

# washington redskins jersey number history

**washington redskins jersey number history** reflects a rich and evolving legacy that parallels the franchise's storied presence in the National Football League. From the early days of the team's inception to its more recent iterations, the jersey numbers worn by Washington players have become iconic symbols representing individual legacies and the franchise's cultural heritage. This article delves into the comprehensive history of Washington Redskins jersey numbers, examining the significance behind the most notable numbers, changes over the decades, and the impact these numbers have had on fans and players alike. It also explores retired numbers, the stories of legendary players associated with specific digits, and how the franchise's identity shaped the tradition surrounding jersey numbers. With a focus on historical context, player profiles, and the evolution of jersey numbering, this article provides a thorough understanding of this unique facet of the Washington Redskins' history. Readers will gain insight into how jersey numbers have contributed to the team's enduring popularity and legacy.

- Evolution of Washington Redskins Jersey Numbers
- Notable Jersey Numbers and Their Legends
- Retired Numbers and Their Significance
- Changes in Jersey Number Policies
- Impact on Fan Culture and Merchandise

## Evolution of Washington Redskins Jersey Numbers

The evolution of washington redskins jersey number history is deeply intertwined with the broader history of the NFL and its changing regulations. Initially, jersey numbers served a basic purpose of identifying players on the field. However, as the sport grew in popularity and complexity, jersey numbers became a critical part of player identity and marketing. The Redskins, founded in 1932, adopted a traditional numbering system that aligned with the NFL's position-based guidelines, which evolved significantly over time. Numbers were assigned according to playing positions, with quarterbacks typically wearing numbers in the single digits or teens, linemen in the 50s and 60s, and skill position players like wide receivers and running backs in the 20s to 40s.

Over the decades, the Washington Redskins jersey number history saw shifts reflecting changes in NFL numbering policies, team traditions, and player preferences. The franchise maintained consistency with numbering patterns but also witnessed exceptions when prominent players chose unique numbers that became emblematic of their careers. The evolution of jersey fabrics, design, and font styles also contributed

to the visual history of Redskins jerseys, illustrating the blend of tradition and modernization.

## **Early Numbering System and Position-Based Assignments**

During the early years of the Washington Redskins, the NFL implemented a system that grouped jersey numbers by player positions to help referees and fans identify players more easily. This system assigned numbers in ranges such as 1–19 for quarterbacks and kickers, 20–49 for defensive backs and running backs, and 50–79 for offensive and defensive linemen. The Redskins followed this convention closely, which helped lay the foundation of their jersey number traditions.

## **Modern Adjustments and Flexibility**

By the late 20th century, the NFL relaxed some restrictions, allowing players more freedom to select numbers outside their traditional ranges. The Washington Redskins embraced these changes, which led to more personalized jersey numbers that reflected player personalities and marketing considerations. This flexibility contributed to the emergence of iconic numbers associated with legendary Redskins players.

## **Notable Jersey Numbers and Their Legends**

The Washington Redskins jersey number history is rich with numbers that have become synonymous with franchise legends. Certain jersey numbers transcend their functional purpose and become iconic symbols of player excellence and team heritage. The Redskins have had many such numbers worn by Hall of Famers and franchise stars, each contributing to the team's legacy.

### **Number 33 – John Riggins**

One of the most celebrated jersey numbers in Redskins history is 33, worn by running back John Riggins. Known for his powerful running style and clutch performances, Riggins played a pivotal role in the Redskins' success during the 1980s, including their Super Bowl XVII victory. His number 33 jersey is one of the most recognized in franchise history and remains a fan favorite.

### **Number 28 – Darrell Green**

Another iconic number is 28, worn by Hall of Fame cornerback Darrell Green. Green's remarkable speed and longevity defined his career with the Redskins, spanning over two decades. His jersey number became a symbol of defensive excellence and resilience, making 28 an integral part of the Washington Redskins jersey number history.

