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# Nate Tomlinson ready to step up for NBL side Melbourne Tigers

- by: *Russell Gould*
- From: **Herald Sun**
- March 10, 2013 12:00AM

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THE job for rookie Melbourne Tigers point guard Nate Tomlinson in today's clash with ladder leaders New Zealand has been made easier with import Seth Scott passed fit to play.

Tomlinson, however, knows the importance of "stepping up" with his teammates in the absence of star Jonny Flynn, who remains sidelined indefinitely with a foot injury.

Flynn not only leads the Tigers in scoring this season, but controls the floor for upwards of 35



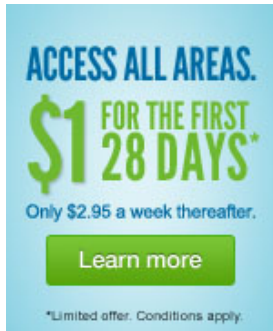
Nate Tomlinson is making the most of his opportunities alongside Jonny Flynn. Picture: Richard Serong  
Source: News Limited

minutes each week.

Today that role falls to Tomlinson, who has averaged about 15 minutes this season, his first in the NBL.

But the son of former NBL coach Bill Tomlinson said he was keen to get stuck into his new role.

"I'm looking forward to it. I'm going to have to step up and not just me. Jonny scores a lot of points and does a lot of things for our team. So it's going to have to be a group effort," he said.



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"We haven't talked about (Flynn being out) too much. A couple of times during the year we have had guys go down and others have stepped up.

"I think I have to be a bit more aggressive, but defensively my role will be important. Guarding (MVP candidate) Cedric Jackson is an important job.

"I haven't done anything different, but team-wise we have and that will be how we cover Jonny's loss."

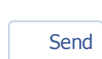
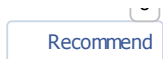
Tomlinson said there was "no doubt" Melbourne could beat the Breakers, who have lost only three of 25 games this season.

"We think we are getting better as the season goes on and we'll have to prove it," he said.

Despite the prospect of Flynn's injury keeping him out beyond today's game, Tomlinson said his focus was only on getting through the Breakers.

Scott, who has been battling back spasms that forced him to sit out last week's loss to Wollongong, trained strongly yesterday and will play as the Tigers return to Hisense Arena.

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Notes

# Several teams show interest in free-agent LB Brad Jones

By [Tom Silverstein](#) of the Journal Sentinel  
March 10, 2013

In the buildup to NFL free agency, one player among the Green Bay Packers' group of soon-to-be unrestricted free agents who has flown under the radar is linebacker **Brad Jones**.

Very little has been written about his future, but with the negotiating period for free agents open since late Friday night, Jones has been drawing interest. According to his agent, **Josh Wright**, eight teams have been in contact with him regarding Jones.

Free agents cannot sign a contract until 3 p.m. Tuesday, but the three-day negotiating window leading up to the official start of free agency is a good indicator of the market for some players. That eight teams have contacted Jones speaks to the ground he has gained since the start of last season.

Jones, a core special teams player the last four seasons and occasional starter, became a full-time starter at inside linebacker after season-ending injuries to **Desmond Bishop** (hamstring) and **D.J. Smith** (knee). It wasn't long before Jones was playing three-down football, serving on running downs and as the lone linebacker when the defense went to its dime package.

In all, Jones started 10 of 16 games and finished with 77 tackles, two sacks, four pass breakups and a forced fumble. He was particularly effective in goal-line situations and played physically given his 6-foot-3, 242-pound frame.

The Packers still have some concern about their inside linebacker position because Bishop's return from surgery to reattach his hamstring muscle isn't a slam dunk and Smith's return in time for training camp is in question. It is one reason so many people have predicted the Packers will select an inside linebacker in the draft.

In Jones, someone would be getting a versatile linebacker who will have no problem learning a new defense. He has played both inside and outside and at the least can be a very good addition on special teams.

Whether the Packers value that as much as others or feel for salary-cap reasons they can't compete is something that will be known soon.

If Jones were to leave, **A.J. Hawk**, **Jamari Lattimore** and **Terrell Manning** would be the only inside linebackers with game experience who are ready to take part in the off-season conditioning program. Another option, **Robert Francois**, is a restricted free agent whose future with the team will be decided by the start of

free agency.

The Packers have to either submit a tender worth at least \$1.3 million to Francois, sign a long-term deal or cut him and see if they can re-sign him at a lower price.

## No dice

It may have made a lot of sense to Packers fans to sign defensive tackle **Cullen Jenkins**, the former Packer who was released by the Philadelphia Eagles on Feb. 25.

But it didn't make sense to general manager **Ted Thompson**.

While Jenkins expressed a desire to return to Green Bay, the Packers never got involved in the bidding. On Sunday night, according to multiple reports, Jenkins agreed to a three-year, \$8 million deal with the New York Giants that included \$3 million of guaranteed money.

That is a reasonable amount for a veteran of Jenkins' caliber, but Thompson apparently didn't think he was worth it. According to his agent **Brian Levy**, the Packers "checked in" but never got involved in negotiations.

Thompson did approve a visit from former New York Giants end **Chris Canty**, which is a sign the team is interested, but he has not pursued negotiations yet and appears willing to wait so they can get him at the lowest price.

Kansas City and Tennessee also have expressed interest.

### Find this article at:

<http://www.jsonline.com/sports/packers/brad-jones-expected-to-be-a-hot-commodity-in-free-agency-bn93jn4-196798081.html>



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