

# Steelers desperately need to trade for a wide receiver

**BY PAUL ZEISE**  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers defense was impressive Sunday, as it dominated the high-powered Indianapolis Colts offense. That, in large part, is why they won 27-20 in a game most people had them pegged to lose.

The defense forced six turnovers, had five sacks, rendered Jonathan Taylor irrelevant and made Daniel Jones of the Colts look a lot like Daniel Jones of the New York Giants.

It was an incredible turnaround from the woeful performance of the previous two games against the Green Bay Packers and the Cincinnati Bengals. The Steelers defense showed when its stars perform, it can be as menacing as any defense in the NFL.

The Steelers offense was efficient, cashed in on some short fields and scored enough points to win the game. Efficient is good, for sure, but the Steelers offense left — and

leaves — a lot to be desired.

I asked this question of several people, but how many points would the Colts have scored if they had six turnovers go their way? I would be willing to bet if that Colts offense was handed six turnovers and all of those short fields, it would have scored about 50 points and blown the Steelers off the field.

How about in the Steelers’ previous win over the Patriots, when the defense generated five turnovers and the offense scored only 21 points? How many points would the Patriots have scored that day if they had the 5-0 edge in turnovers? I am guessing a lot more than 27.

I am really not trying to be overly critical, but the reality is the offense is not good enough. It just isn’t, and had the defense not handed it so many short fields and delivered stops, the Steelers would have lost.

The Steelers had 225 total yards Sunday. They averaged 4.9 yards per pass and 1.7 yards per rush. Their longest passing play was 18 yards, and their \$30 million receiver, DK

Metcalf, had a total of two catches for 6 yards.

It is an offense that doesn’t scare anyone, doesn’t make many big plays and doesn’t even run the ball — the alleged bread and butter — very well. The run game is one thing and can improve as the offensive line improves, but the passing game won’t get better unless the Steelers go out and get another receiver, period.

I know they have this love affair with Calvin Austin III, Roman Wilson and the group of tight ends, but take a closer look at Sunday’s game. It is pretty clear the Steelers offense lacks firepower. The four tight ends are all good at catching the ball, but none are going to run away from anyone.

And while there are some areas on offense, I suppose, with room for growth, the truth is the most glaring hole is at that second receiver position. The Colts showed if you can take away DK Metcalf, the Steelers offense isn’t scary at all.

Maybe some day Wilson will become a legitimate threat, but it’s not

now, not this year, and the Steelers can’t afford to wait for him. Austin has proven to be a very reliable No. 3 or No. 4 receiver, but he is being miscast as a No. 2. He isn’t going to make anyone focus on him in order to take pressure off of Metcalf.

The Steelers are reportedly finally going to sign Marquez Valdes-Scantling, and while he does have a connection with Rodgers, he doesn’t necessarily make the Steelers better. I don’t think he is better at this point than Austin, to be quite honest.

There are plenty of receivers who are allegedly on the market, and I don’t care which one of them the Steelers go get. Brian Batko lists Jakobi Meyers, Calvin Ridley, Jaylen Waddle, Chris Olave and Garrett Wilson.

I know the price for a couple of those guys could be steep, but are the Steelers serious about winning the Super Bowl or are they not? Are they serious about improving their team for this year — with a 41-year old quarterback and a bunch of 30-somethings who might be on

their last legs — or not?

That’s the question Omar Khan and Co. need to ask themselves, as do the Rooneys and anyone else in on the decision. Is this is a season when they are serious about making a run at the Super Bowl or not?

If it isn’t, then the Steelers should save all of their draft picks, stand pat and not try to improve the receiving corps. But if it isn’t, why the heck did they bring Aaron Rodgers here? Why did they go get Jonnu Smith, Jalen Ramsey and Metcalf?

The defense has shown at times it can be awful. But it has also shown that when the stars show up and are ready to play, it can be dominant enough to take over games and stop the best offenses in the NFL.