## Number 20 – Sean Taylor

Sean Taylor's number 20 holds a special place in Redskins lore. Known for his aggressive and passionate play as a safety, Taylor's career was tragically cut short, but his impact on the team and fans remains profound. His jersey continues to represent dedication and intensity on the field.

## Other Notable Numbers

- Number 17 – Joe Theismann, celebrated quarterback and Super Bowl champion.
- Number 44 – Bobby Mitchell, a trailblazing running back and wide receiver.
- Number 47 – Chris Cooley, popular tight end known for his consistent play.
- Number 11 – Sonny Jurgensen, Hall of Fame quarterback with a prolific passing career.

## Retired Numbers and Their Significance

The Washington Redskins jersey number history features a select group of retired numbers, honoring players whose contributions were extraordinary. Retiring a jersey number is one of the highest honors a franchise can bestow, permanently associating that number with a player's legacy and ensuring no future player wears it.

## Criteria for Retiring Numbers

The Redskins franchise retires numbers based on a player's impact on the team, career achievements, leadership, and contributions to the community. This practice preserves the memory of exceptional players and cements their place in team history.

## Officially Retired Numbers

Some of the officially retired numbers in Washington Redskins jersey number history include:

1. **Number 7** – Sammy Baugh, one of the NFL's earliest stars and a pioneering quarterback/defensive back.
2. **Number 33** – John Riggins, whose jersey retirement celebrates his Super Bowl heroics and career

achievements.

3. **Number 28** – Darrell Green, honored for his defensive brilliance and dedication to the Redskins.
4. **Number 44** – Bobby Mitchell, recognized for breaking racial barriers and his exceptional play.
5. **Number 56** – Chris Hanburger, a legendary linebacker known for his toughness and leadership.

These retired numbers serve as permanent reminders of the players' legendary status and the franchise's respect for its history.

## Changes in Jersey Number Policies

Throughout the Washington Redskins jersey number history, changes in NFL and team policies have influenced how numbers are assigned and perceived. The NFL's evolving numbering rules and the Redskins' internal decisions have shaped the jersey number landscape over time.

## NFL Numbering Rule Changes

The NFL has periodically updated rules governing jersey numbers to improve clarity and enhance player identification. Notably, in recent years, the NFL relaxed position-based restrictions, allowing a wider range of numbers for different positions. This flexibility allowed the Redskins to accommodate player preferences and marketing opportunities.

## Washington Redskins Specific Practices

The Redskins have also developed unique traditions regarding jersey numbers, including allocating certain numbers to franchise captains or star players. The team's policies have occasionally allowed exceptions to standard NFL guidelines, reflecting the franchise's commitment to honoring player legacies and preferences.

## Impact on Fan Culture and Merchandise

The Washington Redskins jersey number history has had a significant impact on fan culture and merchandise sales. Jersey numbers are a key element in how fans connect with players and express their support for the team. Popular numbers associated with franchise legends often drive merchandise demand and foster a sense of identity among supporters.

## **Fan Identification and Loyalty**

Wearing a player's jersey number allows fans to express admiration and loyalty. Numbers like 33, 28, and 20 have become symbols of pride for Redskins fans, representing some of the franchise's most beloved figures. This connection enhances the fan experience and strengthens community bonds.

## **Merchandising and Marketing**

The Redskins' use of iconic jersey numbers has also played a vital role in merchandising strategies. Replica jerseys featuring historic numbers remain popular among collectors and fans alike. The franchise has leveraged these numbers in marketing campaigns to celebrate its heritage and foster engagement.

## **Legacy Through Numbers**

Jersey numbers contribute to preserving the Washington Redskins jersey number history by keeping the stories of past legends alive. Through numbers, fans and players share a continuous link to the team's rich past, ensuring that the legacy of iconic players endures beyond their playing days.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the history behind the Washington Redskins jersey numbers?**

The Washington Redskins, now known as the Washington Commanders, have a rich history of jersey numbers that have been worn by some of the franchise's greatest players. Over the years, certain numbers have become iconic due to the achievements of players who wore them.

