

NFL Wilson stands out in weekend of traditional passers

By TIM BOOTH
Associated Press



AP Photo/Ted S. Warren

Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson talks to reporters Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2015, before NFL football practice in Renton, Wash. The Seahawks will face the Green Bay Packers, Sunday in the NFC Championship game.

Warner and Drew Brees.

"I think one of the things that definitely allows me to play well is the guys around me. I've got great guys around me, guys that want to work every day, guys that are devoted to being successful and no matter what it takes," Wilson said. "I think that when you're in those moments, you either live for them or you fall off."

Last week saw Wilson at his finest. He needed just 22 pass attempts to throw for 268 yards and three touchdowns. He averaged more than 12 yards per pass attempt and threw two of the finest touch passes of his career. He dropped a 16-yard TD into the arms of Baldwin, letting go of the pass before Baldwin even made his break.

Then in the second quar-

ter, Wilson stayed in the pocket and tossed a deep ball to Jermaine Kearse for a 63-yard touchdown that gave the Seahawks a 14-7 lead.

"For the most part he knows how to put touch on the ball and a lot of quarterbacks don't know how to do that," said Hall of Fame quarterback Warren Moon, who is part of Seattle's radio broadcast team. "He knows how to make all the different throws. That ball to Jermaine Kearse is the best touch you'll ever see."

Wilson's performance against Carolina also countered a season where his best games were not at home. In the regular season, Wilson threw six touchdowns and six interceptions at home versus 14 TDs and one interception on the road. The three touchdown passes were

a new playoff best and the 268 yards passing his second-best. Wilson's timing was crisp and his throws came in rhythm.

"He gets the advantage that he gives us and kind of the variety of ways that we throw the football," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said. "It really adds to it, and he's just kind of taken off with it, and it's a beautiful part of our game as it starts to emerge."

There's also the matter of how Wilson plays when it matters most. He already owns 14 career comebacks in 54 regular-season and playoff games combined.

"Whenever I talk to him, that's all he talks about, is living for those situations. I don't know if it all started back in high school or whatever but he just loves the big time of a game. He wants the ball in his hands. I think he would rather be behind sometimes and have the ball in his hands and be able to go down the field and win the football game," Moon said.

"With this team it's not always like that, but he's had as many comebacks as anyone in the game the short time he's been in the game. He loves that. He loves those moments. Has he been successful on every one of them? No. Did Michael Jordan hit every game-winning shot? No. But he wins more of them than he loses and that's because he likes it and he lives for it."

College Basketball



Washington State head coach Ernie Kent yells to his players during the second half against Washington State at an NCAA college basketball game on Friday, Jan. 2, 2015, in Stanford, Calif. Stanford won 71-56.

AP Photo/Tony Avelar

Kent to face Ducks for first time

East Oregonian

Tonight will be more than first-year Washington State coach Ernie Kent's first Pac-12 home game as Cougars coach, it'll also mark first time he faces off against the Oregon Ducks program he headed for 13 years.

Kent resigned from his post at Oregon in 2010 after leading the school to a record 235 victories, multiple conference titles and runs to the NCAA Elite Eight in 2002 and 2007. Kent spent two years as an analyst for Fox Sports Pac-12 Networks before taking the position in Pullman this spring.

The Cougars are just 8-7 this year, but Kent has his team playing their best bas-

ketball of the season with wins in two of three Pac-12 games including a triumph over rival Washington on Saturday.

Oregon is also 2-1 this year in league play, but all three contests have been played within the friendly confines of Matthew Knight Arena. In fact, the trip to Beasley Coliseum marks the Ducks first true road contest in 16 games this season.

The Ducks have won the last seven meetings and 10 of the last 11, as the Cougars last got a win in the series Jan. 8, 2011, a 77-63 win at Pullman.

Tipoff is set for 5 p.m. tonight in Pullman. The game will be carried by the Pac-12 Networks.

Jets, 49ers, Raiders turn to defense to fill open head coaching positions

Associated Press

The New York Jets stuck with defense. The San Francisco 49ers and Oakland Raiders are giving it a try, too.

The Jets hired Arizona defensive coordinator Todd Bowles as head coach

Wednesday, the 49ers promoted longtime defensive line coach Jim Tomsula, and the Raiders turned to Denver defensive coordinator Jack Del Rio.

Denver, Atlanta and Chicago still have openings. On Wednesday, John Fox inter-

viewed with Chicago, two days after parting ways with Denver.

The 49ers said Tomsula will be formally introduced Thursday at a news conference that comes after a more than two-week search that ended right in house.

Tomsula replaces Jim Harbaugh, who parted ways with the 49ers on Dec. 28 in what the team called a "mutual decision." Harbaugh was introduced as Michigan's coach two days later following a successful four-year stint during which the 49ers reached three

straight NFC championship games and a Super Bowl.

The Jets made it official with Bowles, also a top candidate for the Atlanta job, a day after hiring former Houston director of college scouting Mike Maccagnan as general manager. Bowles, a

former NFL defensive back, is the Jets' sixth straight defensive-focused head coach.

Del Rio, a former NFL linebacker, was the head coach in Jacksonville for nine seasons before spending the past three as Denver's defensive coordinator.

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