

15 NFL QBs In Risk Of Losing Their Job In 2020

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The Super Bowl has come and gone and a new quarterback leads the NFL as the top dog. While Superbowl MVP Patrick Mahomes might not have to worry about his job, there are a handful of starting quarterbacks this season that might be out of a job. Here is a breakdown of those that should be worried and very worried.

Possible

Eli Manning: Giants

After getting benched for rookie Daniel Jones, Eli Manning had originally been on this list. Even Eli knew his future was looking grim with the Giants, and instead of taking his chances on the market, Manning decided to retire all together on January 10th. Though Daniel Jones' rookie year was not stellar, the 7th overall pick's job is still secured with the Giants as Big Blue looks to build to the future with Jones as their starter. If he had not retired, I would've said, "Hello Eli Manning to the Broncos" at one point. The following eight quarterbacks may be facing the same chopping block.

Joe Flacco: Broncos

Originally when Flacco had been traded to the Broncos from the Ravens in 2019, I felt that Flacco could have had a career comeback just like Peyton Manning. While trying to recreate the magic they had with trading for a Super Bowl winning vet, such as they did with Manning, Broncos' general manager, John Elway, put all his marbles on the table by signing Flacco to a three-year, restructured, \$66 million contract.

Unfortunately, after an injury took him out for the remainder of the 2019 season by Week 8, those hopes came crashing down. Flacco,35, underwent an MRI on his neck and received good news in February, according to Mike Klis of 9News Denver. Though he could be ready to play by the start of the season, his health, age and declining performance are still worrisome. Before his season ending injury, Flacco had thrown for six touchdowns and five interceptions in eight games.

While the Broncos have failed in the past drafts in picking a franchise quarterback, they will have the option this year with the overall fifteenth pick in the 2020 Draft to try again, unless they choose to stick with former rookie Drew Lock, who showed much promise last season. The future looks grim for the once highest-paid quarterback and former Super Bowl champion, as he looks to float into the abyss of yesteryear, just like former quarterback Jay Cutler.

Alex Smith: Redskins

Smith,35, is coming off a devastating broken tibia and fibula injury which resulted in a close to deadly infection that could have led to the amputation of his leg. The injury sidelined Smith for half of the 2018 season and the entire 2019 season. At 35, coming back from such a devastating injury has people questioning if Smith will ever be the same. Smith has expressed his intent to continue playing, though his health is a big risk.

With only one year left on his contract, if healthy and allowed to play, Smith would end up playing a transitional role for the 17th overall 2019 draft pick, Dwayne Haskins. Haskins showed promise last year after taking the reins and might have cost this next quarterback his job as well.

Case Keenum: Redskins

The current 31-year-old quarterback was signed to a one-year, \$3.5 million contract last offseason. While starter Alex Smith may not be ready to return by next season, sophomore Dwayne Hoskins will most likely take over. Haskins showed potential last year even though his 2-7 record as a starter didn't show it. With a healthy Alex Smith as back up, resigning Case Keenum would only waste cap space as the Redskins will want to use that money to

continue to build around Haskins. The only option left for Keenum would be to serve as a backup, assuming Smith is not cleared, if he were to stay with the Redskins.

Josh Rosen: Dolphins

After being traded from the Cardinals at the end of his freshman season, Rosen started his sophomore season with the Dolphins and may be starting his junior year somewhere else. The Dolphins are in complete rebuilding mode and seeing Rosen get benched for some Fitz-Magic halfway through the season last year, may be a sign for things to come as the Dolphin's organization are clearly not sold on Rosen as their franchise quarterback.

Rosen,23, has three years left on his \$17 million, four-year contract and would only cost the Dolphins \$2 million if they chose to drop him. The Dolphins go into the 2020 Draft with eleven picks and it seems very unlikely one of those picks won't be spent on a quarterback. If kept, Rosen would be battling Fitzpatrick for a starting role, while whoever is drafted this off season is groomed for the future.

Nick Foles: The Jaguars

Another year, another injury for the former Super Bowl MVP. After being signed to a three-year contract and a starting position role, 2019 looked promising for Foles. Unfortunately, Foles suffered a broken left clavicle in Week 1 that put him on the shelf until Week 11.

