Eagles Outlast Cowboys in Chaotic Season Opener, 24–20

Philadelphia raises Super Bowl banner, overcomes ejection drama and weather delay in NFC East showdown

By Phil Johnson

The NFL could not have scripted a wilder start to the 2025 season. Banner ceremonies, a player ejection six seconds into the game, a weather delay, controversial officiating, and a nail-biting finish — all culminating in the Philadelphia Eagles’ 24–20 victory over the Dallas Cowboys on Thursday night at Lincoln Financial Field.

# Fireworks — and Spit — to Open the Season

The chaos began almost instantly. On the game’s opening drive, Eagles defensive tackle Jalen Carter was ejected just six seconds into the game for spitting on Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott. Television replays appeared inconclusive — with Prescott perhaps spitting toward the ground — but the officials wasted no time in tossing Carter, setting a volatile tone for the night.  
  
Dallas capitalized, punching in a 1-yard touchdown run from Javonte Williams to grab a quick 7–0 lead.

# Hurts, Barkley Fuel First-Half Surge

The defending champion Eagles responded like champions. Jalen Hurts rushed for two first-half touchdowns (from four and eight yards out) while Saquon Barkley added a 10-yard scoring run, giving Philadelphia touchdowns on its first three possessions. That early burst gave them a 21–10 lead and showcased the seamless chemistry between Hurts and Barkley in their first regular-season action together.  
  
Hurts finished the night with 152 passing yards on 19-of-23 efficiency, plus 62 rushing yards and two scores. Barkley contributed 60 yards on the ground with his touchdown.

# Lightning Strikes, Momentum Stalls

Midway through the third quarter, with Philadelphia holding a slim 24–20 lead, a 65-minute lightning delay sent both teams to the locker rooms. The pause killed offensive rhythm for both sides, and what had been a high-tempo shootout turned into a defensive slog.  
  
Penalties also bogged down the game. The Eagles were flagged nine times for 110 yards, while the Cowboys committed four penalties for 42 yards — a discrepancy that frustrated Dallas fans and head coach Brian Schottenheimer alike.

# Cowboys’ Missed Chances

Prescott played a steady but unspectacular game, going 21-of-34 for 188 yards, with no touchdowns or interceptions. His favorite target, CeeDee Lamb, hauled in six catches for 110 yards, routinely exploiting single coverage.  
  
But Dallas failed to capitalize in key moments. Rookie cornerback Quinyon Mitchell’s recovery of a Miles Sanders fumble in the red zone saved the Eagles from surrendering the lead. And with under two minutes remaining, Prescott’s 4th-and-3 pass fell incomplete, ending the Cowboys’ final drive and sealing the Eagles’ win.

# By the Numbers

- Total Yards: Cowboys 307, Eagles 302  
- Yards per Play: Eagles 5.6, Cowboys 5.5  
- Time of Possession: Eagles 34:52, Cowboys 25:08  
- Third-Down Conversions: Eagles 6-of-12 (50%), Cowboys 5-of-12 (41%)

# Takeaways

- Philadelphia proved resilient despite losing Carter and committing double-digit penalties. Hurts’ efficiency and Barkley’s power provided enough cushion to weather the storm.  
- Dallas showed flashes under new coach Brian Schottenheimer but failed to execute late, particularly in the red zone and on fourth down.  
- Officiating and discipline loomed large. The lopsided penalty margin and Carter’s early ejection will likely be talking points all week.

# What’s Next

The Eagles (1–0) continue their title defense on the road next week against the Arizona Cardinals, while the Cowboys (0–1) look to regroup at home versus the New Orleans Saints.  
  
For now, Philadelphia keeps the bragging rights in the NFL’s fiercest rivalry — in a game as chaotic, unpredictable, and dramatic as opening night football could get.