



MAN OF THE YEAR — Linebacker London Fletcher-Baker earned his second consecutive Buffalo Bills Walter Payton Man of the Year award last week. The award goes to the member of the team who demonstrates outstanding balance in his life between civic and professional responsibilities.

Photo by Patrick McPartland

NFL

Schobel shackling QBs

by MATT KRUEGER
Reporter

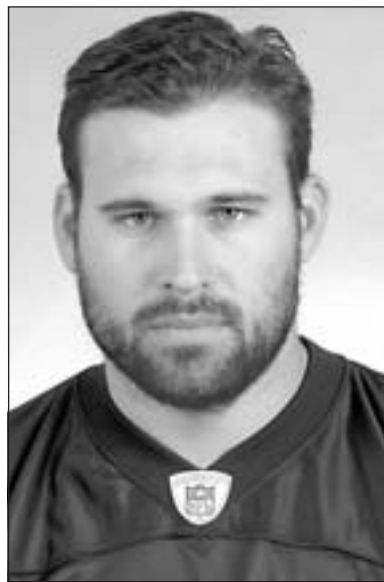
Aaron Schobel isn't one to boast or brag about on-field accomplishments and he definitely is not the loudest Bill in the Buffalo locker room.

But Schobel's actions on the field, specifically his ability to make life miserable for opposing quarterbacks, speak louder than any sound byte. He's a pass-rushing machine with a laser-targeting sack system. And he's a big reason the Bills have won four of their last six games.

"He's a natural player," coach Dick Jauron said. "He has a great attitude, a great temperament, I think, for the game. And he plays hard. And he's a skilled guy, a highly skilled guy. He's a rare player."

With his nine-tackle, three-sack performance in the Bills' 31-13 win over the New York Jets Sunday, Schobel took over the top spot in the NFL for sacks. His 12.5 sacks this season ties him with San Diego linebacker Shawne Merriman for the lead.

Schobel got to New York quarterback Chad Pennington on a second-and-6 play from the Jets 28-yard line in the third quarter,



Aaron Schobel

forcing a fumble that was recovered by Ryan Denney. That turnover led to a 6-yard touchdown pass from J.P. Losman to tight end Robert Royal about 90 seconds later.

Schobel then added two sacks on backup quarterback Kellen Clemens on the Jets' final drive of the game.

Those three sacks tied a personal record for most in a game and helped him surpass his career best for sacks in a season. His

previous best was 12 in 2005.

Schobel has gotten a sack in the past four games. It's the second time this season he has gotten a sack in four consecutive games. He is now one of only two Buffalo Bills, joining the legendary Bruce Smith, to record three 10-plus sack seasons. Schobel had 11.5 in 2003.

After a slow start to the season, Schobel has 11.5 sacks in the past nine games.

With 45 tackles this season, Schobel trails his marks from the past three seasons. He finished with 60 in 2003, 73 in 2004 and 71 in 2005.

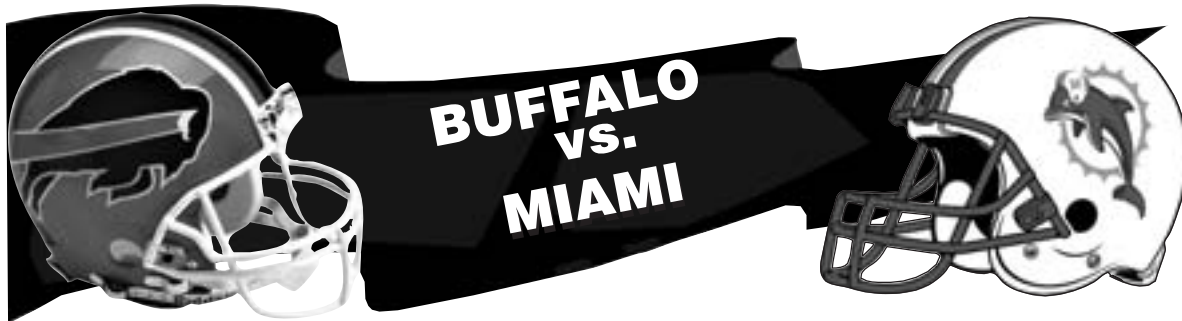
For Jauron, who didn't get to see too much of Schobel when he was coaching the Detroit Lions and Chicago Bears, the sixth-year defensive end has exceeded his coach's expectations.

"We were certainly aware of his abilities," Jauron said. "But he's definitely better than I thought he was. And I thought he was pretty good."

With 59 career sacks, Schobel trails only Phil Hanson (61.5) and Smith (171) on the Bills all-time sack leaders list. He has led the Bills in each of his six seasons.

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Predictions: Bills will squish the fish



The Buffalo Bills avenged one of their losses this season with Sunday's 31-13 dismantling of the AFC East rival New York Jets.

Quarterback J.P. Losman was 10-of-15 passing for 157 yards and two touchdowns, including a 77-yard bomb to Lee Evans. Running back Willis McGahee rushed for 125 yards on 16 carries, while cornerback Nate Clements returned an interception 58 yards for a touchdown. London Fletcher-Baker picked off his third interception of the year.

This week, the archrival Miami Dolphins (6-7) come to Buffalo for an AFC East showdown. The Dolphins are hot, having won five of their last six games and are coming off a huge, 21-0, win over the New England Patriots Sunday.

