson out of LSU made the Dolphins’ 53-man roster as a rookie and played in seven games, recording two tackles and recovering one fumble. He was released by Miami at the end of training camp in 2015 and signed by the Washington Redskins’ practice squad in November. Johnson was released by Washington on May 2.

Johnson was signed by the Patriots on May 9 and played in two games in 2016 with the Patriots, accumulating five total tackles and one quarterback hit.



Team Europe golfer Danny Willett walks to the 18th tee during a practice round for the Ryder Cup at Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minnesota, on Wednesday.

## Ryder Cup may swing to US

BY PATRICK REUSSE  
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

Minneapolis-St. Paul was in its early years as a major league area when it had a chance to host the best baseball team ever assembled. That would be the National League collection that came to Met Stadium for the 1965 All-Star Game.

Juan Marichal started, Bob Gibson finished, and Sandy Koufax and Don Drysdale pitched in between. Hall of Famers Roberto Clemente, Frank Robinson and Billy Williams were reserve outfielders. The American League fought its way to a one-run loss (6-5), which was an upset in itself.

We are more than two generations later in our major league status and we have gotten used to this big-league stuff, including the occasional important golf events at Hazeltine National.

There was the initial disaster of the 1970 U.S. Open, when Hazeltine was an immature and unappealing course that had no business hosting such an important event. It was reconfigured and trees grew, and the 1983 Senior Open cleared the way to host a very successful 1991 U.S. Open, and 25 years and two PGA Championships later, it’s the Ryder Cup.

Golf isn’t a team sport by nature and this doesn’t compare as a declaration of greatness with the 1965 National Leaguers, but the opinion here is that this area is about to host the best golf team ever assembled.

The talent the United States is bringing to this 12-player, 28-match competition is astounding. The depth is such that the Yanks can have Bubba Watson, the No. 7-ranked player in the world, and Tiger Woods, the greatest golfer to ever swing a club, riding around in carts, and captain Davis Love III still could say in a radio interview:

“We’re a great golf team. This is maybe the best golf team ever assembled, if we just go and play our game.”

This comment received considerable attention, including with the Europeans, winners of the past three Ryder Cups.

Love tried to offer a disclaimer in his daily media session on Tuesday, saying the best ever was something he planned to motivate his players, and not intended to discredit the Euros or other Ryder Cup teams.

You were right the first time. This is

### COMMENTARY

maybe the best golf team ever assembled, and I’m not sure there’s any “maybe” about it. If the Yanks go and play their game, the U.S. is going to win.

There’s only one way the Yanks are going to lose this time to Europe, and that’s if they choke remarkably as they did at Oak Hill in 1995 and at Medinah in 2012, or less dramatically as they did at Muirfield Village in 1987 and at the Belfry in 1989.

American athletes and sports fans have had this incessant desire to put themselves in some type of underdog role ever since that night in Lake Placid, N.Y. in 1980, when Jim Craig’s hot goaltending carried the U.S. to a hockey upset of the Soviet Union.

There will be endless chants of that from the largest share of the 40,000 spectators at Hazeltine this weekend. Fair enough, but there would be much less glory in winning with this lineup than there would be humiliation in handing possession of the Ryder Cup to Europe for a 4th straight biennium.

The bottom half of the roster for Europe is Chris Wood, Andy Sullivan, Mathew Fitzpatrick, Thomas Pieters and two players added for experience more than recent play, Martin Kaymer and 43-year-old Lee Westwood.

The bottom half of the roster for the United States is Brooks Koepka, Brandt Snedeker, Zach Johnson, J.B. Holmes, Rickie Fowler and Ryan Moore. The top of the U.S. team is ultra-talented Dustin Johnson, a still-vibrant Phil Mickelson, the splendid Jordan Spieth, the cutthroat Patrick Reed, the late-arriving star Jimmy Walker, and the reliable Matt Kuchar.

Europe’s captain is Darren Clarke, the slimmed-down Irishman.

Clarke might be able to get his team through the 16 pairs matches the first two days with heavy use of Rory McIlroy, Danny Willett, Justin Rose, Sergio Garcia, sore-kneed Henrik Stenson and the unheralded Rafael Cabrera-Bello.

When it gets to the singles on Sunday and the Yanks’ depth, Clarke will need the same intervention of fate as when he won the British Open out of nowhere in 2011. Or not.

Maybe what he’ll actually need is another compelling U.S. choke. And Love might have reduced the chance of that to almost zero with Ryan Moore as his last selection. I would take that guy rolling for me any time, any stakes.

