Here's Vick after January's wild-card game against Green Bay, when his last throw was an ill-advised pass to a covered Riley Cooper.

It takes athletic arrogance, the good kind, to believe that in a game with 22 moving parts, you can be the one that towers above all the rest.

Michael Vick has that kind of confidence, and ability to match, and they make his performances electric. His blend of bravado and talent can turn even other professionals into awestruck fans and make teammates want to follow his lead on the field.

But that competitive swagger has also led to each of Vick's last four interceptions: one in January in the playoffs and three more last week in Pittsburgh.

He wants to make big plays. But at times, he tries to make all of them, even when discretion would be wiser.

Here's Vick after January's wild-card game against Green Bay, when his last throw was an ill-advised pass to a covered Riley Cooper.

"I could have checked it down to the back, and I feel like I got greedy," Vick said then. He added, "For me to make the decision that I made and try to get the big play . . . it's something that I'll have to really work on in the offseason."

The offseason came and went, and here was Vick after throwing three interceptions in four drives last week.

"Once we got down 14-0, I just started pressing the issue," he said, later adding, "I just pressed the issue too hard and wasn't patient."

Notice a theme?

The preseason interceptions in Pittsburgh, of course, mean nothing, while the one in January slammed shut a once-promising season. But they come from the same instinct, and that's a reason for concern heading into a season with huge expectations.

The double-edged nature of Vick's will and skill was neatly captured after his third interception last week, when he made perhaps his best play of the night and worst decision.

As the Steelers' Troy Polamalu danced with the ball, Vick, clearly angry, dived head and shoulder first into the safety's legs to cut him down.

How many other quarterbacks in the NFL have the athleticism to take out Polamalu in the open field? How many have the fire to even try? And how many would let their competitiveness override their judgment and risk injury in a preseason game?

The desire to take on everyone can hurt him and his team.

On the same day Vick threw those three interceptions, he was also answering questions about a just-published GQ interview. Vick seemed eager to do the interview, to embrace the hard-earned trappings of life as a superstar quarterback.

But in the same interview he allowed his defiance of critics who "want to hate me" to put a dent in the narrative he spent so long constructing: that of the contrite former dogfighter who paid a price and simply wanted to move on and score touchdowns.

Vick's comments unnecessarily stirred up a furor that seemed to have finally gone dormant. His desire to keep fighting led to a public-relations misstep.

The GQ article is a media controversy; it will fade. The interceptions are an issue that might not go away unless Vick actually makes the improvements he talked about after last season's bitter end.

No one would argue that Vick should become the kind of quarterback who simply moves the chains and "manages the game."

A Michael Vick who only makes routine plays isn't Michael Vick. The Eagles need the Vick who

attacks defenders and dares them to try to stop him.

But they also need the care Vick showed early last season.

He had no turnovers in his first six games, culminating with his historic showing against the Redskins on *Monday Night Football,* the night he fully reemerged as a star.

The Eagles had many problems down the stretch last year, but one of them was that Vick followed his torrid start with six interceptions in the Eagles last five regular-season games.

Vick, who publicly resisted last year when pressed on improving his blitz reads but entered training camp acknowledging he needed to work on it, struck a softer tone this week when talking about his decision-making.

"Every interception I threw [against Pittsburgh] could have been prevented just by making a better decision," Vick said Tuesday as he prepared for what may be his final preseason tune-up. "I know why I made the mistakes that I made and how I can correct them."

The Eagles hope so.

Despite all of the high-profile acquisitions this summer, the Eagles season still hinges on Vick's health, his arm, his legs, and yes, his head.