

# Seahawks defense peaking at right time

Ready for Sunday clash with Vikings

By **TIM BOOTH**  
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — The questions and concerns that dogged the Seattle Seahawks' vaunted defense in September and October were silenced by the end of the season.

That's because the Seahawks accomplished something that hadn't been done since the 1950s.

Seattle heads into Sunday's wild-card game at Minnesota on a roll defensively. The pinnacle of their late-season success was holding Arizona to six points in the regular-season finale to end up leading the NFL in scoring defense for the fourth straight season. According to STATS, Seattle is the first team since the Cleveland Browns (1953-57) to lead the league in scoring defense in four or more consecutive seasons.

Over the final five games of the season, the Seahawks allowed only 55 total points. And two of the touchdowns scored during that time were special teams and defensive scores by their opponents.

However long this postseason run lasts for Seattle, it will be a new, but somewhat easier task for the Seahawks defense. After playing all their NFC playoff games at home the past two seasons, the Seahawks will be exclusively on the road this time around where it's far easier for Seattle to communicate on the defensive side.

"Maybe we focus better on the road, I don't know what it is. I just think we're a better road team than we are a home team this year," Seattle linebacker Bruce Irvin said.

Seattle also led the league in rush defense at 81.5 yards per game, giving up the exact same amount of yards it did a season ago when the Seahawks were third-best in the league at stopping the run. Their first task in the playoffs could be



Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman (25) celebrates a stop against the Arizona Cardinals during the first half of an NFL football game on Jan. 3 in Glendale, Ariz.

their most difficult, trying to slow down Adrian Peterson, who led the NFL with 1,485 yards rushing this season.

But Seattle's already stopped Peterson once this season, holding him to 18 yards on eight carries in Week 13.

"You can't expect a guy like that to get eight touches again. They're going to find different ways, whether handing the ball off, or getting him screens or checking it down to him," Seattle linebacker Bobby Wagner said. "I definitely feel like he's going to try to have a bigger presence in this game."

Getting the scoring defense title was particularly important, but seemed unlikely going into the final week. With

Cincinnati having allowed 16 to Baltimore in its finale earlier in the day, the Seahawks could give up only eight points to Arizona to at least share the scoring title.

Enter DeShawn Sheard with the Seahawks holding a 36-6 lead in the closing minutes and Arizona deep in Seattle's end.

The Seahawks had already gotten one break when Chandler Catanzaro's field goal attempt at the end of the first half hit the upright and ricocheted back onto the field. On fourth-and-10 from the Seattle 12 with 5:25 left, the Cardinals opted to go for it rather than kick a meaningless field goal. Drew Stanton's forced pass was intercepted by Sheard, ig-

ning a huge celebration on the Seahawks sideline.

"I was not aware at all. I heard them talking on the sideline in the fourth quarter about it but I didn't really pay no mind to it until I got the interception and I came back to the sideline and Earl (Thomas) and (Richard Sherman) came up to me and were like, 'Thank you, you saved the record,'" Sheard said. "I didn't realize until then how significant the interception was. For my first interception at the last possible defensive drive in the regular season it could not have come at a better time. It's a great feeling to know that I have legitimately been part of history."

# Bevell and Cable share in running Seattle's offense

By **TIM BOOTH**  
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — The titles that go along with the roles Darrell Bevell and Tom Cable hold working for the Seattle Seahawks would indicate a hierarchy.

Bevell is the offensive coordinator. Cable is an assistant head coach in charge of the offensive line.

What those titles don't tell is the unique partnership between the pair, forged when they were first paired together in 2011 as part of Pete Carroll's plan for moving Seattle's offense forward.

They are equals, each with specific responsibilities that join into a collaborative effort that this season has helped Seattle experience wild swings of failure and struggle, as well as record-setting success as the Seahawks prepare for Sunday's wild-card game at Minnesota.

It's a decision-making structure that isn't specific to Seattle, but over time has become a winning formula for the Seahawks.

"I think it's unique. For me, it's a really cool relationship that we have," Bevell said. "We get to collaborate all week as we're preparing for the game plan. We communicate during the week, we have to communicate on the runs, we have to communicate on the protections and make sure that's all squared away, and then we do a great job on game day."

"It's easy to say for me,

but I really feel like when there's no egos involved and nobody cares who gets the credit, then you're able to do great things."

The distinctive setup of the Seahawks offense has gained notoriety this season because of the success Seattle has had led by quarterback Russell Wilson.

In a season where there were protection and run game issues for the first half, the Seahawks ended up setting franchise records for total yards gained, yards passing as Wilson became the first Seattle quarterback to pass for more than 4,000 yards, and finished in the top five in the league in total offense for the first time since 2005.

