

Major decisions loom this week for Tomlin, Steelers

BY GERRY DULAC
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

PITTSBURGH — Oh, there were the talent-search excursions to the East-West Shrine Bowl and Senior Bowl. And there were a few meetings to determine some minor coaching changes.

But the real work for the Steelers begins in earnest Monday when the entire coaching staff convene at their South Side facility to break down the offense and defense and decide who will be a part of their schemes in 2025 — and what those schemes might look like.

Coach Mike Tomlin will spend two days each on both sides of the ball, going over what improvements

are needed for next season and which players — particularly free agents — will be retained or let go. And the Steelers have plenty of significant free agents, including quarterbacks Russell Wilson and Justin Fields and running back Najee Harris and Jaylen Warren.

Three other starters — linebacker Elandon Roberts, cornerback Donte Jackson and receiver Van Jefferson — are also unrestricted free agents.

Some of those decisions have likely already been made. For example, they are not expected to resign two of their starting offensive linemen — left tackle Dan Moore Jr. and guard James Daniels — allowing them to enter the free agent

market on March 12.

Just as important, this week’s sessions will involve establishing an agenda for next week’s NFL combine in Indianapolis. That’s when the Steelers will start to narrow their focus on which players they would like to target in the April draft.

Of course, no decision is more significant than deciding which quarterback — Wilson or Fields — they want to retain in 2025. It is a split decision internally, kind of like it was in 2021 when the Steelers were deciding if they wanted to bring back Ben Roethlisberger for his 18th and final season, which they eventually did.

It’s a different decision at run-

ning back. Warren is a restricted free agent, which means the Steelers are likely to tender him a right-of-first-refusal offer that will cost them only \$3.18 million in 2025. They could still re-sign Harris, who is an unrestricted free agent. Tomlin has long favored Harris, even though his career yards-per-carry average (3.9) is nearly a yard lower than Warren’s (4.8).

As for the coaching staff, Tomlin has made only two changes since the end of the season — bringing back Gerald Alexander as second-year coach to replace Grady Brown, whose contract was not renewed, and hiring former Pitt linebacker and former Dallas Cowboys assistant Scott McCurley to be inside

linebackers coach, replacing Aaron Curry.

There could still be one other minor change, but the staff shakeup that might have been expected after the Steelers lost their final five games and had another one-and-done appearance in the postseason never materialized.

The offseason work begins in earnest this week.

Staffer recognized
Former Steelers trainer John Norwig has been selected by the Pro Football Hall of Fame for their annual Awards of Excellence program in the athletic trainers category.

Norwig, who retired after the 2022 season, will be feted June 25-26 in Canton, Ohio.

NHL STANDINGS

NHL Expanded Glance EASTERN CONFERENCE										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	Home	Away	Div
Atlantic										
Florida	57	34	20	3	71	192	165	17-9-2	17-11-1	6-5-1
Toronto	55	33	20	2	68	169	156	19-11-0	14-9-2	11-5-1
Tampa Bay	55	31	20	4	66	197	153	18-7-2	13-13-2	7-9-0
Ottawa	56	29	23	4	62	158	156	16-7-2	13-16-2	7-7-1
Detroit	55	28	22	5	61	160	171	15-12-2	13-10-3	7-9-1
Boston	57	27	24	6	60	157	182	18-9-3	9-15-3	9-6-2
Montreal	56	25	26	5	55	163	194	13-12-4	12-14-1	9-6-0
Buffalo	54	22	27	5	49	171	185	13-12-3	9-15-2	5-7-1
Metropolitan										
Washington	55	36	11	8	80	196	140	19-7-2	12-4-0	12-4-0
Carolina	56	33	19	4	70	184	154	21-6-1	12-13-3	14-4-3
New Jersey	57	31	20	6	68	175	142	15-9-4	16-11-2	10-6-3
Columbus	56	26	22	8	60	184	186	17-6-4	9-16-4	7-6-3
N.Y. Rangers	55	27	24	4	58	165	168	14-12-2	13-12-2	7-9-0
N.Y. Islanders	55	25	23	7	57	152	162	13-11-2	12-12-5	8-5-2
Pittsburgh	57	23	25	9	55	164	201	13-10-4	10-15-5	4-9-4
Philadelphia	57	24	26	7	55	162	192	13-13-1	11-13-6	7-10-1

