

New Orleans Saints Qb History



New Orleans Saints QB History is a fascinating journey through the evolution of one of the most storied franchises in the National Football League (NFL). The New Orleans Saints, founded in 1967, have had a rich and varied history, particularly at the quarterback position. From early struggles to Super Bowl glory, the Saints' quarterback lineage has played a pivotal role in shaping the team's identity and success. This article will explore the most significant quarterbacks in the team's history, their contributions, and how they have helped to define the franchise.

Early Years: The Struggle for Identity (1967-1978)

The New Orleans Saints' journey began in 1967 when they were established as an expansion team. The early years were marked by inconsistency and challenges, particularly at the quarterback position. The Saints used a variety of quarterbacks during this period, with little success.

First Quarterbacks

1. Rookie Era (1967-1975):

- The first-ever starting quarterback for the Saints was Billy Kilmer, who played for the team from 1967 to 1970. Kilmer was known for his strong arm but struggled with consistency.
- Following Kilmer, the Saints experimented with several quarterbacks, including Gary Cuozzo and Archie Manning. Manning, drafted first overall in 1971, became the face of the franchise for over a decade.

2. Archie Manning:

- Manning is perhaps the most significant figure in the early history of the Saints. Despite playing for a struggling team, he showcased remarkable talent and resilience. His ability to evade defenders and make plays under pressure earned him the nickname "the most sacked quarterback in NFL history."
- Manning's legacy is marked by his perseverance and skill, but he never led the Saints to the playoffs during his tenure, leaving fans yearning for a contender.

The 1980s: Searching for Stability

The 1980s saw the Saints continue to search for a franchise quarterback. Despite drafting several promising players, the team struggled to find stability at the position.

Key Players of the 1980s

- Ken Stabler: After a successful career with the Oakland Raiders, Stabler joined the Saints in 1982. He provided a brief spark of competitiveness, leading the team to a playoff appearance in 1987. However, his tenure was short-lived, as he retired after the 1984 season.
- Bobby Hebert: Hebert, known as "The Cajun Cannon," became the starting quarterback in 1985 and led the team to multiple playoff appearances. His strong arm and leadership helped to elevate the Saints' competitive status in the league.

The 1990s: The Rise of a Contender

The 1990s marked a turning point for the New Orleans Saints. Under head coach Jim Mora, the team began to find success, culminating in their first playoff victory.

Notable Quarterbacks

- Bobby Hebert: Continuing his impact from the previous decade, Hebert led the Saints to their first playoff appearance in 1987 and their first playoff win in 1990. His connection with wide receiver Eric Martin helped solidify the Saints' offense.
- Jim Everett: Acquired in 1992, Everett brought experience and talent to the Saints. He helped lead the team to the playoffs in 1992 and 1993, showcasing his ability to perform in critical moments.

The Turn of the Century: Rebuilding and Resilience

The late 1990s and early 2000s were marked by inconsistency and a lack of playoff success for the Saints. The quarterback position continued to be a challenge for the franchise.

Transition Period

- Aaron Brooks: Drafted in 1999, Brooks took over as the starting quarterback in 2000. He had a mixed tenure, leading the Saints to the playoffs in 2000 and 2001 but struggled with turnovers. Despite his inconsistencies, Brooks remains one of the more notable quarterbacks in Saints history.
- Jeff Blake: A veteran presence, Blake joined the Saints in 2000 and played a crucial role in mentoring Brooks. His experience helped the young quarterback navigate the challenges of the NFL.

The Drew Brees Era: A New Chapter (2006-2020)

The arrival of Drew Brees in 2006 marked a transformative period for the New Orleans Saints. Brees, previously with the San Diego Chargers, would go on to become one of the greatest quarterbacks in NFL history.

Impact of Drew Brees

1. Statistical Milestones:

- Brees holds numerous passing records, including career passing yards and completions. His accuracy and intelligence on the field set a new standard for the position.
- He consistently ranked among the league's top quarterbacks, earning multiple Pro Bowl selections and an MVP award in 2009.

2. Super Bowl XLIV Champion:

- Brees led the Saints to their first-ever Super Bowl victory in the 2009 season, defeating the Indianapolis Colts. His performance in the game earned him the Super Bowl MVP award, solidifying his place in Saints lore.

3. Community Impact:

- Beyond his on-field success, Brees became a beloved figure in New Orleans, engaging in numerous charitable endeavors and helping the city recover post-Hurricane Katrina.

Post-Brees Era: The Search for the Future

As Drew Brees retired after the 2020 season, the Saints faced the challenge of finding a successor capable of maintaining the franchise's competitive edge.

Quarterback Candidates Following Brees

- Taysom Hill: Known for his versatility, Hill has played various positions for the Saints, including quarterback. His dual-threat capability has made him a valuable asset for the team, but consistency as a starting quarterback remains a question.
- Jameis Winston: After signing with the Saints in 2020, Winston served as Brees' backup and eventually took over as the starter. His strong arm and potential offer promise, but his turnover issues have raised concerns among fans and coaches alike.
- Andy Dalton: Signing with New Orleans in 2022, Dalton provided a veteran presence in the quarterback room, adding depth and experience as the team looked to establish its post-Brees identity.

Conclusion

The **New Orleans Saints QB history** is a testament to the evolution of the franchise and the pivotal role quarterbacks have played in its success. From the struggles of the early years to the glory days of Drew Brees, the Saints' quarterback lineage reflects resilience, talent, and the pursuit of excellence. As the team continues to search for its next franchise quarterback, the lessons learned from past signal-callers will undoubtedly influence the future of the organization. The legacy of the Saints' quarterbacks will always be remembered, shaping the narrative of one of the NFL's most beloved franchises.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was the first starting quarterback in New Orleans Saints history?

The first starting quarterback in New Orleans Saints history was Billy Kilmer, who played for the team from 1967 to 1970.

Which quarterback is known for leading the Saints to their first Super Bowl victory?

Drew Brees is known for leading the Saints to their first Super Bowl victory in Super Bowl XLIV, where they defeated the Indianapolis Colts.

How long did Drew Brees play for the New Orleans Saints?

Drew Brees played for the New Orleans Saints for 15 seasons, from 2006 to 2020.

Which Saints quarterback holds the franchise record for most career touchdown passes?

Drew Brees holds the franchise record for most career touchdown passes, with a total of 571 touchdowns.

What notable achievement did Archie Manning, the Saints quarterback from 1971 to 1982, accomplish during his career?

Archie Manning was a two-time Pro Bowler during his time with the Saints and is remembered as one of the franchise's early stars.

Which quarterback had a significant impact on the Saints' success in the late 2010s?

Drew Brees had a significant impact on the Saints' success in the late 2010s, leading the team to multiple playoff appearances and a NFC South division title.

Who was the Saints starting quarterback before Drew Brees joined the team?

The starting quarterback for the Saints before Drew Brees was Aaron Brooks, who played for the team from 2000 to 2005.

What is the significance of the Saints' quarterback history in the context of the team's overall legacy?

The Saints' quarterback history is significant as it includes key figures like Archie Manning and Drew Brees, who not only shaped the franchise's identity but also contributed to its success, including the team's first Super Bowl title.

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