

# Ny Jets Quarterback History



NY Jets quarterback history is a rich tapestry woven with moments of triumph, disappointment, and undeniable passion. The New York Jets, established in 1960, have seen a plethora of quarterbacks come and go, each leaving their mark on the franchise. From the legendary Joe Namath to the more recent struggles of players like Sam Darnold, the journey of Jets quarterbacks is a compelling narrative that encapsulates the highs and lows of professional football.

## Early Years and the Arrival of Joe Namath

The history of the Jets' quarterbacks began in the 1960s, a decade that would define the franchise's early identity.

### The Formation of the Team

- The Jets were originally known as the Titans of New York and were one of the eight original teams in the American Football League (AFL).
- In 1965, the team drafted Joe Namath, who would become one of the most iconic quarterbacks in NFL history.

### Joe Namath's Impact

Namath, affectionately known as "Broadway Joe," brought charisma and a unique

playing style to the Jets. His impact on the franchise is unparalleled, and he remains a symbol of hope and success for Jets fans.

- Super Bowl III: Namath famously guaranteed a victory over the Baltimore Colts, leading the Jets to their first and only Super Bowl win in 1969.
- Career Stats: Namath finished his career with 27,663 passing yards and 173 touchdown passes, showcasing his talent despite injuries that plagued him throughout his career.

## **The 1970s and 1980s: A Mixed Bag**

After Namath's departure, the Jets oscillated between strong performances and struggles in the quarterback position.

### **Quarterback Carousel**

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Jets cycled through several quarterbacks, each with varying degrees of success:

1. Al Woodall: Woodall led the team in the early 70s but struggled to find consistency.
2. Richard Todd: Drafted in 1976, Todd became the starter and led the Jets to the AFC Championship Game in 1982.
3. Ken O'Brien: A Pro Bowler in 1991, O'Brien was known for his strong arm and accuracy.

Despite these quarterbacks, the Jets struggled to return to the Super Bowl during this era.

## **Challenges and Changes**

The Jets faced numerous challenges during this time:

- Injuries: Key players often faced injuries, disrupting the rhythm of the team.
- Coaching Changes: Frequent changes in coaching staff further complicated the quarterback situation.

## **The 1990s: A New Hope**

The 1990s brought new life to the Jets, with a few standout quarterbacks who would leave a lasting legacy.

## **Boomer Esiason**

- Acquired in 1993, Esiason brought a veteran presence and leadership to the team.
- He won the NFL MVP award in 1988 and was known for his strong passing ability and competitiveness.
- Esiason led the Jets to the playoffs in 1998, showcasing his talent and experience.

## **Vinny Testaverde**

- Testaverde joined the Jets in 1998 and played a pivotal role in the team's success.
- He led the Jets to the AFC Championship Game in 1998, marking a significant achievement for the franchise.
- Known for his strong arm, Testaverde had a career year in 1998, throwing for over 3,200 yards and 29 touchdowns.

## **The 2000s: Promise and Pain**

The early 2000s brought both hope and despair for Jets fans, as the team continued to search for stability at the quarterback position.

## **Chad Pennington**

- Drafted in 2000, Pennington became the starting quarterback and quickly established himself as a leader.
- He led the Jets to the playoffs in 2002 and 2004, earning a reputation as a smart and accurate passer.
- Pennington's career was marred by injuries, but he still managed to throw for over 17,000 yards and 102 touchdowns with the Jets.

## **Other Quarterbacks of Note**

- Brett Favre: The legendary quarterback joined the Jets in 2008 but struggled to replicate his previous success.
- Kerry Collins: Briefly played for the Jets but did not leave a lasting impact.

# **The 2010s: A New Era of QBs**

The 2010s introduced a new wave of quarterbacks, with varying degrees of success.

## **Mark Sanchez**

- Drafted in 2009, Sanchez led the Jets to back-to-back AFC Championship Games in 2009 and 2010.
- Known for his charismatic personality, Sanchez had moments of brilliance but also faced criticism for his inconsistency.
- His tenure with the Jets ended in 2013 after a series of disappointing performances.

## **Geno Smith**

- Smith was drafted in 2013 and showed flashes of potential but struggled to become the franchise quarterback the Jets hoped for.
- His time with the Jets was marred by injuries and off-field incidents, leading to his eventual departure.

# **The Recent Years: Searching for Stability**

The Jets' quarterback situation in the late 2010s and early 2020s has been tumultuous, characterized by ongoing struggles for consistency and effectiveness.

## **Sam Darnold**

- Drafted third overall in 2018, Darnold was viewed as a potential franchise quarterback.
- Despite his talent, Darnold faced challenges, including a lack of offensive support and injuries.
- He was traded to the Carolina Panthers in 2021 after three seasons with the Jets.

## **Zach Wilson**

- The Jets selected Wilson with the second overall pick in the 2021 NFL Draft, hoping to find their long-term solution.

- Wilson's early career has been marked by inconsistency, leading to questions about his future with the franchise.

## **Conclusion: The Future of NY Jets Quarterbacks**

The NY Jets quarterback history is a story filled with highs and lows, legendary moments, and ongoing challenges. As the team continues to search for stability and success at the quarterback position, fans remain hopeful that the next chapter in their history will be one of triumph. With emerging talents like Zach Wilson and the potential for future acquisitions, the Jets' quarterback legacy is far from over. The passion of Jets fans and the rich history of the franchise ensure that the journey will continue, filled with hope for brighter days ahead.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who was the first starting quarterback for the New York Jets?**

The first starting quarterback for the New York Jets was Al Dorow, who played in their inaugural season in 1960.

### **Which Jets quarterback famously guaranteed a Super Bowl victory?**

Joe Namath famously guaranteed a Super Bowl victory before Super Bowl III, which the Jets won against the Baltimore Colts.

### **What year did Joe Namath retire from the New York Jets?**

Joe Namath retired from the New York Jets in 1977.

### **Who holds the record for most touchdown passes in a single season for the Jets?**

The record for most touchdown passes in a single season for the Jets is held by Vinny Testaverde, who threw 29 touchdowns in 1998.

### **Which Jets quarterback led the team to their last playoff appearance?**

Mark Sanchez led the New York Jets to their last playoff appearance in the 2010 season.

**What notable achievement did Ken O'Brien accomplish during his time with the Jets?**

Ken O'Brien was named to the Pro Bowl in 1985 and had a successful career as the Jets' quarterback in the 1980s.

Who was the Jets' quarterback during the infamous 'Butt Fumble' play?

Mark Sanchez was the Jets' quarterback during the infamous 'Butt Fumble' play in a game against the New England Patriots in 2012.

**Which Jets quarterback threw for over 4,000 yards in a season for the first time in franchise history?**

Vinny Testaverde was the first Jets quarterback to throw for over 4,000 yards in a season, achieving this in 1999.

## Who is the Jets' all-time leader in passing yards?

As of October 2023, the all-time leader in passing yards for the New York Jets is Chad Pennington.

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