

washington redskins qb history

washington redskins qb history presents a fascinating journey through one of the National Football League's most storied franchises. The quarterback position for the Washington Redskins has seen a blend of legendary talents, transitional figures, and emerging stars over the decades. This article explores the evolution of the team's signal-callers, highlighting key players who have defined eras and shaped the franchise's identity. From the early pioneers to modern-day quarterbacks, the history of Washington's QBs reflects changing strategies, personnel challenges, and moments of glory. Examining statistics, career milestones, and the impact on team success provides a comprehensive understanding of the Washington Redskins QB history. This overview also contextualizes the quarterbacks' roles within the broader narrative of the franchise's development, including playoff runs and Super Bowl appearances. The following sections delve into distinct periods and notable quarterbacks who have left an indelible mark on the Redskins' legacy.

- Early Years and Foundational Quarterbacks
- The Sonny Jurgensen Era
- The Joe Theismann Legacy
- Transition and Instability in the 1990s and 2000s
- The Robert Griffin III Phenomenon
- Recent Quarterbacks and Current Outlook

Early Years and Foundational Quarterbacks

The Washington Redskins, established in 1932, initially relied on several quarterbacks who laid the groundwork for the franchise's offensive identity. During these formative years, the quarterback role was evolving across the NFL, and Washington's QBs reflected a mix of ruggedness and versatility. These early signal-callers were instrumental in establishing team culture and competitiveness in the league's earlier decades.

Sammy Baugh: The Pioneer

Sammy Baugh stands as one of the most influential quarterbacks in Washington Redskins history and NFL lore. Playing from 1937 to 1952, Baugh revolutionized the passing game with his exceptional accuracy and arm strength. He was a key contributor to multiple championship teams and was known for his ability to throw, punt, and play defensive back. Baugh's impact extended beyond statistics; he helped popularize the forward pass and set franchise records that lasted for decades.

Other Early Contributors

Besides Baugh, quarterbacks like Frank Filchock and Dutch Bergman played pivotal roles during the 1930s and 1940s. Although their tenures were shorter and less decorated, they contributed to the team's competitive presence. These players operated in a time when the NFL was less pass-oriented, making their performances significant within the context of the era.

- Sammy Baugh (1937-1952)
- Frank Filchock (1936-1941)
- Dutch Bergman (brief appearances in the 1930s)

The Sonny Jurgensen Era

Sonny Jurgensen's tenure with the Redskins, spanning from 1964 to 1974, marked a golden age for the franchise's passing attack. Known for his strong arm and improvisational skills, Jurgensen became one of the league's premier quarterbacks, earning multiple Pro Bowl selections and setting impressive passing records. His style of play elevated the Redskins' offense and laid the foundation for future quarterbacks in the organization.

Statistical Achievements

During his career with Washington, Jurgensen accumulated over 25,000 passing yards and more than 170 touchdown passes. He led the league in passing yards multiple times and was recognized for his ability to read defenses and deliver accurate throws under pressure. His contributions were critical in maintaining the Redskins as a competitive force throughout the 1960s and early 1970s.

Legacy and Influence

Jurgensen's legacy extends beyond numbers; he helped modernize the Redskins' aerial attack and positioned the franchise as an offensive innovator. His influence can be seen in subsequent generations of quarterbacks who aspired to combine arm talent with tactical awareness.

The Joe Theismann Legacy

Joe Theismann, who led Washington from 1976 to 1985, is another iconic figure in the Redskins' quarterback history. His era is often remembered for the team's resurgence and eventual Super Bowl success. Theismann combined leadership, durability, and a strong skill set that helped the Redskins reach new heights during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Super Bowl XVII Champion

Theismann's career highlight was guiding Washington to victory in Super Bowl XVII against the Miami Dolphins. His performance in that season and throughout his career earned him Pro Bowl honors and cemented his status as a franchise legend. Theismann's ability to manage games and execute in critical moments defined his time as the team's starter.

Career Highlights and Challenges

Over ten seasons, Theismann threw for over 25,000 yards and 160 touchdowns. However, his career was tragically cut short by a severe leg injury in 1985. Despite this, his contributions to the Redskins' success remain integral to the team's history.

