

# Ryan Broyles thanks Lions after being granted release

**Dave Birkett** Detroit Free Press

After he played just 16 snaps in last week's preseason win over the Jacksonville Jaguars, Ryan Broyles texted Detroit Lions general manager Martin Mayhew and asked if the two could meet Saturday morning to discuss his future.

To Broyles and just about everyone else, it had become painfully obvious things weren't going to work out in Detroit.

Two days after Broyles asked for his release, the Lions accommodated the 27-year-old receiver, waiving him along with eight other players in their first round of cuts.

With 78 players on their roster, the Lions have three transactions left to make Tuesday. They have until 4 p.m. Saturday to reach the 53-man roster limit.

Broyles declined comment about his release by text message Monday, saying he wanted to do his talking through social media.

He posted news of his release on his Facebook and Twitter accounts.

"When one door of happiness closes, another opens," he wrote in part. "Thank you Detroit Lions organization thank you for believing in me from the very beginning. Mayhew, Lewand, Schwartz, Linehan, Jefferson thanks! Coach Caldwell, Lombardi and Prince thank u! I have enjoyed my time here Although, It is time for me to move on there will be a special place in my heart for these memories."

Broyles played just 21 games over three injury-riddled seasons with the Lions after the team took him in the second round of the 2012 six months after he tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee as a senior at Oklahoma.

The NCAA's all-time reception leader at the time, Broyles rehabbed vigorously before the draft and was back playing in games by late September, but he tore the ACL in his right knee in a December loss to the Indianapolis Colts and finished the season on injured reserve.

In 2013, Broyles' season was cut short by a ruptured Achilles tendon, and last year, his first healthy season in the NFL, he appeared in just five games and caught only two passes as the team's fifth receiver.

He had five catches for 48 yards this preseason, and finishes his Lions career with 32 catches for 420 yards and two touchdowns.

"He's a guy that's got talent, there's no question about that, and I'm wishing the best for him," Lions coach Jim Caldwell said. "The guy had some injuries early on, got himself healthy and competed. There's a lot of good competition and there's only a small opportunity to make it happen and so the other guys were able to demonstrate a little better than he did at this particular point in time. But, obviously, the jury's not out on him. I think you'll see he'll land on his feet and do quite well."

A fan favorite who never quite seemed to fit into Caldwell's system, Broyles joins Mikel Leshoure, Titus Young and Louis Delmas as second-round picks under Mayhew who are no longer with the team.

Mayhew has long been advocate of Broyles, and Caldwell indicated Monday that Broyles was given a fair chance to win a job this summer.

"I'm not sure what 'fair shake' means," Caldwell said. "I think last year we had a discussion because he and Golden (Tate) played the same positions so I'm not certain we want to take the ball out of his hands any more than what we did. And then beyond that, this league is kind of built on the opportunities you get. I've been fired a couple times. I'd certainly like to go back and say, 'You know what, I'd like to have a little bit more time.' But it doesn't happen that way. You've got to do with what you have right here and right now and that's what counts, and that's how you're judged."

The Lions will keep four or five receivers when they finalize their 53-man roster. Tate and Calvin Johnson are locked into jobs, Corey Fuller, Lance Moore and Jeremy Ross are considered next in line, and TJ Jones and Greg Salas are among others competing for roster spots.

Along with Broyles, the Lions cut fourth quarterback Garrett Gilbert, running back Desmond Martin (Wayne State), receiver Vernon Johnson, tight end Deon Butler (Central Michigan), cornerbacks Jocquel Skinner and R.J. Stanford, and defensive linemen Roy Philon and Erik Williams on Monday.

They also placed cornerback Chris Owens on injured reserve, and traded kicker Kyle Brindza (Plymouth High) to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers for tight end Tim Wright.

“Like we said it’s going to be some good football players on that list,” Caldwell said. “And that just shows you it’s developing the foundation for a good unit and we’re going to have some more guys that we’re going to have to let go that’s going to be a very, very tough decision.”

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