WESTERN CONFERENCE										
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	Home	Away	Div
Central										
Winnipeg	56	39	14	3	81	202	134	22-5-3	17-9-0	14-5-0
Dallas	55	35	18	2	72	182	139	20-7-1	15-11-1	12-4-1
Minnesota	56	33	19	4	70	163	159	13-12-1	20-7-3	11-7-2
Colorado	57	33	22	2	68	186	174	16-10-2	17-12-0	8-8-1
Utah	56	24	23	9	57	158	170	9-12-6	15-11-3	7-8-2
St. Louis	56	25	26	5	55	154	171	12-14-2	13-12-3	5-8-1
Nashville	54	19	28	7	45	144	179	13-10-3	6-18-4	7-7-2
Chicago	55	17	31	7	41	149	191	11-14-3	6-17-4	5-10-3
Pacific										
Edmonton	55	34	17	4	72	182	152	18-10-2	16-7-2	9-5-1
Vegas	56	33	17	6	72	185	155	19-6-3	14-11-3	14-2-1
Los Angeles	53	29	17	7	65	151	136	17-3-2	12-14-5	7-8-1
Vancouver	55	26	18	11	63	155	166	11-10-7	15-8-4	8-5-2
Calgary	55	26	21	8	60	148	165	16-10-4	10-11-4	9-4-2
Anaheim	54	24	24	6	54	137	165	13-12-2	11-12-4	6-10-1
Seattle	57	24	29	4	52	169	183	13-14-4	11-15-0	7-9-1
San Jose	57	15	35	7	37	148	216	9-18-2	6-17-5	4-10-2

Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Sunday's Games	Tuesday's Games
No games scheduled	No games scheduled
Monday's Games	Wednesday's Games
No games scheduled	No games scheduled
Canada 5, Finland 3	Thursday's Games
Sweden vs. USA at TD Garden, 8 p.m.	Canada vs. USA at TD Garden, 8 p.m.

NBA STANDINGS

NBA Expanded Conference Glance EASTERN CONFERENCE										
	W	L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf	
Cleveland	44	10	.815	—	8-2	W-4	25-4	19-6	29-7	
Boston	39	16	.709	5½	8-2	W-3	17-10	22-6	28-9	
New York	36	18	.667	8	8-2	W-2	19-10	17-8	25-11	
Indiana	30	23	.566	13½	6-4	W-1	14-8	15-14	18-16	
Milwaukee	29	24	.547	14½	4-6	W-1	17-9	11-15	23-16	
Detroit	29	26	.527	15½	6-4	W-4	14-13	15-13	21-20	
Orlando	27	29	.482	18	4-6	W-1	17-10	10-19	21-16	
Atlanta	26	29	.473	18½	4-6	L-1	12-12	14-16	19-14	
Miami	25	28	.472	18½	4-6	L-4	12-11	12-17	14-16	
Chicago	22	33	.400	22½	3-7	L-4	10-19	12-14	17-20	
Phila.	20	34	.370	24	3-7	L-5	10-17	10-17	14-20	
Brooklyn	20	34	.370	24	6-4	W-3	9-17	11-17	11-23	
Toronto	17	38	.309	27½	4-6	L-1	12-17	5-21	11-24	
Charlotte	13	39	.250	30	1-9	L-3	9-20	4-19	7-30	
Washington	9	45	.167	35	3-7	L-4	5-23	4-21	7-23	