It was an unexpected turnaround after Seattle slogged through the first eight weeks before going on a record run that had not been seen here in a decade.

"I think Tom and Darrell have done an incredible job again, not just now, again," Carroll said. "They've continued to maximize the talent that we have. You've seen our guys blossom as players."

"You've seen young players fit in, you've seen the quarterback just continue to get better throughout the process, which really encompasses all aspects of what we're doing."

The decision to go with that type of structure was Carroll's idea, first hatched when he brought both Cable and Bevell to the staff after the 2010 season.

## SCOREBOARD

### PREP SCHEDULE

#### TODAY

**Girls Basketball** — North Marion at Astoria, 5:30 p.m.; Seaside at Newport, 5:30 p.m.; De La Salle at Warrenton, 6 p.m.; Vernonia at Knappa, 6 p.m.; Jewell at Country Christian, 5:30 p.m.; Ilwaco at Tacoma Baptist, 7 p.m.

**Boys Basketball** — North Marion at Astoria, 7:15 p.m.; Seaside at Newport, 7:15 p.m.; De La Salle at Warrenton, 7:45 p.m.; Vernonia at Knappa, 8 p.m.; Jewell at Coun-

try Christian, 7 p.m.; Ilwaco at Tacoma Baptist, 7 p.m.

**Wrestling** — Seaside Pac Rim, 3:30 p.m.

#### SATURDAY

**Girls Basketball** — Stayton at Astoria, 5:30 p.m.; Warrenton at Riverdale, 4 p.m.

**Boys Basketball** — Stayton at Astoria, 7 p.m.; Warrenton at Riverdale, 5:45 p.m.

**Swimming** — Seaside at The Dalles Invite, 10 a.m.

**Wrestling** — Seaside Pac Rim, 10 a.m.

# Tower: Zilli believes new mock-ups from Verizon validate his concerns

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## One element

The new monopole at Shively Park is one element in a long-sought agreement between the city and Verizon to move an outdated communications tower off Coxcomb Hill near the Astoria Column. The city and Verizon would share a new communications tower off Reservoir Road, which would help improve the city's emergency communications, while the new monopole at Shively Park and equipment atop the Astor Hotel building downtown would ensure Verizon's wireless coverage.

Zilli understands the city's interest in improving emergency communications, but believes the city's decision to sign off on the monopole at Shively Park was biased because of the city's role in the agreement. The City Council covered about \$70,000 in expenses by the Friends of the Astoria Column to get a Portland telecommunications consultant to work with Ver-

izon on relocating the existing tower off Coxcomb Hill, and authorized an additional \$20,000 in city money to help the consultant close the deal.

Zilli, concerned about the City Council's objectivity, asked the city for a change of venue for his appeals to an administrative law judge or other neutral decision-maker.

But City Attorney Blair Henningsgaard, in a letter to Zilli Thursday, said neither the city manager nor the City Council could honor the request. He said the only body with the authority to make a final decision on the appeals is the City Council.

"The council cannot pass on this responsibility to others," Henningsgaard wrote.

Michael Connors, a Portland attorney representing Verizon, urged the City Council in a letter last week to deny Zilli's appeals. Both the company and the city explored several alternative sites for the monopole before agreeing on Shively Park.

"There is a strong con-

sensus that the proposed site is the best available site for the facility and the appellant (Zilli) has failed to identify a viable alternative," Connors wrote.

Zilli would have the option of appealing a City Council decision to the state Land Use Board of Appeals.

## Validate his concerns

Zilli believes the new photographic mock-ups from Verizon validate his concerns.

"These new photos confirm the tower will be visible from many locations around the city and will be a dominant feature on the landscape," he said in an email. "This new information confirms my assertion that the Historic Landmarks Commission and Astoria Planning Commission were unable to accurately weigh and consider the impacts to this historic landmark location."

"There is now no doubt in my mind the proposed cell tower will create a significant adverse impact to Shively Park."

Rosemary Johnson, a special projects planner for the city, said the company hired by Verizon to do the earlier photo simulations did a poor job.

"Verizon did not realize they were not accurate, and

so when Ron brought that to everyone's attention, that's when they hired a new company to go out and do better photo simulations," she said.

Now, Johnson said, the mock-up "definitely is different. The height has never

changed. It's just the visualizations were incorrect and we now have correct photo simulations which truly depict the 150 feet.

"And, therefore, it is more visible from various spots around town."

## Henry Spencer Olson

**Born:** Dec. 22nd, 2015 (1:48 PM) in Salem, OR  
**Height:** 21.5 inches  
**Weight:** 7 pounds, 2 ounces  
**Parents:** Scott & Kimberly Olson  
**Sibling:** Eleanor Anne Olson  
**Grandparents:** Al & Carol Olson of Astoria; Joel & Vicki Giusti of Salem

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