### **Which Washington Redskins jersey numbers have been retired?**

The Washington Redskins have retired a few jersey numbers to honor their legendary players, including number 7 for quarterback Joe Theismann, number 33 for running back John Riggins, and number 28 for running back Larry Brown.

### **Who are some notable players associated with specific Washington Redskins jersey numbers?**

Notable players include Joe Theismann (No. 7), John Riggins (No. 44), Darrell Green (No. 28), and Art Monk (No. 81). Each of these players made significant contributions to the team while wearing their respective numbers.

## Have any Washington Redskins jersey numbers been reused by multiple famous players?

Yes, some jersey numbers have been worn by multiple notable players over the years. For example, number 28 was famously worn by both running back Larry Brown and cornerback Darrell Green, both Hall of Famers.

## How has the Washington Redskins jersey numbering system changed over time?

The Washington Redskins followed the NFL's standard numbering system, assigning numbers based on player positions. While the system remained mostly consistent, certain numbers gained special significance due to the legacy of the players who wore them, leading to some numbers being retired or rarely issued.

## Additional Resources

### 1. *The Legacy of Numbers: Washington Redskins Jersey History*

This book delves into the rich history of the Washington Redskins' jersey numbers, exploring the stories behind the players who wore them. It highlights iconic numbers and the legends who made them famous, providing fans with a nostalgic journey through the team's past. Detailed player profiles and memorable game moments are featured throughout.

### 2. *Numbers of Glory: The Washington Redskins' Jersey Legends*

"Numbers of Glory" offers an in-depth look at the most celebrated jersey numbers in Washington Redskins history. From Hall of Famers to fan favorites, the book uncovers how these numbers became symbols of excellence and pride for the franchise. It also examines the cultural and emotional significance of jersey numbers in football.

### 3. *Redskins Jerseys: A Symbol of Heritage and Honor*

This book traces the evolution of the Washington Redskins jerseys, focusing on the significance of each number worn by key players. It provides historical context for changes in design and number assignments, alongside anecdotes from players and coaches. Readers gain insight into how jersey numbers contribute to team identity and legacy.

### 4. *From 32 to 21: Iconic Washington Redskins Jersey Numbers*

Highlighting some of the most iconic jersey numbers, this book recounts the careers of legendary Redskins players who defined their eras. It examines how their jersey numbers became synonymous with skill, leadership, and dedication. The narrative includes interviews, statistics, and rare photographs.

### 5. *Redskins Number Retirements: Honoring the Greats*

Focusing on the Washington Redskins' tradition of retiring jersey numbers, this book honors the players

who left an indelible mark on the franchise. It details the stories behind each retired number and the ceremonies that celebrated these legends. The book serves as a tribute to the players' achievements and contributions to the team.

#### 6. *The Story Behind the Numbers: Washington Redskins Edition*

This comprehensive guide explores the personal stories and careers associated with each jersey number in Redskins history. It reveals how numbers influenced player identities and fan connections. The book also covers lesser-known players whose numbers hold special meaning.

#### 7. *Washington Redskins: Jerseys Through the Decades*

Covering the visual and cultural shifts in Redskins jerseys over the decades, this book includes a focus on how player numbers were assigned and their impact on team culture. It showcases changes in jersey style alongside player milestones connected to their numbers. The book is rich with archival images and fan testimonials.

#### 8. *Gridiron Numbers: The Washington Redskins' Player Legacy*

"Gridiron Numbers" examines the jersey numbers of standout Redskins players and how those numbers have become emblematic of their legacy. The book highlights player achievements and memorable seasons marked by specific numbers. It also discusses the significance of numbers in football traditions.

#### 9. *The Washington Redskins Number Chronicles*

This book chronicles the history of every jersey number worn by the Washington Redskins, offering detailed accounts of the players behind them. It serves as a comprehensive reference for fans interested in the team's numerical heritage. The book combines statistics, player biographies, and historical context to tell the full story of Redskins jersey numbers.

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