

Dallas Cowboys Postseason History



Dallas Cowboys postseason history is a captivating saga filled with triumphs, heartbreaks, and iconic moments that have shaped not only the franchise but the entire landscape of professional football. As one of the most storied teams in the NFL, the Cowboys have a rich postseason legacy that spans several decades, showcasing a blend of exceptional talent and remarkable coaching. This article delves into the Dallas Cowboys' postseason history, highlighting key moments, notable players, and their overall impact on the NFL.

Early Years and First Playoff Appearance

The Dallas Cowboys were established in 1960, and their journey to postseason prominence began with their first playoff appearance in 1966. Coached by Tom Landry, the team quickly developed a reputation for its strong defense and innovative offense.

The 1966 NFL Championship Game

In their inaugural playoff season, the Cowboys faced the Green Bay Packers in the NFL Championship Game. The game was a hard-fought battle that ended in a 34-27 loss for the Cowboys, but it laid the groundwork for the team's future success in the postseason.

The 1970s: The Rise of America's Team

The 1970s marked a turning point in the Dallas Cowboys' postseason history. The team became known as "America's Team," thanks to its growing fan base and consistent success.

Super Bowl Appearances

During this decade, the Cowboys reached the Super Bowl three times:

1. Super Bowl V (1970): The Cowboys faced the Baltimore Colts but lost 16-13 in a game marked by turnovers.
2. Super Bowl VI (1972): A redemption story, the Cowboys defeated the Miami Dolphins 24-3, claiming their first championship.
3. Super Bowl XII (1978): The Cowboys triumphed again, this time against the Denver Broncos, winning 27-10.

Key Players of the 1970s

The success of the Cowboys during this era can be attributed to legendary players, including:

- Roger Staubach: The quarterback known for his leadership and clutch performances.
- Bob Lilly: A dominant defensive tackle and the first player ever drafted by the Cowboys.
- Tony Dorsett: A game-changing running back who would later lead the team to its next Super Bowl victory.

The 1980s: A Decade of Frustration

The 1980s were a rollercoaster for the Cowboys, marked by ups and downs in postseason success.

Playoff Appearances and Near Misses

The Cowboys made several playoff appearances but struggled to reach the Super Bowl:

- 1981: Lost in the NFC Championship Game to the San Francisco 49ers.
- 1982: Another NFC Championship loss, this time to the Washington Redskins.
- 1985: The Cowboys fell short in the divisional round against the 49ers.

Despite the disappointments, the team remained competitive, showcasing talents like running back Tony Dorsett and wide receiver Drew Pearson.

The 1990s: The Glory Years

The 1990s signified the Cowboys' return to prominence, as they became a dominant force in the NFL, winning three Super Bowls in four years.

Super Bowl Victories

The Cowboys' success in the 1990s can be highlighted by their Super Bowl victories:

1. Super Bowl XXVII (1993): A dominant 52-17 victory over the Buffalo Bills.
2. Super Bowl XXVIII (1994): A more challenging match, the Cowboys triumphed 30-13 against the Bills again.
3. Super Bowl XXX (1995): The Cowboys secured their third championship in four years with a 27-17 win over the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Key Figures of the 1990s

The success of the Cowboys during this era can be credited to:

- Troy Aikman: The quarterback who led the Cowboys to their Super Bowl victories.
- Emmitt Smith: The all-time leading rusher who was crucial in the Cowboys' offensive strategy.
- Michael Irvin: A dynamic wide receiver who provided Aikman with a reliable target.

2000s to Present: Ups and Downs

Following the 1990s success, the Cowboys experienced a mix of playoff appearances and frustrating exits.

Notable Playoff Runs

The Cowboys returned to the playoffs several times in the 2000s:

- 2003: Lost in the wildcard round to the Carolina Panthers.
- 2007: A strong season ended in disappointment with a divisional round loss to the New York Giants.
- 2014: The Cowboys made a notable run, reaching the divisional round but falling to the Green Bay Packers in a controversial game.

Recent Developments

In recent years, the Cowboys have been rebuilding, focusing on young talent such as quarterback Dak Prescott and running back Ezekiel Elliott. Their recent playoff appearances include:

- 2016: The Cowboys reached the divisional round but lost to the Green Bay Packers.
- 2018: A wildcard victory against the Seattle Seahawks, followed by a loss to the Los Angeles Rams in the divisional round.

Impact on the NFL and Legacy

The Dallas Cowboys' postseason history has left an indelible mark on the NFL. Known for their significant fan base, the Cowboys have contributed to the league's popularity and growth. Their success has inspired countless players and coaches, and their brand has become synonymous with excellence in football.

Future Prospects

As the Cowboys continue to build their roster and refine their strategies, fans remain hopeful for a return to Super Bowl glory. With a strong mix of veteran leadership and young talent, the Cowboys are poised to make a significant impact in the coming seasons.

Conclusion

The **Dallas Cowboys postseason history** is a tale of resilience, glory, and evolution. From their early playoff experiences to their dominant 1990s, the Cowboys have experienced both highs and lows. With a rich legacy and a dedicated fan base, the team continues to be an integral part of the NFL narrative. As they strive for future success, the Cowboys will undoubtedly continue to make history in the postseason for years to come.

Frequently Asked Questions

What year did the Dallas Cowboys last appear in the Super Bowl?

The Dallas Cowboys last appeared in the Super Bowl in the 1995 season, where they defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XXX.

How many Super Bowl championships have the Dallas Cowboys won?

The Dallas Cowboys have won a total of five Super Bowl championships, with victories in the years 1971, 1977, 1992, 1993, and 1995.

What is the Cowboys' all-time playoff record?

As of the end of the 2022 season, the Dallas Cowboys have an all-time playoff record of 35 wins and 30 losses.

Who is the all-time leading passer for the Cowboys in the

postseason?

Troy Aikman is the all-time leading passer for the Dallas Cowboys in the postseason, with 3,449 passing yards.

Which player holds the record for most rushing yards in a single postseason for the Cowboys?

Emmitt Smith holds the record for most rushing yards in a single postseason for the Dallas Cowboys, with 478 yards in the 1992 playoffs.

When was the last time the Cowboys reached the NFC Championship Game?

The last time the Dallas Cowboys reached the NFC Championship Game was in the 1995 season, where they defeated the Green Bay Packers.

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