WESTERN CONFERENCE										
	W	L	Pct	GB	L10	Str	Home	Away	Conf	
Oklahoma City	44	10	.815	—	8-2	L-1	25-3	18-7	25-9	
Memphis	36	18	.667	8	7-3	L-1	21-6	15-12	20-14	
Denver	36	19	.655	8½	8-2	W-8	19-8	17-11	22-12	
Houston	34	21	.618	10½	3-7	L-1	17-9	17-11	20-13	
L.A. Lakers	32	20	.615	11	8-2	L-1	19-6	13-14	20-12	
L.A. Clippers	31	23	.574	13	6-4	W-3	19-10	12-13	20-18	
Minnesota	31	25	.554	14	6-4	W-1	16-13	15-12	23-14	
Dallas	30	26	.536	15	6-4	W-2	17-11	13-15	21-18	
Sacramento	28	27	.509	16½	5-5	L-1	14-13	14-14	19-19	
Golden State	28	27	.509	16½	6-4	W-1	15-13	13-14	18-19	
Phoenix	26	28	.481	18	3-7	L-3	16-11	10-17	17-17	
San Antonio	23	29	.442	20	3-7	L-1	13-12	9-16	16-18	
Portland	23	32	.418	21½	6-4	L-3	15-13	8-19	14-27	
Utah	13	41	.241	31	3-7	L-1	6-19	7-22	5-32	
New Orleans	13	42	.236	31½	1-9	W-1	9-19	4-23	7-26	

Sunday's Games	Wednesday's Games
2025 All-Star Game Semifinal 1	Charlotte at L.A. Lakers, 10 p.m.
Global Stars 41, Young Stars 32	Thursday's Games
2025 All-Star Game Semifinal 2	Boston at Phila., 7 p.m.
OGs 42, Rising Stars 35	Memphis at Indiana, 7 p.m.
2025 All-Star Game	Chicago at New York, 7:30 p.m.
OGs 41, Global Stars 25	Cleveland at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Monday's Games	Orlando at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
No games scheduled.	L.A. Clippers at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Tuesday's Games	Charlotte at Denver, 9 p.m.
No games scheduled.	Phoenix at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
	L.A. Lakers at Portland, 10 p.m.

THIS DATE IN SPORTS

Feb. 18
1924 — Theresa Weld Blanchard wins her sixth and final U.S. figure skating championship. Sherwin Badger captures his fifth straight and final men's title.
1928 — Sonja Henie, 15, becomes the youngest Olympic figure skating champion. She easily beats Fritz Burger of Austria and Beatrix Loughran of the U.S.
1932 — Sonja Henie wins her sixth straight world title.
1951 — Manhattan District Attorney Frank Hogan orders the arrest of three City College basketball players on bribery charges and two professional gamblers and two intermediaries in a game-fixing scandal involving college teams across the country.
1961 — Bob Pettit of St. Louis scores a career-high 57 points in a 141-138 victory over the Detroit Pistons.
1964 — Wilt Chamberlain scores 52 points against Detroit, his second consecutive 50-point game.
1972 — Randy Smith of Buffalo plays the first of what would become 906 consecutive games, an NBA record which took more than 11 full seasons to accomplish.
1981 — Edmonton's Wayne Gretzky scores five goals and adds two assists to lead the Oilers over the St. Louis Blues 9-2.
1986 — San Antonio's Alvin Robertson records the second quadruple-double in NBA history, with 20 points, 11 rebounds, 10 assists and 10 steals in the Spurs' 120-114 win over Phoenix.
1990 — Dale Earnhardt blows a tire with one mile remaining in the Daytona 500, giving Derricke Cope the biggest upset in stock car racing history.
1992 — Italy's Alberto Tomba wins the giant slalom in

