

SPORTS

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Everything seems to be on Wilson as Seahawks move on



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren

Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson is tripped up by Atlanta Falcons middle linebacker Deion Jones as he scrambles in the second half Monday. The Falcons won 34-31.

By **TIM BOOTH**
Associated Press

SEATTLE — When he was in the early stages of his professional career, the Seattle Seahawks asked Russell Wilson just to do his part.

At that time, Seattle's defense was elite. Their roster was young and ambitious and the depth they amassed could overcome seemingly any loss.

That's not the case anymore, putting the bulk of the responsibility on Wilson now as the Seahawks try to make something out of this season and find their way into the playoffs.

"He was a huge factor in the game," coach Pete Carroll said after Monday's 34-31 loss to Atlanta. "He was all over the place."

Numerous issues arose from Seattle's second straight home loss. Most centered

on a couple of questionable special teams decisions by Carroll, including his call to go for a fake field goal late in the first half rather than attempt a 35-yard kick. The fake was blown up by Atlanta's Grady Jarrett and Luke Willson was thrown for a 4-yard loss.

Carroll defended the decision after the game and again Tuesday morning on his radio show.

"I like being aggressive when we have our chances. That was an opportunity to score a touchdown and we thought we had a good one," Carroll said on KIRO-AM in Seattle.

Aside from the special teams issues is how dependent the Seahawks have become on Wilson offensively. It's one thing to ask the quarterback to be a leader, an efficient passer and occasionally run when the opportunity presents itself. It's another to do what Seattle has asked of

Wilson through the first 10 games.

Seattle's three currently healthy running backs — Eddie Lacy, Thomas Rawls and J.D. McKissic — have combined for exactly one more yard rushing (377) than Wilson has run for this season (376). And it doesn't help that Seattle's stellar defense has been devastated by injuries to starters Richard Sherman, Kam Chancellor and Cliff Avril.

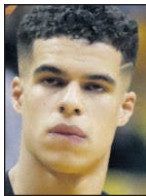
It's all been on Wilson's shoulders, and likely will continue to be going forward. Between passing and rushing, Wilson has been responsible for 81.9 percent of Seattle's total offensive yards this season. Impressive? Yes. Too much for Seattle's desire to be balanced and have an established run game? Yes.

"I don't think that it's a lack of talent at running back. We have some great running backs, we just have to do a little bit better, that's all," Wilson said after the loss.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Missouri's Porter Jr. out for season after back surgery

COLUMBIA, Mo. — Michael Porter Jr. insisted before the season that he was not necessarily a one-and-done player who would leave next year for the riches of the NBA.



Michael Porter Jr.

The standout Missouri freshman will have plenty of downtime to consider his future after the school announced Tuesday that he would miss the rest of the season following lower back surgery. The procedure, called a microdiscectomy, was scheduled in Dallas and the expected recovery time is three to four months.

The injury is a staggering blow for last year's top high school recruit, just as it is for a Missouri program excited for the future following his arrival and the talented recruiting class that followed him to Columbia.

"I cannot wait to be completely healthy and playing the game I love, once again," Porter said.

Porter signed with Missouri after originally being committed to Washington, doing so after former Huskies coach Lorenzo Romar was fired in March. His father, Michael Porter Sr., was an assistant coach at Washington at the time and was later hired by first-year Missouri coach Cuonzo Martin.

The 6-foot-10 freshman averaged 36.2 points and 13.6 rebounds per game as a senior in high school, and he was a McDonald's All-American.

No. 18 Oregon State women win on road, beat NC Central 97-44

DURHAM, N.C. — Kat Tudor had career-highs of 23 points and 11 rebounds, and No. 18 Oregon State beat North Carolina Central 97-44 on Wednesday for its first road win of the season.

The Beavers (3-1) bounced back from a 72-67 loss against No. 6 Notre Dame on Sunday. Oregon State stays in Durham, North Carolina to face No. 16 Duke on Saturday before opening the Maui Invitational on Dec. 1 against Nevada.

Tudor was 9 of 14 from the floor, matched a career-best with five 3-pointers and collected her first career double-double. Joanna Grymek had 16 points and Marie Gulich added 15 for Oregon State.

Rodneysha Martin scored 15 points and Kieche White had 11 to lead North Carolina Central (1-2).

The Beavers had a double-digit lead with four minutes left in the first quarter, and led 51-17 at the break. Tudor had 14 points and eight rebounds in the first half.