- Super Bowl XVII MVP-level leadership
- Pro Bowl selections in 1982 and 1983
- Durability and consistent performance

Transition and Instability in the 1990s and 2000s

The 1990s and early 2000s were marked by quarterback volatility for Washington. Following Theismann's departure, the team struggled to find a long-term answer at the position, leading to a series of short-term starters and inconsistent play. Despite intermittent success, this period lacked the stability seen in earlier decades.

Mark Rypien and Super Bowl XXVI

Mark Rypien provided a bright spot by leading the Redskins to a Super Bowl XXVI victory in 1991. His strong arm and playoff performances earned him the Super Bowl MVP award, highlighting his critical role in the franchise's championship history. However, injuries and performance issues limited his long-term impact.

Other Quarterbacks of the Era

This period featured numerous quarterbacks including Gus Frerotte, Brad Johnson, and Trent Green, none of whom secured a lasting starting role. The frequent turnover hindered offensive continuity and contributed to fluctuating team success.

- Mark Rypien (1988-1993)
- Gus Frerotte (1994-1999)

- Brad Johnson (1999–2000)
- Trent Green (2001)

The Robert Griffin III Phenomenon

Robert Griffin III, drafted in 2012, brought renewed excitement to the Redskins' quarterback position. His dynamic playing style combined athleticism with passing ability, capturing national attention and earning the Offensive Rookie of the Year award. Griffin's electrifying performances briefly revived the franchise's hopes for sustained success.

Rookie Season and Impact

Griffin's rookie year featured a remarkable blend of rushing yards and passing efficiency, leading Washington to the playoffs. His dual-threat capability redefined expectations for the team's offense and energized the fan base.

Injuries and Career Challenges

Despite a promising start, injuries curtailed Griffin's career trajectory. Recurring knee problems and inconsistent play led to reduced playing time and eventual replacement by other quarterbacks. Nonetheless, his tenure remains a memorable chapter in Washington Redskins QB history.

Recent Quarterbacks and Current Outlook

The most recent era of Washington quarterbacks has been characterized by ongoing efforts to stabilize the position. The franchise has cycled through several starters while searching for a long-term leader capable of returning Washington to playoff contention. This phase reflects broader challenges within the team's roster and coaching strategies.

Kirk Cousins and Development

Kirk Cousins emerged as a notable starter for Washington beginning in 2012. Although initially a backup, he secured the starting role and delivered solid statistical performances. Cousins demonstrated consistent passing yardage and touchdown production, though the team often struggled to translate those efforts into postseason success.

Current and Emerging Talent

Washington continues to evaluate quarterback prospects through the draft and free agency. The organization's focus remains on identifying a franchise quarterback who can lead the team into a

new era of competitiveness. Recent drafts and acquisitions suggest a commitment to building around the quarterback position strategically.

- Kirk Cousins (2012-2017)
- Dwayne Haskins (2019-2020)
- Taylor Heinicke (2020-present)

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was the first starting quarterback for the Washington Redskins?

The first starting quarterback for the Washington Redskins was Sammy Baugh, who began playing for the team in 1937.

Which Washington Redskins quarterback has the most passing yards in franchise history?

Kirk Cousins holds the record for the most passing yards in Washington Redskins franchise history.

Who was the Washington Redskins quarterback during their Super Bowl wins?

Joe Theismann was the quarterback during the Redskins' Super Bowl XVII win, and Doug Williams was the quarterback for their Super Bowl XXII victory.

How many Pro Bowl selections did Washington Redskins quarterbacks have historically?

Washington Redskins quarterbacks have earned numerous Pro Bowl selections, with notable players like Sammy Baugh, Joe Theismann, and Mark Rypien receiving multiple honors.

Which Washington Redskins quarterback threw the most touchdown passes in a single season?

Mark Rypien threw the most touchdown passes in a single season for the Redskins, with 28 touchdowns in the 1991 season.

Has any Washington Redskins quarterback been inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame?

Yes, Sammy Baugh, a legendary Redskins quarterback, was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1963.

Who succeeded Kirk Cousins as the Washington Redskins starting quarterback?