Albertville, France, to become the first Alpine skier to win the same event at two Winter Olympics.
1995 — Utah guard John Stockton becomes the first NBA player with 10,000 assists in a 108-98 victory over the Boston Celtics.
2001 — Dale Earnhardt, the greatest stock car star of his era, is killed in a crash on the last turn of the last lap of the Daytona 500 as he tries to protect Michael Waltrip's victory.
2006 — Shani Davis becomes the first black athlete to win an individual gold medal in the Winter Olympics, capturing the 1,000-meter speedskating race. Joey Cheek makes it a 1-2 American finish, adding a silver to his victory in the 500 at the Turin Games.
2010 — Evan Lysacek becomes the first U.S. man to win the Olympic gold medal since Brian Boitano in 1988, shocking everyone with an upset of defending champion Evgeni Plushenko.
2012 — Shenneka Smith's 3-pointer from the wing with 8 seconds left lifts St. John's to a 57-56 win over No. 2 Connecticut, ending the Huskies' 99-game home court winning streak. It's the Huskies' first home loss to an unranked opponent in nearly 19 years.
2013 — Brittney Griner scores 25 points, including the 3,000th of her career, to help No. 1 Baylor rally past third-ranked Connecticut 76-70.
2017 — Mikaela Shiffrin wins a third straight slalom title at the world championships to retain her unbeaten record at major events.
2022 - Johannes Thingnes Bo of Norway wins his 4th biathlon gold medal of the Beijing Winter Olympics when he takes out the men's mass start.

PITTSBURGH PENGUINS STATISTICS

THROUGH GAMES OF SATURDAY, FEB. 15, 2025										
Pittsburgh Penguins										
POS	NO.	PLAYER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM	PP	
F	87	Sidney Crosby	55	17	41	58	-15	21	6	
F	67	Rickard Rakell	56	25	23	48	-14	10	5	
F	17	Bryan Rust	48	20	22	42	-21	14	3	
D	65	Erik Karlsson	57	6	32	38	-14	18	1	
F	71	Evgeni Malkin	47	9	25	34	-19	24	2	
F	8	Michael Bunting	55	14	14	28	-16	48	9	
D	24	Matt Grzelcyk	57	1	27	28	-12	8	0	
D	58	Kris Letang	50	7	13	20	-16	28	3	
F	72	Anthony Beauvillier	56	12	6	18	3	10	0	
D	29	Marcus Pettersson	47	3	15	18	-2	25	0	
F	18	Drew O'Connor	53	6	10	16	-14	16	1	
F	13	Kevin Hayes	40	9	5	14	-12	6	4	
F	19	Cody Glass	44	3	10	13	-10	12	1	
F	46	Blake Lizotte	38	9	4	13	3	22	1	
F	53	Philip Tomasino	28	7	5	12	-4	2	3	
F	55	Noel Acciari	57	4	5	9	-17	12	0	
F	0	Jesse Puljujarvi	26	3	6	9	-1	10	0	
F	20	Lars Eller	17	4	3	7	-4	10	0	
F	83	Matt Nieto	29	1	2	3	-4	2	0	
D	38	Owen Pickering	25	1	2	3	-5	6	0	
D	0	Valtteri Puustinen	10	1	1	2	-4	4	1	
D	5	Ryan Shea	22	0	2	2	-7	6	0	
D	43	Danton Heinen	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	
F	73	Pierre-Olivier Joseph	20	0	1	1	-9	22	0	
F	22	Sam Poulin	6	0	1	1	1	2	0	
D	3	Jack St. Ivany	19	0	1	1	-3	17	0	
F	52	Emil Bemstrom	2	0	0	0	-1	0	0	
D	4	Nathan Clurman	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	
D	7	Vincent Desharnais	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	
D	27	Ryan Graves	40	0	0	0	-9	25	0	
F	14	Bokondji Imama	6	0	0	0	1	7	0	
F	2	Rutger McGroarty	3	0	0	0	-1	0	0	
F	11	Vasily Ponomarev	4	0	0	0	-1	2	0	
TEAM TOTALS			57	163	278	441	-226	403	40	
OPPONENT TOTALS			57	196	337	533	208	453	31	
POS	NO	GOALTENDER	GP	MINs	AVG	W	L	OT	SO	
	39	Alex Nedeljkovic	27	1595	2.93	12	9	5	1	
	35	Tristan Jarry	22	1252	3.31	8	8	4	0	
	30	Joel Blomqvist	11	593	3.54	3	8	0	0	
TEAM TOTALS			57	3471	3.19	23	25	9	1	
OPPONENT TOTALS			57	3471	2.72	34	16	7	4	