And that means this team can be good enough to win the Super Bowl, but it won’t unless the offense adds some firepower at the wide receiver position. It is nice they have 19 tight ends who all seem to catch the ball, but this team needs an impact player, a game breaker beyond Metcalf, and that player isn’t on the roster.

# Shelton landed with Twins after bettering his approach

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Derek Shelton spent the first couple of weeks after his firing by the Pittsburgh Pirates in his feelings, bitter about the dismissal just 38 games into his sixth season as manager and defiant about his ability to do the job well.

That sudden free time turned out to be an unexpected gift. As he candidly assessed in conversation with several confidants the approach he used, the adjustments he made and the lessons he learned, Shelton took the notes that helped him land in Minnesota — because the Twins took notice.

“I honestly believe the reflection period is probably the reason that I’m in this chair right now,” Shelton said on Tuesday after his introductory news conference at Target Field as Minnesota’s 15th manager. “I think if that happens to you at the end of the season, it’s really hard to

turn that back around and be able to say, ‘I could have done this differently.’”

Twins president Derek Falvey already knew Shelton well, from their overlap in Cleveland when Falvey first began his career and the two seasons in Minnesota when Shelton worked as the bench coach for two different managers — Paul Molitor in 2018 and Rocco Baldelli in 2019 — before getting his big break with Pittsburgh.

Falvey would call Shelton from time to time for an outside perspective while he was with Pirates, a relationship that unequivocally influenced the decision by the Twins.

“I think we were harder on him than maybe we were on other candidates,” Falvey said. “Shelty and I



Derek Shelton

talked about some of the real challenges that he had in Pittsburgh, very specific challenges, whether those were with players or staff or with the front office or otherwise, which we all have. These aren’t easy jobs. They’re challenging, and you go through them and you learn a ton. I was able to actually hit him on some of those things and say, ‘How would you handle that differently? Because I know how you handled it then. I know what you were frustrated by.’ That helped us a ton to kind of understand that.”

Shelton, who went 306-440 with the Pirates, didn’t pull any punches from his side of the interview, either.

The Twins, who fired Baldelli with a 527-505 record after three AL Central titles in seven seasons but only one trip to the playoffs over his last five years, have cut costs since the 2023 team ended the club’s professional-sports-record 18-game

postseason losing streak and won a series for the first time since 2002. Executive chair Joe Pohlrad led an exploration of a sale of the franchise his grandfather bought in 1984, before the family recently opted to stay put and add yet-to-be-identified new investors to the ownership group to help pay down debt and reset the financial outlook.

While neither Falvey nor Shelton would reveal a specific payroll target for 2026, in part because of the fluidity of the offseason transaction period that is just starting, both of them gave strong hints that they won’t be asked to further pare down the roster and be forced to trade, say, one or both of their All-Star starting pitchers, Pablo López and Joe Ryan.

“When I sat down with Joe Pohlrad, and I asked him the question, I said, ‘What’s on the table? What’s off the table?’ And his response to me was, ‘Ask me anything

you want,’” Shelton said. “I got the answers that made me really want this job.”

When Shelton arrived with the Pirates, long one of the lowest-spending clubs in Major League Baseball while playing in one of its smallest markets, they were in clear starting-over mode. The Twins, despite their 10-player sell-off leading up to the trade deadline this past season, don’t consider themselves to be in that same category.

“My goal this offseason is not to take away from this team,” Falvey said. “We’re going to have to evaluate every opportunity that comes our way. There’s going to be a lot of calls on players on our team because we think we have some talented players. I have little doubt that will be part of our process. At the same time, my personal goal is to find ways to augment and add around it.”

# Steelers sign receiver Valdes-Scantling to practice squad

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The Pittsburgh Steelers signed wide receiver Marquez Valdes-Scantling to the practice squad on Tuesday, reuniting him with former teammate Aaron Rodgers.

The well-traveled Valdes-Scantling played alongside Rodgers from 2018-21 when they were both in Green Bay.

The 31-year-old Valdes-Scant-

ling, who won a pair of Super Bowls with Kansas City in 2022 and 2023, was most recently with the San Francisco 49ers, catching four passes for 40 yards before being released last month.

Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin downplayed Valdes-Scantling’s arrival, which came a week after reports that Valdes-Scantling’s signing was imminent, only for him to

hold off while waiting for a chance to join a 53-man roster instead of taking a practice squad spot.

That opportunity did not materialize, and now Valdes-Scantling finds himself on his fifth team since 2023. His most productive stop during that stretch came in New Orleans, where he averaged 22.6 yards per catch and scored four touchdowns in eight games with the

Saints.

“He is a really special guy, and I think MVS can still really play,” Rodgers said last week. “You saw last year when he was in New Orleans, he had opportunities. He had a lot of big touchdowns. He can still run.”

Valdes-Scantling caught 123 passes for 2,153 yards and 13 touchdowns during his four seasons

alongside Rodgers in Green Bay and has averaged 17.3 yards per reception in his career.

The Steelers are in first place in the AFC North at 5-3, but have struggled to get consistent production out of their wide receivers outside of DK Metcalf. Metcalf leads the team with 29 receptions. Their next four top pass catchers are either running backs or tight ends.

THE DAILY SCOREBOARD

| NFL STANDINGS                                     |   |   |     |      |     |     |
|---------------------------------------------------|---|---|-----|------|-----|-----|
| AMERICAN CONFERENCE                               |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| East                                              |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| New England                                       | 7 | 2 | 0   | .778 | 237 | 169 |
| Buffalo                                           | 6 | 2 | 0   | .750 | 235 | 167 |
| Miami                                             | 2 | 7 | 0   | .222 | 180 | 243 |
| N.Y. Jets                                         | 1 | 7 | 0   | .125 | 168 | 221 |
| South                                             |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Indianapolis                                      | 7 | 2 | 0   | .778 | 290 | 181 |
| Jacksonville                                      | 5 | 3 | 0   | .625 | 176 | 184 |
| Houston                                           | 3 | 5 | 0   | .375 | 168 | 121 |
| Tennessee                                         | 1 | 8 | 0   | .111 | 130 | 257 |
| North                                             |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Pittsburgh                                        | 5 | 3 | 0   | .625 | 202 | 195 |
| Baltimore                                         | 3 | 5 | 0   | .375 | 202 | 216 |
| Cincinnati                                        | 3 | 6 | 0   | .333 | 216 | 300 |
| Cleveland                                         | 2 | 6 | 0   | .250 | 126 | 184 |
| West                                              |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Denver                                            | 7 | 2 | 0   | .778 | 225 | 166 |
| L.A. Chargers                                     | 6 | 3 | 0   | .667 | 215 | 193 |
| Kansas City                                       | 5 | 4 | 0   | .556 | 235 | 159 |
| Las Vegas                                         | 2 | 6 | 0   | .250 | 132 | 210 |
| NATIONAL CONFERENCE                               |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| East                                              |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Phila.                                            | 6 | 2 | 0   | .750 | 208 | 185 |
| Dallas                                            | 3 | 5 | 1   | .389 | 263 | 277 |
| Washington                                        | 3 | 6 | 0   | .333 | 201 | 236 |
| N.Y. Giants                                       | 2 | 7 | 0   | .222 | 197 | 249 |
| South                                             |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Tampa Bay                                         | 6 | 2 | 0   | .750 | 197 | 178 |
| Carolina                                          | 5 | 4 | 0   | .556 | 170 | 205 |
| Atlanta                                           | 3 | 5 | 0   | .375 | 143 | 178 |
| New Orleans                                       | 1 | 8 | 0   | .111 | 138 | 243 |
| North                                             |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Green Bay                                         | 5 | 2 | 1   | .688 | 206 | 166 |
| Detroit                                           | 5 | 3 | 0   | .625 | 239 | 178 |