After Kirk Cousins, Washington drafted Dwayne Haskins in 2019 to be the starting quarterback.

What was the impact of Joe Theismann on Redskins quarterback history?

Joe Theismann had a significant impact as he led the Redskins to a Super Bowl victory, was a two-time Pro Bowler, and set several franchise records during his tenure.

Have any Washington Redskins quarterbacks come from notable college programs?

Yes, many Washington quarterbacks came from notable college programs, including Kirk Cousins from Michigan State and Joe Theismann from Notre Dame.

How has the Washington Redskins quarterback position evolved over the decades?

The Redskins quarterback position evolved from the pioneering passing of Sammy Baugh in the 1930s, through the franchise's Super Bowl-winning eras with Joe Theismann and Doug Williams, to more recent quarterbacks like Kirk Cousins and Dwayne Haskins who reflect the modern NFL's emphasis on passing offense.

Additional Resources

1. "The Legacy of Redskins Quarterbacks: From Sonny Jurgensen to Alex Smith"

This book dives into the rich history of Washington Redskins quarterbacks, chronicling the evolution of the position within the franchise. It highlights the careers and impacts of iconic players such as Sonny Jurgensen, Joe Theismann, and Alex Smith, exploring their leadership and memorable moments. Readers gain insight into how these quarterbacks shaped the team's identity over the decades.

2. "Joe Theismann: The Heart of the Washington Redskins"

Focusing on the legendary Joe Theismann, this biography covers his rise to prominence and his pivotal role in the Redskins' success during the late 1970s and 1980s. The book details his playing style, leadership qualities, and the famous injury that ended his career. It also reflects on his contributions to the team's culture and legacy.

3. *"Sonny Jurgensen: Redskins' Passing Pioneer"*

This book celebrates Sonny Jurgensen, one of the greatest quarterbacks in Redskins history. It explores his record-setting passing achievements and his influence on the team's offensive strategies. Through interviews and game analyses, readers discover how Jurgensen's talent and charisma helped elevate the franchise.

4. *"Kirk Cousins and the Modern Redskins Quarterback Era"*

Covering the recent years of Washington's quarterback history, this book examines Kirk Cousins' tenure with the franchise. It discusses his development, statistical milestones, and the challenges he faced leading the team. The narrative also touches on the changing dynamics of the NFL quarterback role in the modern era.

5. *"The Quarterback Carousel: Washington Redskins' Search for Stability"*

This title explores the various quarterbacks who have played for the Redskins during periods of transition and uncertainty. It analyzes the team's efforts to find a franchise quarterback and the impact of frequent changes under center. The book provides a comprehensive overview of the struggles and hopes tied to the position.

6. *"Doug Williams: Breaking Barriers as a Redskins Quarterback"*

This biography highlights Doug Williams, the first African American quarterback to win a Super Bowl, leading the Redskins to victory in Super Bowl XXII. The book details his career, challenges, and historic achievements, emphasizing his role in breaking racial barriers in professional football. It is an inspiring story of perseverance and triumph.

7. *"Mark Rypien and the Redskins' Super Bowl Glory"*

Focusing on Mark Rypien's journey, this book recounts his leadership in securing the Redskins' Super Bowl XXVI championship. It delves into his playing style, key games, and the team dynamics during his peak years. The narrative celebrates his place in Redskins lore as a Super Bowl-winning quarterback.

8. *"John Riggins and the Quarterback Connection: Redskins' Offensive Powerhouse"*

While primarily a running back, John Riggins' relationship with Redskins quarterbacks is central to this book's theme. It explores how the synergy between Riggins and his quarterbacks helped define the Redskins' offensive success in the 1980s. The book provides a unique perspective on quarterback history through the lens of offensive teamwork.

9. *"From Sammy Baugh to Today: The Evolution of Washington's Signal Callers"*

This comprehensive history traces the Redskins' quarterbacks from the early days with Sammy Baugh through the latest players. It highlights changes in playing style, coaching philosophies, and the franchise's adaptation to the evolving NFL landscape. Readers receive a broad view of how the quarterback position has developed within the team.

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