Last week's win at the Meadowlands was about as solid a victory as the Bills have pulled off in a while, with big plays on both sides of the ball. Finally, after several years of mediocrity Bills-Dolphins once again means something. Snow would help, but Buffalo doesn't need it to run the

ball down Miami's throat and make life miserable for Joey Harrington. — Buffalo 27, Miami 13. *Ken Bartolotta, Lifestyles Reporter (10-3)*

The Bills worked together and caught a few good breaks, putting them in a winning advantage Sunday against the Jets. This upcoming weekend against Miami should be another adrenaline rush for the Buffalo Bills fans. With cold weather and winter flurries, the Miami Dolphins will be no match for our boys. — Buffalo 28, Miami 17. *Jill Schmelzer, Lifestyles Coordinator (9-4)*

The Buffalo Bills played their

most complete game of the season against the New York Jets Sunday. The winner of this Sunday's game versus Miami will see its playoff dreams ended and the winner will still have some glimmer of hope. Right now, the Bills have bigger playmakers than Miami, and the Dolphins typically struggle in Buffalo in December. I would look for a lot of balls through the air and another big performance from Lee Evans Sunday. — Buffalo 28, Miami 14. *Chris Gordon, Orchard Park Editor (9-4)*

As I have said for the past three years of doing this column, I hate

Miami. I can't find one redeeming quality about the team, which is primarily based on their "awesome" uniforms. Look for J.P. Losman and company to capitalize on this past weekend's rout of the New York Jets. My boy Aaron Schobel is going to rack at least two more sacks on Joey Harrington and the Bills will win this game. — Buffalo 28, Miami 6. *Nick Primerano, Ken-Ton Editor (8-5)*

Both Buffalo and Miami have come close to righting their respective ships after slow starts to the season. And with the game taking place in Buffalo, not even the NFL's

indecision about the game's starting time will derail the Bills. Buffalo will even out its overall record by getting the best of its division rival behind another solid outing by J.P. Losman and co. — Buffalo 27, Miami 17. *Jason Nadolinski, Sports Reporter (8-5)*

Buffalo is playing well, but I'm waiting for the wheels to come off, and that might happen against Miami, who just blew out the Patriots. Expect Buffalo to put up a spirited effort but come up short. Look for the Dolphins' Jason Taylor to make a key defensive play. — Miami 24, Buffalo 23. *Patrick Nagy, Sports Reporter (7-6)*

The Bills are doing exactly what coach Dick Jauron wanted them to do, play its best football at the end of the season. The improvement is noticeable, especially with quarterback J.P. Losman and the offensive line. Look for the Bills to have a big defensive game against Miami and come out with another win. — Buffalo 30, Miami 17. *Matt Krueger, Sports Reporter (7-6)*

Tigers' hockey surprise Timon with strong effort

Freshman Sean Smith made 29 saves and junior Matt Allwes scored his second goal of the season as the Tigers battled Bish-

op Timon-St. Jude to a 4-1 loss Saturday on the Amherst Pepsi Center's Feature Rink.

Timon got on the board first and

halfway through the second period took a 2-0 lead on the power play.

The Tigers roared back with a power-play goal of their own. The puck caromed around the boards to junior Al McQuiggan. McQuiggan wasted no time and let a powerful slap shot go from the top of the faceoff circle. Allwes went hard to the net and made a beautiful deflection past the Timon goal to cut the lead to one.

"With the new rules this year in the Federation, we've put a lot of emphasis in practice on special teams," said Amherst coach Rich Crozier. "That's two games in a row we've recorded a power-play goal. Our focus is to get as many shots to the net as possible, and that's what Al did. Matty crashed the net and made a real nice play. We needed that goal and it was

great to see the execution carry over from what we have been working on in practice."

The game became very physical and Amherst showed they would not back down. The Tigers played their best period of the game recording 10 shots.

Penalty trouble plagued the Tigers in the third and ruined any chances for a comeback. Smith played very well, especially late in the game.

"By far this was Sean's best game of the season," said Crozier. "For me it comes down to one thing for Sean and that's his focus, something that is not always easy for a freshman. He was very focused and kept us in the game."

The Tigers take on small school division foe Williamsville South Thursday on the Feature Rink.

"Our team has made some progress since the East game," said Crozier. "There is no doubt about that. The effort against St. Francis and Timon was excellent. That's a big positive. What we need to focus on are the small things. First and foremost, finishing our offensive chances. We missed two open nets and rang one off the crossbar. We score on those three alone and we walk out with a tie. Secondly, we need to play more disciplined. We took too many penalties again and the ones late in the game took away our chance to make a comeback."

"That said, the message in the locker room was clear," he continued. "We are headed in the right direction and my team assured me that we will be ready for Thursday's game against South."

Defense

(Continued from page 25)

assists. He assisted Esposito and Paul Campise (power play) on first period goals. Later, he took a Martino assist and beat the South goalie for the puck at 5:01 of the second and scored at 3:42 of the third from Esposito and Manzella. Cardinale also assisted on Campise's goal. Manzella also scored for Sweet Home from Derek Cavalier and Matt Stewart.

Sweet Home outshot South 29-25.

Kevin Cottrell scored South's only goal from Joel Zangara and Kevin Winnert.

Sweet Home (5-0) hosts Ithaca, a top-ranked large school last year, at 8 p.m. Friday on the Feature Rink and plays St. Francis at 1 p.m. Sunday at Buffalo State College.

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