



## Nate Solder strives for more

By Ian R. Rapoport / Patriots Notebook | Saturday, August 27, 2011 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | N.E. Patriots

FOXBORO — It's not that **Patriots** [team stats] left tackle **Nate Solder** sets high standards. It's that he doesn't really know any other way.

The rookie first-rounder has started two preseason games, allowing one sack but appearing sturdy and dependable. Yet when he examines his performance, he glosses over the positives.

That's just how the Colorado product works.

"There's an expected level of play," Solder said, "and when you're doing well, you should expect that. You should never be satisfied with that. I'm always just looking to get better."

That's life as a tackle. Praise rarely comes, but blame comes with each failed blocked.

Solder will likely fall into the background this year, as veteran **Matt Light** [stats] may even get the start tonight against Detroit after a training camp slowed by shoulder rehabilitation.

But while he does, he won't be basking in the glow of everything he did well starting those two preseason games.

"I look at (the film) and see all the things I did wrong," Solder said. "So, I know what I need to improve on for the next game."

Solder rumbled with Bucs defensive end **Adrian Clayborn** in the second preseason game, but gave up a sack to **Tim Crowder**. It was a not-so-subtle suggestion that he's not quite ready for primetime, but he has the talent to be.

"A lot of people coming into this program with these great coaches have a lot to learn in a lot of cases," Solder said. "And I feel like it's been a whole learning process for me, and I appreciate it because I want to learn as much as I can and be the best player I can be."

"I don't want to act like I'm an expert on any of this stuff. I'm absolutely not. I'm happy to be here. What else can I say?"

Patriots who?

If the Lions were impressed by the beat-downs the Patriots handed their last two preseason opponents, they weren't saying. Just the opposite, actually.

In fact, they don't appear to care one way or the other what challenges the Pats present, even with their high-tempo offense.

"It's not anything we haven't faced," said defensive tackle **Corey Williams**, according to the Detroit News. "It's not like it's new. It's the same speed we are used to playing at."

Perhaps just as surprising was that coach **Jim Schwartz** jumped into the fray, saying what the Pats do "is no different from what we practice against every day."

Branch loving camp

Last year, **Deion Branch** arrived in New England midway through the season, forcing him to scramble to get ready. And he still had 48 catches for 706 yards and five touchdowns in 11 games.

This year, Branch has been here from the beginning. He's already seeing the difference for his overall level of understanding.

"The difference is it gives me the opportunity to pick up on some of the things I missed during the last training camp," Branch said. "(Instead of) me coming in and just picking up the game plan and just working on the stuff for that week. We went over so much stuff the past 2-3 weeks that I missed because I didn't have the training camp (last) year. That's always important."

With Branch far more comfortable with the system this time around, he's done what he could to spread the knowledge.

"My role has changed a whole lot," Branch said. "I see myself being a little bit more vocal with the younger guys. I've got to talk to them, but I've also have to show them. You go out and show these guys, and hopefully they pick it up and then take whatever I can give them."



Photo by Matt Stone

What rehearsal?

The third preseason game is often the closest thing to the season opener, but veteran defensive end **Andre Carter** doesn't see it like that. He will treat tonight like a regular game, anyway. There's too much to be done.

"Football's football," Carter said. "It's a game. You gotta go out there and out and put on your best show and just show basically what you're made of.

"It's all about competition. Go out there and compete. The preseason game is just a football game."

**Article URL:** <http://www.bostonherald.com/sports/football/patriots/view.bg?articleid=1361693>

---

**Related Articles:**

**Power outages alter Patriots' plans**

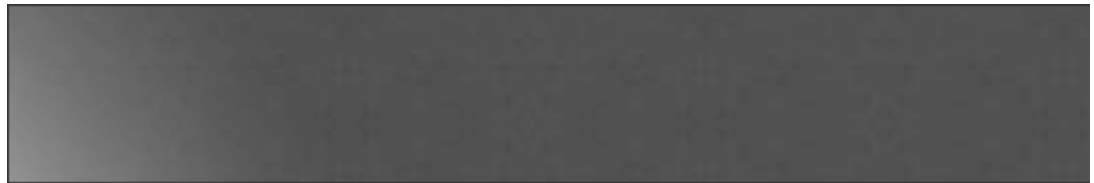
</sports/football/patriots/view.bg?articleid=1362245>

**These areas a growing concern**

</sports/football/patriots/view.bg?articleid=1362144>

**Who's making the cut?**

</sports/football/patriots/view.bg?articleid=1362143>



[Contact us](#) | [Print advertising](#) | [Online advertising](#) | [Herald history](#) | [Send a news tip](#) | [Electronic edition](#) | [Br](#)

[\*\*Save on Boston Herald Home Delivery\*\*](#)

[\*\*Jobs with Herald Media\*\*](#)

For back copy and collectible issue information please call 617-426-3000 Ext. 7714. [Click here for Celtics, F](#)



© Copyright by the Boston Herald and Herald Media.

No portion of BostonHerald.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written per