

Page 6... The Portland Observer... August 28,1991 Seahawks look to be average in 1991

by Aaron Fentress

supposedly going through a rebuilding period last season. Although their 9-7 record shows that they weren't exactly a powerhouse, it did show that rebuilding or notthe Seahawks don't have very far to go before they can be regarded as serious contenders.

The Seahawks started off last season with three straight losses while ending the season wining five of six and missing the playoffs by only a half game. Although it would be stretching it a bit to say that the Seahawks will pick up in 1991 where they left off in 1990, it is safe to say that with the parody in the NFL, the Seahawks have a solid shot at making the playoffs. Offense

To make the playoffs the Seahawks will count heavily on running back Derrick Fenner. Fenner came out of no where last season to finish sixth in the AFC in rushing with 859 yards and 14 touchdowns. Fenner, coupled with fullback John L. Williams (714 yards, three touchdowns) give the Seahawks a dangerous running attack to keep the pressure off of quarterback Dave

Krieg, who will need it. Krieg's streakiness as a passer makes the running game that much more important because Krieg can't be counted on to win games. If he does, fine. When he doesn't, Fenner and Williams will have to carry the load.

Krieg finished 11th in the AFC last season in passing. While Krieg's completion percentage of 59.2 was impressive, his touchdown passes (15) to interceptions (20) was the worst of his career.

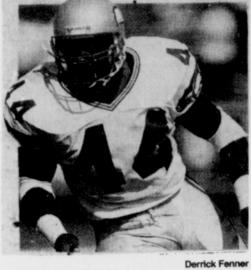
looked to be the Seahawks QB of the future, but the Seahawks made San Diego State QB Dan McGwire their number one pick in last spring's draft.

If Krieg struggles McGwire will probably be the man. But to expect a rookie to step in and lead a team to the playoffs is asking a lot.

If Krieg is to be successful he will need 4th year man Brian Blades

The Seattle Seahawks were Blades produced over a 1,000 yards and landed in the Pro-Bowl. Last season Blades accounted for only 49 catches. On the other side of Blades is Tommy Kane who benefited from Blades' lack of productivity. Kane caught 52 passes for over 700 yards.

The Seahawks got some receiving help in the draft landing receivers Doug Thomas (Clemson) and David Daniels (Penn State). Both run under 4.5 and will give the



Seahawks some speed off the bench and challenge Jeff Chadwick and Paul Skansi for roster spots.

Defense

Defensively the Seahawks will be lead by their defensive line. Defensive end Jacob Green (12 sacks) is Seattle's most feared pass rusher while second year man Cortez Kennedy will be expected to live up to his potential as the third player taken in the 1990 NFL draft. Kennedy, along with Joe Nash and Jeff Bryant will give offenses trouble up the middle at Defensive tackle.

At the other end Tony Woods Third year man Kelly Stouffer figures to be a quality pass rusher due to his quickness. But according to scouting reports, Woods is most effective against the run.

> Last season the Seahawks defense finished 9th overall in the NFL. Seattle was 10th against run and 11th against the pass. Although 9th is not bad, Seattle will need better play from their defensive backs to improve in 1991.

Last season the secondary

to regain his form of 1989. That year accounted for only 12 interceptions finishing 23rd in the NFL in takeaway/giveaway ratio. The secondary is considered solid but unspectacular. Despite the low interception rate they did manage to give up an NFL low 10.8 yards per completion. The Seahawks bend but they don't break. But sometimes you have to break a little to force the action and create turnovers.

> Free safety, Eugene Robinson defines what the Seahawks' secondary is all about. He's a solid

player but unspectacular at making the big play. At Strong Safety Seattle starts Nesby Glasgow who is considered too slow and too old at 34. Glasgow is a liability when matched up man to man with fast backs out of the back field. Glasgow will be challenged by second year man Robert Blackmon.

At corner Dwayne Harper and Patrick Hunter are considered good zone defenders but lack man to man ability.

Linebacker is also a problem for the Seahawks. Dave Wyman is consistent in the middle but has knee problems. Rufos Porter is the speed rusher

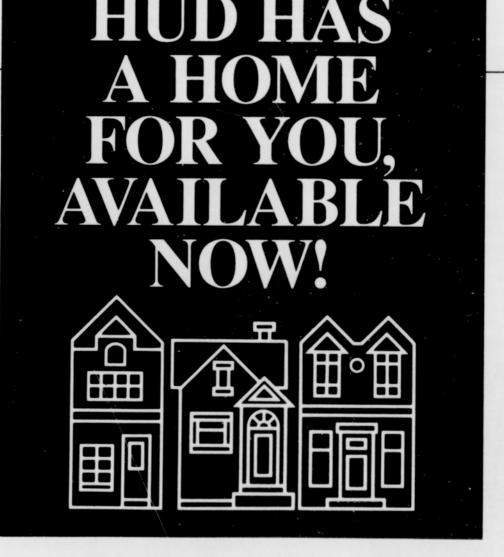
for the Seahawks but lacks size at 226 pounds. Terry Wooden showed promise in his rookie season last year before suffering a knee injury. If the Seahawk backers are going to be effective they will need to keep these three healthy because the position lacks depth.

OUTLOOK

Although it's tough to predict the outcome of the AFC West every year, it seems apparent that the Los Angeles Raiders and the Kansas City Chiefs will lead the way in 1991. The Seahawks look to challenge Denver for third place and a possible wild card playoff spot.

The Seahawks are at best an average team right now. But average is enough to make it to the playoffs with the new 12 team format used for the first time last season.

Look for the Seahawks to be competitive all year long, even giving the Raiders and Chiefs a tough time. But in the end the Seahawks will finish 8-8 with an outside shot at the playoffs.



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