— *Associated Press*



AP Photo/Timothy J. Gonzalez

Oregon State head coach Gary Andersen celebrates after their 34-24 win over Oregon in last year's Civil War game in Corvallis.

Season of change for both Oregon and Oregon State

By **ANNE M. PETERSON**
Associated Press

EUGENE — Last year around this time, Oregon's coach was on the verge of being dismissed and Oregon State was about to finally win a Civil War after eight seasons of futility.

Seems like a long time ago, now.

Oregon and Oregon State head into the 121st Civil War game Saturday looking VERY different from last season.

Mark Helfrich was let go by Oregon just a few days after the Ducks lost 34-24 to the Beavers and finished in the basement of the Pac-12 North. He was replaced by Willie Taggart, whose first season in Eugene has not gone as planned.

The Ducks started with promise and even popped into the rankings at No. 24 with a three-game winning streak in non-conference play.

Oregon would win four of its first five games, but misfortune struck during the first half of the Ducks' 45-24 victory over California on Sept. 30 when starting quarterback Jus-

UP NEXT: CIVIL WAR

- Oregon State Beavers (1-10) at Oregon Ducks (6-5)
- Saturday, 4 p.m. TV: CSNW

tin Herbert fractured his collarbone.

Herbert missed the next five games and the Ducks won just one of those. He returned last weekend to lead Oregon to a 48-28 victory over Arizona. The win made the Ducks (6-5, 3-5) bowl eligible. It also left a lot of fans wondering how the season would have gone if Herbert had been healthy.

A victory against the rival Beavers would not only put Oregon in better bowl position with seven wins, it would also help erase the lingering memories of last season's loss and perhaps even diminish the sting of the what-ifs this season.

"I know all of them were ticked off when I got here," Taggart said. "You hear everybody was ticked off. Not just our players, but everybody. And considering it had been so long

since that happened, that really just stays with you."

Taggart has taken the extra step of showing the team film from last season — with an emphasis on the mistakes.

"Got to come out ready to roll and you can throw the records out in a ballgame like this. You've got to come ready to play and the team that plays the best will be the team that wins," he said.

In contrast, the Beavers' 2016 Civil War win was a much-needed boost for a team that was building under coach Gary Andersen — the Beavers capped the season with four wins, doubling the victories from the previous season, Andersen's first.

Following the victory, the coach said: "Huge victory. Awesome for the kids in the program. Awesome for Beaver Nation."

But this season didn't go as planned for Oregon State, either. Like the Ducks, the Beavers lost their starting quarterback. Jake Luton, a community college transfer, sustained a thoracic spine fracture in a loss to Washington State, the fourth game of the season.

Gionta trades NHL for shot at representing US at Olympics

By **JOHN WAWROW**
Associated Press

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — For someone once constantly told he was too small to have an NHL future, Brian Gionta is enjoying a few last laughs entering the twilight of his career.

At 38, the 5-foot-7, 180-pound forward has no regrets with the decision he made last summer to put family and flag first to forego a chance at playing a 17th NHL season.

Rejecting at least one contract offer in July because it would've meant relocating his wife and three children, Gionta chose to pursue an opportu-

nity to represent the United States at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, in February.

"It was not an easy decision by any means, but in my heart I knew it was the right one," Gionta told The Associated Press.

More important, he added, it was a decision he could make, as opposed to having someone else make it for him.

"You're at peace with it at the same time because you're able to have made it," he said. "It's working so far."

Gionta is enjoying the benefits of being with his family in Buffalo while training individually at the Sabres'

hockey complex. And then there are the occasional trips he makes to his native Rochester, where he has an open invitation to practice with the Sabres' American Hockey League affiliate.

As for his Olympic aspirations, Gionta was awarded the captaincy upon joining the U.S. National team for a three-game Deutschland Cup tournament in Germany two weeks ago. National team general manager Jim Johansson said Gionta was an obvious choice as captain given his accomplishments.

Aside from representing the U.S. at the 2006 Winter Games in Italy,

Gionta has captained the Montreal Canadiens and Sabres, and won a Stanley Cup with the 2003 New Jersey Devils. He's scored 15 or more goals nine times, including last year in Buffalo, and overall has 289 goals and 588 points in 1,006 career games.

"Early on in his career, it was obviously, 'Is he big enough?' or whatever, and people started to find out both his compete and heart level," Johansson said. "There's so many things he can bring to us not only as a hockey player, but there's that other component. And that, from a coach's and manager's standpoint, is irreplaceable."