

## QB SHUFFLE DOMINATES NFL OFF-SEASON

It might take a casual fan of the National Football League until U.S. Thanksgiving to get clarity on which quarterbacks went where in the biggest QB shuffle offseason in recent memory.

Added to the carousel of veteran quarterbacks getting new addresses is a handful of fuzzy-cheeked QBs right out of college who are all projected stars (at least by the teams that chose them in the draft). History tells us, though, that the success rate of college QBs moving into the NFL is not that great.

So let's forget about the big QB names who stayed put, such as Brady, Rogers, Ryan, Brees, Wilson, Big Ben, etc., and concentrate on those who moved, and who moved in.

Kirk Cousins was the biggest 'name' player to move, signing as a free agent with Minnesota Vikings after five years with Washington. The Cousins signing allowed the Vikings to go into 2018 with none of the three QBs they had on their 2017 roster: Case Keenum signed with Denver as a free agent; Sam Bradford was a free-agent signee in Arizona; and Teddy Bridgewater was traded to New York Jets, and later dealt to New Orleans, where he'll back up Drew Brees.

To fill the Cousins void in Washington, the Redskins acquired longtime Kansas City quarterback Alex Smith. The Chiefs deemed him expendable because they believe Pat Mahomes, a second-year player, is ready for stardom.

Tyrod Taylor, who had moments of glory for Buffalo, is suiting up with Cleveland Browns thanks to an off-season trade, and he'll apparently start ahead of No. 1 draft pick Baker Mayfield. Meanwhile, A.J. McCarron, who was acquired by Buffalo from Cincinnati prior to the draft, was shuffled off to Oakland prior to the season. Nathan Peterman will start for Buffalo, and college prospect Josh Allen will back him up. Bills' fans have their fingers crossed.

All eyes will be on the five college quarterbacks who were the stars of April's draft. Mayfield, as mentioned, will be the backup in Cleveland. Sam Darnold, from USC, is the starter for the Jets. Josh Allen will get a lot of sideline time in Buffalo. Josh Rosen is in Arizona, and will be the backup for Bradford, with Cardinals' fans hoping the two can replace Carson Palmer, who retired after the 2017 season after 15 years in the league. And versatile Lamar Jackson was picked by Baltimore Ravens, who with Joe Flacco behind centre have no quarterback worries.

Every team with a new quarterback has high hopes as the season begins. History tells us those hopes usually don't take long to get deflated.

- **Dwight Perry** of the Seattle Times: "**Odell Beckham Jr.** of the New York Giants says his superstar status makes him feel like a 'zoo animal.' Especially the part where the Giants ignore the warnings and feed him \$95 million."
- **Norman Chad** of the Washington Post: "If you watched 'Hard Knocks' this summer, you wouldn't trust the Browns staff to organize a lemonade stand, let alone run a professional football organization."
- AKA Eddie, on Twitter, referring to his hometown's NFL team: "Here in Cleveland we refer to them as the Browns, since there was no W in the 2017 season."
- **Scott Ostler** of the San Francisco Chronicle has a great suggestion for the name of the Raiders' stadium in Las Vegas: "Pair-a-Dice Park."
- **Brad Rock** of the Deseret News: "LA Gear is trying to block the Chargers from using anything that includes the letters LA in the name. You mean like LAugh out loud?"
- Comedy writer **Brad Dickson** of Omaha, on the Nike/**Colin Kaepernick** ad campaign: "Well, I'm glad that Nike finally found a spokesperson who's non-polarizing. Second and third choices were **Julian Assange** and **Kim Jong Un**."
- Comedy writer **Jim Barach**: "**Tom Brady** says he is looking to play five more years in the NFL. Let's just hope no one let's the air out of his dreams."
- **RJ Currie** of sportsdeke.com: "Ex-CFL great **Doug Brown** once called the Winnipeg-Saskatchewan Labour Day game a battle of combines and tractors. If memory serves, last year the Riders laid a threshing on the Bombers." (And this year, too.)
- **Jimmy Fallon** of NBC's 'Tonight Show': "Fantasy Football began tonight. It's a fun way for people who are bad at real sports to realize that they're also bad at imaginary sports."
- **James Corden** of CBS's Late Late Show, on protests against the Kaepernick Nike ad campaign: "Burning your sneakers does seem like a solid way to get out of going to the gym."
- Headline at TheOnion.com: "**Shohei Ohtani** regrets not researching which teams were good before signing with Angels."
- **Janice Hough** of leftcoastsportsbabe.com, on Packers QB **Aaron Rodgers'** \$134 million contract extension: "In related news expect Green Bay to announce beer and brats can now be paid for with an interest-free loan."

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