

Oakland Raiders Quarterback History



Oakland Raiders quarterback history is a fascinating narrative filled with memorable moments, legendary figures, and a legacy that has significantly shaped the NFL. The Raiders, originally established in 1960, have had a tumultuous yet exciting journey, and their quarterbacks have been at the forefront of this evolution. From Hall of Famers to fleeting talents, each quarterback has contributed to the team's identity and its storied past.

Early Years: The Formation of the Raiders

The Oakland Raiders began their journey in the American Football League (AFL) in 1960. During their early years, the team struggled to find a consistent quarterback. The franchise's first signal-caller was Cotton Davidson, who played for the Raiders in their inaugural season. However, it was not until the arrival of Daryle Lamonic in 1967 that the team found a quarterback who could lead them to success.

Daryle Lamonic: The Mad Bomber

Lamonic, known as "The Mad Bomber" for his deep passing ability, became the starter in 1968. His tenure marked a turning point for the Raiders:

- AFL Championship: Lamonic led the Raiders to two AFL Championships in 1967 and 1970.
- Pro Bowl Appearances: He earned three Pro Bowl selections during his career.
- Notable Stats: Lamonic's ability to throw deep passes helped the Raiders establish a high-powered offense, and he threw for over 19,000 yards and 148 touchdowns during his career.

Lamonic's success laid the groundwork for future quarterbacks and established the Raiders as a

formidable force in the league.

The Al Davis Era and Stability at Quarterback

In the early 1970s, under the leadership of owner Al Davis, the Raiders became a powerhouse in the NFL. This era saw the emergence of Ken Stabler, who would become one of the most iconic quarterbacks in franchise history.

Ken Stabler: The Snake

Ken Stabler was the starting quarterback from 1970 to 1979. His unique style and clutch performances earned him the nickname "The Snake." Key highlights of Stabler's career include:

- Super Bowl Victory: Stabler led the Raiders to victory in Super Bowl XI in 1977, defeating the Minnesota Vikings.
- Pro Bowl Selections: He was selected to four Pro Bowls and was named the NFL's Most Valuable Player in 1974.
- Legacy: Stabler's poise under pressure and ability to execute in critical moments made him a fan favorite and a cornerstone of the team's success.

Stabler's leadership on the field helped solidify the Raiders' reputation as a tough, resilient team.

The 1980s and 1990s: A Search for Consistency

After Stabler's departure in 1980, the Raiders faced challenges in finding a long-term solution at quarterback. The team cycled through several quarterbacks during the 1980s and 1990s.

Notable Quarterbacks of the Era

1. Jim Plunkett: Plunkett, who had a rocky start to his career, found a home in Oakland. He led the Raiders to two Super Bowl victories (XV in 1980 and XVIII in 1983) and was named Super Bowl MVP in 1981.
2. Marc Wilson: Wilson was drafted in 1980 and had a brief stint as a starter, but he failed to achieve consistent success.
3. Jeff Hostetler: Hostetler took over as the starter in 1990 and led the Raiders to the playoffs. He is known for his strong arm and leadership.
4. Rich Gannon: Gannon joined the Raiders in 1997 and became the starter in 1998. He transformed into a Pro Bowl quarterback and won the NFL MVP award in 2002, leading the team to Super Bowl XXXVII.

Rich Gannon's success revitalized the franchise and demonstrated the potential for a quarterback to elevate a team.

2000s: The Return of the Raiders

The early 2000s were a mixed bag for the Raiders as they struggled to find a reliable quarterback. However, the presence of Rich Gannon during the late 1990s and early 2000s helped solidify the team's standing.

Gannon's Influence and Decline

Gannon's tenure saw the Raiders reach new heights, but after the 2002 season, the team faced uncertainty:

- Super Bowl Appearance: Gannon led the Raiders to Super Bowl XXXVII, but the team fell to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.
- Injuries and Decline: Gannon's career was marred by injuries, leading to a decline in performance and ultimately his retirement in 2004.

After Gannon's departure, the Raiders faced a quarterback carousel that included:

- Kerry Collins
- Aaron Brooks
- Andrew Walter

None could replicate Gannon's success, leading to frustration among fans and management alike.

2010s: A New Era

The Raiders continued their search for a franchise quarterback throughout the 2010s. This period saw a mix of hope, disappointment, and promise.

Key Quarterbacks of the Decade

1. Jason Campbell: Acquired from the Washington Redskins, Campbell showed flashes of potential but struggled with consistency.
2. Carson Palmer: Palmer was traded to the Raiders in 2011, providing a veteran presence, but he was unable to lead the team to significant success.
3. Derek Carr: Drafted in 2014, Carr emerged as the franchise's centerpiece quarterback. He set multiple franchise records and was named to the Pro Bowl in 2015 and 2016. Carr's leadership and passing ability revitalized the team's offense.

Carr's success marked a turning point for the organization, but he faced challenges as the team transitioned and relocated to Las Vegas.

The Future of Raiders Quarterbacking

As of 2023, the Raiders have continued to evolve their quarterback situation. Following Carr's departure in 2022, the team has explored various options to find their next franchise quarterback.

Recent Developments

- Jimmy Garoppolo: The Raiders signed Garoppolo in 2023, hoping his experience and ability to execute the offense will bring stability to the position.
- Rookie Quarterbacks: The organization has also focused on developing younger quarterbacks to secure the future.

The quarterback history of the Oakland Raiders reflects the team's resilience and determination. From the early days with Lamonica and Stabler to the modern era with Carr and Garoppolo, the Raiders have had their share of ups and downs. Each quarterback has left an indelible mark on the franchise, contributing to a legacy that will continue to evolve. The quest for a franchise quarterback remains a top priority, and fans are eager to see who will emerge as the next great leader of the Silver and Black.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was the first starting quarterback for the Oakland Raiders?

The first starting quarterback for the Oakland Raiders was Tom Flores, who played from 1960 to 1966.

Which quarterback led the Raiders to their first Super Bowl victory?

Ken Stabler led the Raiders to their first Super Bowl victory in Super Bowl XI in 1977.

What notable achievement did Rich Gannon accomplish during his time with the Raiders?

Rich Gannon won the NFL MVP award in 2002 while leading the Raiders to Super Bowl XXXVII.

Who was the Raiders' starting quarterback during their relocation to Los Angeles in the 1980s?

Jim Plunkett was the starting quarterback for the Raiders during their relocation to Los Angeles in the early 1980s.

What impact did Derek Carr have on the Raiders' quarterback history?

Derek Carr, who started for the Raiders from 2014 to 2022, became the franchise's all-time leader in passing yards and touchdowns.

Which quarterback was known for his unique playing style and led the Raiders in the late 1990s?

Jeff George was known for his strong arm and unique playing style, serving as the Raiders' starting quarterback in the late 1990s.

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