| Chicago                                           | 5 | 3 | 0   | .625 | 215 | 227 |
| Minnesota                                         | 4 | 4 | 0   | .500 | 182 | 186 |
| West                                              |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| W                                                 | L | T | Pct | PF   | PA  |     |
| Seattle                                           | 6 | 2 | 0   | .750 | 231 | 150 |
| L.A. Rams                                         | 6 | 2 | 0   | .750 | 209 | 127 |
| San Francisco                                     | 6 | 3 | 0   | .667 | 194 | 188 |
| Arizona                                           | 3 | 5 | 0   | .375 | 180 | 171 |
| Thursday's Games                                  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Las Vegas at Denver, 8:15 p.m.                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Sunday's Games                                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Atlanta vs Indianapolis at Berlin, DEU, 9:30 a.m. |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Baltimore at Minnesota, 1 p.m.                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Buffalo at Miami, 1 p.m.                          |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Cleveland at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Jacksonville at Houston, 1 p.m.                   |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| N.Y. Giants at Chicago, 1 p.m.                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| New England at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.                  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| New Orleans at Carolina, 1 p.m.                   |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Arizona at Seattle, 4:05 p.m.                     |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Detroit at Washington, 4:25 p.m.                  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| L.A. Rams at San Francisco, 4:25 p.m.             |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Pittsburgh at L.A. Chargers, 8:20 p.m.            |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Open: Cincinnati, Kansas City, Tennessee, Dallas  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Monday's Games                                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Phila. at Green Bay, 8:15 p.m.                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Thursday, Nov. 13                                 |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| N.Y. Jets at New England, 8:15 p.m.               |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Sunday, Nov. 16                                   |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Washington vs Miami at Madrid, ESP, 9:30 a.m.     |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Carolina at Atlanta, 1 p.m.                       |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Chicago at Minnesota, 1 p.m.                      |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Cincinnati at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.                  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Green Bay at N.Y. Giants, 1 p.m.                  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Houston at Tennessee, 1 p.m.                      |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| L.A. Chargers at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.             |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Tampa Bay at Buffalo, 1 p.m.                      |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| San Francisco at Arizona, 4:05 p.m.               |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Seattle at L.A. Rams, 4:05 p.m.                   |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Baltimore at Cleveland, 4:25 p.m.                 |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Kansas City at Denver, 4:25 p.m.                  |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Detroit at Phila., 8:20 p.m.                      |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Open: Indianapolis, New Orleans                   |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Monday, Nov. 17                                   |   |   |     |      |     |     |
| Dallas at Las Vegas, 8:15 p.m.                    |   |   |     |      |     |     |