What a golf team, these Yanks. Best ever.

# Woodbrey

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McPhee, who lives in Dixfield.

Woodbrey, who died in 2009 at age 54, got his introduction to the game as a youth growing up in Gorham, and played four years of high school soccer for the Rams before going to UM.

A two-time All-New England selection, Woodbrey was the only player in the history of UMaine’s men’s soccer program to garner All-Yankee Conference honors on two occasions.

Woodbrey led the Black Bears in scoring during three of his four seasons, and he is also in Gorham High’s Athletic Hall of Fame.

He also played basketball and baseball in high school, and the Rams garnered a pair of state championships in 1970 and 1971.

Woodbrey’s family has quite a history at UMaine. His father, Ed Woodbrey, and uncles Vic and Hank, all

played baseball at the school. His uncles played basketball, too.

The University honored the Woodbrey family with the UMaine Alumni Association Fogler Legacy Award last year.

“His father would be so proud of him,” said Helen Woodbrey, who also noted her son would be very happy with the honor of being inducted into UMaine’s Sports Hall of Fame.

Helen also said that even though the family lived two hours from campus in Gorham, they attended as many of Ted’s games as they could.

In 2009, UMaine suspended its men’s soccer program, along with its women’s volleyball program, as part of an effort to cut the school’s budget by nearly \$9 million.

Tickets to Friday’s hall ceremony are on sale now and are \$50 per person, \$25 for children 10 and under. The evening starts with a cocktail hour at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m.

Tickets can be ordered online. Names will be placed on a guest list at the door.

# Bills

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room couch at his home.

“They’re going to game plan specific for the quarterback, so we understand that and we’ll be prepared,” Ryan said. “It might take a little more time than normally what it would, but I’d rather do that than face Tom Brady, so I’m OK with it.”

The Bills know who their quarterback is going to be, and if they are going to pull off the upset, Tyrod Taylor has to be more effective than he has been the first three weeks of the season.

Last week in the win over Arizona, Taylor passed for only 119 yards, and the Bills have to get more from their passing game, especially against an opponent like New England.

One thing Belichick specializes in is taking away a team’s primary strength, and there’s no doubt that with wide receiver Sammy Watkins possibly out again, the Bills will have to rely on LeSean McCoy and their running game.

If the Patriots shut that down, Taylor has to have a big game.

“Our passing attack, we haven’t had a whole lot of success,” Ryan said.

# Watt

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game against the San Diego Chargers.

However, ESPN’s Ed Werder reported Wednesday that sources in Houston called a comeback this season “a longshot.” Werder also reported Watt is seeking a second opinion but the injury is the same disk that required surgery on July 22.

The Texans agreed to a deal with defensive end Antonio Smith on Wednesday. Smith has played for the Texans and is familiar with defensive coordinator Romeo Crennel’s scheme.

Watt, 27, managed only

eight tackles and 1.5 sacks through three weeks this season. It was a significant drop-off from last season, when he recorded 17.5 sacks and three forced fumbles en route to his third Defensive Player of the Year honor. He also captured the award in 2012 and 2014, finishing with 20.5 sacks and four forced fumbles each year.

Watt, Houston’s 2011 first-round pick (11th overall) out of Wisconsin, has 76 sacks, 15 forced fumbles and one interception in 83 games, all starts. He has never missed a regular-season game.

Watt’s rate of 0.92 sacks per game is higher than any other player since the stat was first established in 1982.

# Rose

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eligibility for the Hall of Fame.

“It is not part of my authority of responsibility here to make any determination concerning Mr. Rose’s eligibility as a candidate for election to the National Baseball Hall of Fame,” Manfred said in his decision on Dec. 14. “In fact, in my view, the considerations that should drive a decision on whether an individual should be allowed to work in Baseball are not the same as those that should drive a decision on Hall of Fame eligibility.”

For almost 15 years after being banned, Rose denied he bet on baseball, but in 2004 he admitted that he did so only when managing the Cincinnati Reds.

Rose amassed a record 4,256 hits during his 24-year playing career. He was a career .303 hitter who won three World Series rings.

Rose passed Ty Cobb as career hits leader with 4,192 on Sept. 11, 1985. Rose played for the Reds from 1963 to 1978 and 1984 to 1986, acting as both a player and a manager from 1984 to 1986 and continuing as just a manager until 1989. Rose’s No. 14 was retired by the Reds in June after being inducted into the franchise’s Hall of Fame.

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