Sports

Photo of the Day |



UConn Men's Soccer goes up against the Bryant Bulldogs at Joseph J. Morrone Stadium in Storrs, Conn., on Tuesday, Oct 6, 2026. The Huskies go into the game with a two-game win streak, looking to keep it going.
PHOTO BY MORGAN BLANCHARD, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Brayden's Breakdown:

How Efton Chism and the wide receiver room can be the key to the Patriots' success

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It took less than one full half of the football season for the New England Patriots to suffer their first major injury blow of the 2026 season. Offseason trade acquisition AJ Brown went down with an ankle injury and is expected to miss a few more weeks before a midseason return.

After backing themselves into a corner with a 1-2 record, Mack Hollins, their best receiver to date this season, went down and could not return on Saturday against the Buffalo Bills. The Patriots needed their other wide receivers to answer and answer they did.

Free agent signing Romeo Doubs hauled in his first two touchdowns as a Patriot while second-year undrafted rookie Efton Chism III had two catches during the final drive, including a clutch one-handed endzone snag to give the Patriots the lead in the final minutes. These two could lead the way for an upstart New England team, and here's how.

After losing to Seattle in the Superbowl, the Pats released veteran Stefon Diggs despite recording a 1,000-yard season in 2025. Then right before the season started, they traded Kayshon Boutte to the Texans even though he was a top receiver last season with 551 yards and six touchdowns.

These two were safety blankets for second-year quarterback Drake Maye as he finished second in MVP voting in 2025. Without Diggs and Boutte to start the season, Maye has really struggled. The former third-overall pick has four touchdowns to seven interceptions on the season while also losing a fumble. His struggles were really highlighted before the game against Buffalo when he went for three touchdowns to just one interception in the big win.

Maye finally started to find his groove thanks in part to Chism and Doubs. With Hollins' availability being uncertain, Maye will have to find some new safety blankets. He has built chemistry with Hunter Henry and Demario Douglas over the past three seasons; their steady presence allows Maye to see familiarity in the field.

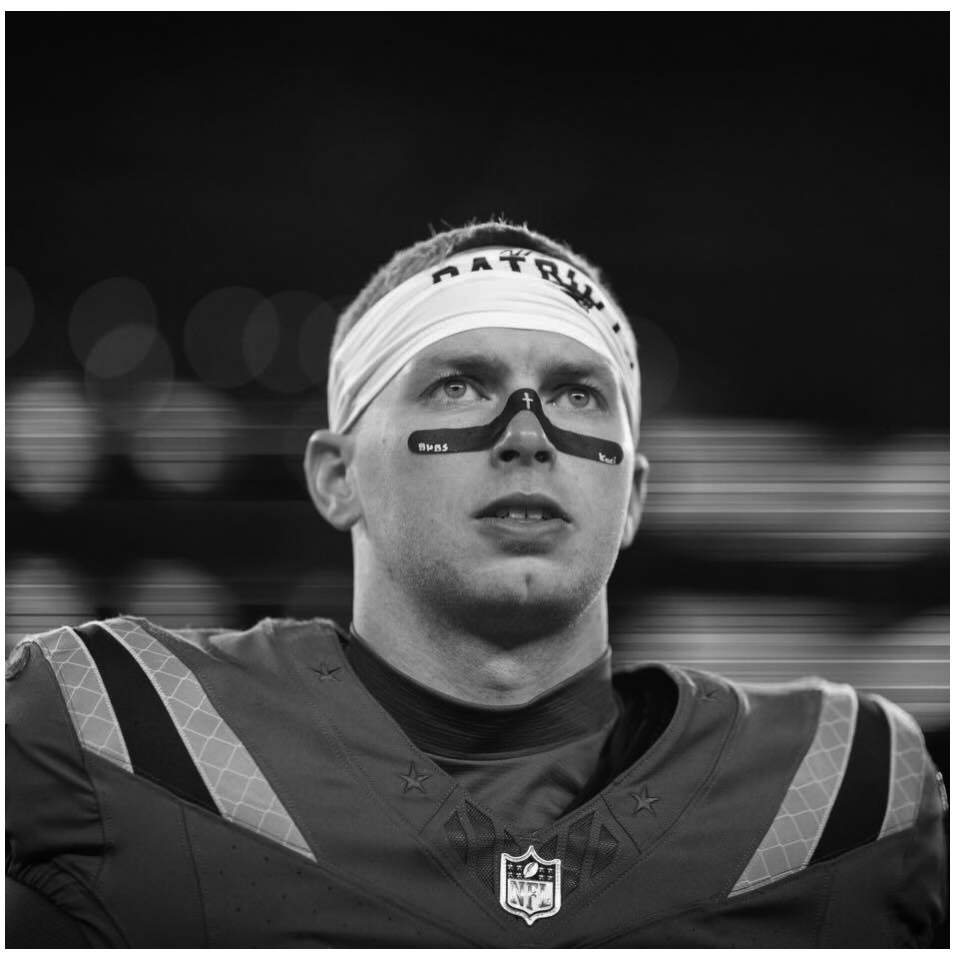
The new guys still need to build a rapport with Maye, but their past might give him some comfort. Doubs caught 21 touchdowns in four seasons with Green Bay while having a career high of 724 receiving yards in 2025. In his last game as a Packer, Doubs had eight catches for 124 yards and a touchdown in Green Bay's playoff loss to the Bears last season. Doubs' ability to rise in the big moments will be very helpful for New England if they want to reach the Superbowl again.

Chism was a monster in college at Eastern Washington. He had almost 4,000 receiving yards in five seasons and 37 career touchdown catches. In his final season of 2024, Chism had 120 catches for 1,311 yards and 13 touchdowns. Hailing from the same school as Cooper Kupp and playing the same role in the Patriots system as guys like Julian Edleman, Wes Welker and Troy Brown, Chism could be relied upon for timely catches like those four have made during their careers. What Chism displayed on Sunday shows he is ready for these moments, and they are sure to happen again this season.

The Patriots defense is always stout so that will keep them in games if the offense is struggling. However, if they can rely on Chism and Doubs to provide while Brown and Hollins are out, they will be able to compete with the rest of the AFC. Add on the running back tandem of Rhamondre Stevenson and TreVeyon Henderson, and New England is right back in the race to lift another Lombardi Trophy.



New England Patriots quarterback Drake Maye runs onto the field. Maye finished second in MVP voting in 2025, but started this season with a struggle.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @DRAKE.MAYE ON INSTAGRAM



New England Patriots player Efton Chism walks on the field. Chism was an accomplished player in college at Eastern Washington.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @EFTON_CHISM ON INSTAGRAM