| NHL STANDINGS                       |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|----|---|----|-----|----|----|----|--|--|--|--|
| EASTERN CONFERENCE                  |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Atlantic                            |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| GP                                  | W  | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA |    |  |  |  |  |
| Montreal                            | 13 | 9 | 3  | 1   | 19 | 48 | 41 |  |  |  |  |
| Detroit                             | 13 | 9 | 4  | 0   | 18 | 44 | 51 |  |  |  |  |
| Boston                              | 15 | 8 | 7  | 0   | 16 | 49 | 51 |  |  |  |  |
| Toronto                             | 13 | 7 | 5  | 1   | 15 | 47 | 47 |  |  |  |  |
| Tampa Bay                           | 12 | 6 | 4  | 2   | 14 | 35 | 33 |  |  |  |  |
| Ottawa                              | 13 | 6 | 5  | 2   | 14 | 48 | 51 |  |  |  |  |
| Buffalo                             | 13 | 5 | 4  | 4   | 14 | 38 | 40 |  |  |  |  |
| Florida                             | 12 | 6 | 5  | 1   | 13 | 31 | 34 |  |  |  |  |
| Metropolitan                        |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| GP                                  | W  | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA |    |  |  |  |  |
| New Jersey                          | 13 | 9 | 4  | 0   | 18 | 46 | 40 |  |  |  |  |
| Pittsburgh                          | 14 | 8 | 4  | 2   | 18 | 49 | 40 |  |  |  |  |
| Carolina                            | 12 | 8 | 4  | 0   | 16 | 44 | 32 |  |  |  |  |
| Philadelphia                        | 13 | 7 | 5  | 1   | 15 | 38 | 35 |  |  |  |  |
| Columbus                            | 12 | 7 | 5  | 0   | 14 | 40 | 36 |  |  |  |  |
| N.Y. Islanders                      | 13 | 6 | 5  | 2   | 14 | 43 | 46 |  |  |  |  |
| N.Y. Rangers                        | 14 | 6 | 6  | 2   | 14 | 31 | 34 |  |  |  |  |
| Washington                          | 12 | 6 | 5  | 1   | 13 | 31 | 29 |  |  |  |  |
| WESTERN CONFERENCE                  |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Central                             |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| GP                                  | W  | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA |    |  |  |  |  |
| Colorado                            | 13 | 7 | 1  | 5   | 19 | 47 | 35 |  |  |  |  |
| Winnipeg                            | 12 | 9 | 3  | 0   | 18 | 45 | 30 |  |  |  |  |
| Utah                                | 13 | 9 | 4  | 0   | 18 | 44 | 35 |  |  |  |  |
| Dallas                              | 13 | 7 | 3  | 3   | 17 | 37 | 39 |  |  |  |  |
| Nashville                           | 15 | 5 | 6  | 4   | 14 | 39 | 51 |  |  |  |  |
| Chicago                             | 13 | 5 | 5  | 3   | 13 | 39 | 38 |  |  |  |  |
| Minnesota                           | 14 | 5 | 6  | 3   | 13 | 40 | 51 |  |  |  |  |
| St. Louis                           | 13 | 4 | 7  | 2   | 10 | 37 | 53 |  |  |  |  |
| Pacific                             |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| GP                                  | W  | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA |    |  |  |  |  |
| Seattle                             | 12 | 6 | 2  | 4   | 16 | 33 | 33 |  |  |  |  |
| Edmonton                            | 15 | 6 | 5  | 4   | 16 | 46 | 48 |  |  |  |  |
| Anaheim                             | 11 | 7 | 3  | 1   | 15 | 41 | 34 |  |  |  |  |
| Vegas                               | 11 | 6 | 2  | 3   | 15 | 39 | 32 |  |  |  |  |
| Los Angeles                         | 13 | 5 | 4  | 4   | 14 | 37 | 44 |  |  |  |  |
| Vancouver                           | 14 | 7 | 7  | 0   | 14 | 40 | 45 |  |  |  |  |
| San Jose                            | 13 | 4 | 6  | 3   | 11 | 42 | 53 |  |  |  |  |
| Calgary                             | 14 | 3 | 9  | 2   | 8  | 31 | 48 |  |  |  |  |
| Monday's Games                      |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Toronto 4, Pittsburgh 3             |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| St. Louis 3, Edmonton 2             |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Vancouver 5, Nashville 4, OT        |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Seattle 3, Chicago 1                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday's Games                     |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Utah 2, Buffalo 1, OT               |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Carolina 3, N.Y. Rangers 0          |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Boston 4, N.Y. Islanders 3, SO      |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Philadelphia 5, Montreal 4, SO      |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Minnesota 3, Nashville 2, OT        |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Dallas 4, Edmonton 3, SO            |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Tampa Bay at Colorado, late         |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Detroit at Vegas, late              |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Florida at Anaheim, late            |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Winnipeg at Los Angeles, late       |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday's Games                   |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Utah at Toronto, 7 p.m.             |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| St. Louis at Washington, 7:30 p.m.  |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Columbus at Calgary, 9:30 p.m.      |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Chicago at Vancouver, 10 p.m.       |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| San Jose at Seattle, 10 p.m.        |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday's Games                    |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Minnesota at Carolina, 7 p.m.       |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Montreal at New Jersey, 7 p.m.      |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Ottawa at Boston, 7 p.m.            |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| St. Louis at Buffalo, 7 p.m.        |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |
| Washington at Pittsburgh, 7:30 p.m. |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |  |  |  |  |