

# Jacksonville Jaguars Quarterbacks History



Jacksonville Jaguars quarterbacks history is a rich and diverse narrative that reflects the evolution of the team since its inception in 1995. Throughout the years, the Jaguars have seen a variety of signal-callers take the reins, each contributing to the team's identity in unique ways. From early franchise leaders to modern-day challengers, the quarterbacks of the Jaguars have played pivotal roles both on and off the field.

## Formation of the Franchise

The Jacksonville Jaguars were established in 1993 as part of the NFL's expansion to bring more teams to the league. By 1995, they began play and quickly became competitive, making their mark in the AFC. The need for a reliable quarterback was immediate, setting the stage for several key players in the franchise's history.

## Early Years (1995-1999)

### 1. Mark Brunell (1995-2003)

- Role: Starting Quarterback

- Achievements:

- Brunell was the first starting quarterback for the Jaguars and led the team through its formative years.

- He made three Pro Bowl appearances (1997, 1999, 2000) and was instrumental in leading the Jaguars to their first playoff appearance in 1996.

- In 1999, he helped the Jaguars reach the AFC Championship Game, showcasing his skills and composure under pressure.

### 2. Other Quarterbacks:

- Rob Johnson (1997-1999)
- Played as a backup to Brunell but had a notable stint, especially in the 1997 season.
- Steve Beuerlein (1999)
- Served as a veteran presence toward the end of his career, though his impact was limited.

## **The Turn of the Century (2000-2009)**

As the new millennium approached, the Jaguars experienced ups and downs, including coaching changes and fluctuating performance. The quarterback position was pivotal during this time.

### **Quarterback Carousel**

#### **1. Byron Leftwich (2003-2006)**

- Role: Starting Quarterback
- Achievements:
  - Selected 7th overall in the 2003 NFL Draft, Leftwich brought a strong arm and an imposing physical presence.
  - He became the starter in his rookie season and quickly earned respect, leading the Jaguars to several winning seasons.
  - Leftwich's tenure was marked by injuries but also by moments of brilliance and potential, particularly in the 2005 season when he threw for over 3,000 yards.

#### **2. David Garrard (2002-2010)**

- Role: Backup and later Starter
- Achievements:
  - Garrard initially served as Leftwich's backup but eventually took over as the starter.
  - In 2007, he had a breakout season, recording a career-high 18 touchdown passes and leading the team to the playoffs.
  - He became known for his mobility and ability to make plays outside the pocket.

#### **3. Other Notable Quarterbacks:**

- Quinn Gray (2007-2008)
  - Had a brief period as a starter, showcasing his potential during injuries to Leftwich and Garrard.
- Luke McCown (2004-2006, 2008)
  - Played sparingly but contributed during his time with the team.

## **Struggles and Rebuilding (2010-2016)**

The years following Garrard's departure were challenging for the Jaguars. The franchise struggled to find stability at the quarterback position.

# Challenges in the Quarterback Room

## 1. Blaine Gabbert (2011-2013)

- Role: Starting Quarterback
- Achievements:
  - Drafted 10th overall in 2011, Gabbert faced immediate pressure to perform.
  - His time with the Jaguars was marred by inconsistency and injuries, leading to a lack of success.
  - Despite flashes of talent, he struggled to adapt to the NFL's pace, ultimately leading to his release.

## 2. Chad Henne (2012-2014)

- Role: Backup and Starter
- Achievements:
  - Henne played a key role during Gabbert's struggles and started several games himself.
  - His experience provided some stability, but the team continued to face challenges.

## 3. Other Quarterbacks:

- Blake Bortles (2014-2018)
  - Drafted 3rd overall in 2014, Bortles became the starting quarterback and led the team to the playoffs in 2017.
  - He had mixed performances over his tenure, leading to debates about his long-term viability.
- Kirk Cousins (2018)
  - Briefly joined the Jaguars but was primarily a backup.

# The Rise and Fall of Blake Bortles (2014-2018)

Bortles' era was a rollercoaster ride for Jaguars fans, filled with high hopes and crushing disappointments.

## 2017 Playoff Run

### 1. Breakout Season:

- Bortles had a career year in 2017, throwing for over 3,600 yards and leading the Jaguars to a surprising playoff run.
- The team reached the AFC Championship Game, where they faced the New England Patriots, falling just short of the Super Bowl.

### 2. Inconsistency:

- Following the 2017 season, Bortles struggled with accuracy and decision-making, leading to fluctuating performances and ultimately being released in 2019.

## Recent Developments (2019-Present)

The Jaguars have continued to search for a franchise quarterback, leading to the drafting of Trevor Lawrence.

## **Trevor Lawrence Era (2021-Present)**

### **1. Drafting Lawrence:**

- The Jaguars held the first overall pick in the 2021 NFL Draft and selected Lawrence, a highly touted prospect from Clemson.**
- His arrival brought renewed hope for the franchise, with expectations for him to develop into a franchise cornerstone.**

### **2. Early Career:**

- Lawrence faced the usual rookie struggles in 2021 but showed flashes of brilliance, particularly in the second half of the season.**
- In 2022, under head coach Doug Pederson, Lawrence displayed significant growth, leading the team to a playoff berth and earning respect around the league.**

### **3. Future Outlook:**

- As of 2023, Lawrence is viewed as a potential elite quarterback in the NFL, with the Jaguars building around him to maximize their chances for success.**

## **Conclusion**

**The Jacksonville Jaguars quarterbacks history is a testament to the challenges and triumphs of an expanding franchise in the NFL. From Mark Brunell's early leadership to the promise of Trevor Lawrence, the team has experienced a wide spectrum of performances and personalities under center. As the Jaguars look to the future, the lessons learned from past quarterbacks will undoubtedly shape the team's trajectory, providing a foundation for success in the years to come. As the**

**franchise continues to evolve, the hope is that the next chapter will be filled with achievements and milestones worthy of the Jaguars' passionate fanbase.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Who was the first starting quarterback for the Jacksonville Jaguars?**

**The first starting quarterback for the Jacksonville Jaguars was Mark Brunell, who played for the team from its inception in 1995 until 2003.**

**Which Jacksonville Jaguars quarterback holds the franchise record for most passing yards?**

**As of 2023, Mark Brunell holds the franchise record for most passing yards, with over 25,000 yards during his tenure.**

**Who was the first Jaguars quarterback to lead the team to the playoffs?**

**Mark Brunell was the first Jaguars quarterback to lead the team to the playoffs, achieving this feat in the 1996 season.**

**Which quarterback was known for his dual-threat capabilities during his time with the Jaguars?**

**David Garrard, who played for the Jaguars from 2002 to 2010, was known for his dual-threat capabilities as both a passer and a runner.**

**What significant achievement did Blake Bortles accomplish during his time as Jaguars quarterback?**

**Blake Bortles led the Jaguars to the AFC Championship game in the 2017 season, marking the team's deepest playoff run**

**since its inception.**

**Who is the Jaguars' all-time leader in touchdown passes thrown?**

**Blake Bortles is the Jaguars' all-time leader in touchdown passes thrown, recording 103 touchdowns during his career with the team.**

**What year did the Jaguars draft Trevor Lawrence?**

**The Jacksonville Jaguars drafted Trevor Lawrence as the first overall pick in the 2021 NFL Draft.**

**How did the tenure of Nick Foles with the Jaguars end?**

**Nick Foles' tenure with the Jaguars ended after just one season in 2019, as he was injured early in the season and later traded to the Chicago Bears in 2020.**

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