Rookie Gardner Minshew was able to emerge and gained tremendous attention from fans despite being very green. After returning, Foles played two games before being benched for Minshew, who was responsible for the only 6 games the Jaguars had won this year. Unless Foles can show the same game playing ability he showed in his 2016 playoff run with the Eagles, Foles could be sat down the line for Minshew if coaches continue to buy into Minshew's hype.

Andy Dalton: Bengals

Another 31-year-old quarterback in trouble of losing their starting position is Andy Dalton. With the first overall pick and with all eyes on Heisman winner Joe Burrow, Dalton's time with the Bengals may be coming to an end. With one year left on his contract, Dalton would be costing the Bengals \$17 million if they kept him. Wide Receiver, AJ Green, is also trending towards the end of his contract and being able to keep both players may be financially impossible.

In the first five years of his career, Dalton took the Bengals to five wild-card appearances(all resulted in losses).Since their last playoff loss in 2015, the Bengals have missed the playoffs for four consecutive years. The time for change has arrived once again in Cincinnati and with a 16-14 TD:INT ratio last year, it is hard to say Dalton's best days are yet to come.

Marcus Mariota: Titans

After the last year of his rookie contract, things do not look promising for the 2015 second overall draft pick. The addition of Ryan Tannehill last offseason was supposed to be the fire to light up Mariota this year. The complete opposite happened as by Week 7, Mariota lost his starting position to Tannehill. If there was any hope that he could still be kept, that hope was thrown away after Tannehill led the Titans deep into the playoffs by knocking out the former Super Bowl champions in the wild-card and going as far as the AFC Championship. The last time the Titans were in the AFC Championship before then, iPods had just been invented.

Both Mariota and his college coach , Chip Kelly, arrived to the NFL with high expectations that neither met. Chip is back to coaching college teams while Mariota has yet to make the top five list and took the Titans to the playoffs only once. Maybe with the right coach and scheme, Mariota's career could rejuvenate, but unfortunately it will not be with the Titans. In four years Mariota failed to win the division, went three years back to back with a 9-7 record and one playoff run where they lost in the divisional round. None of this screams "future of the team" or second overall pick. Unless Tanehill refuses to sign next season with the Titans, Mariota's time with the Titans will be over.

Ryan Tannehill: Titans

As mentioned before, it is very likely Ryan will stay this season with the Titans. Coach Vrabel was very fond of Tannehill, and contract negotiations seem to be under way. Originally, the 31 year vet was signed to a one-year, \$2 million contract. Meant to create competition between Mariota and himself, Tannehill would end up taking the starting position by Week 6 as Mariota was benched half way into the game.

The uncertainty in contract negotiations at this point put Tannehill on this list. If resigned, Tannehill would take the starting role or could be kept as a mentor to play as a transitional role for an upcoming rookie. One thing is for sure and that is both Tannehill and Mariota won't both be on the team next year.

Not So Far Fetched

When I first started doing my research, mid season, I had seven players on this list and my mind hasn't changed.

Jameis Winston: Buccaneers

The man picked 1st overall in the 2015 Draft (followed by Mariota) should be biting his fingernails this off-season. At the end of his five year contract, Winston is the definition of "on the fence". With a 28-42 record as a starter, and zero play off appearances, Winston is still adamant he has potential. While his 30 interceptions last year put a huge tarnish on his numbers, his overall performance was decent. If his TD:INT ratio can be corrected in the off-season, Winston could still be the man.

The inadequacy of the organization surely does not rest on Winston, a franchise that hasn't won a NFC championship since 2002 and has only reached the postseason twice since, both times resulted in losses in the wild-card. With wide receiver Mike Evans having four years left on his contract, in order to keep both players, the organization would have to focus and build around the two in order to better utilize their talents. In five years, and with three different coaches, it has yet to be done. Since 2015, the Buccaneers record has been: 6-10/9-7/5-11/5-11/7-9.

Jacoby Brissett: The Colts

After signing the one-year contract extension to his two-year, \$30 million contract last September, Brissett will have to prove himself as a franchise quarterback this season if he wishes to stay a Colt. Adding additional help to the offensive line as well as a second season playing under Frank Reich's system could help the young quarterback.

The Colts are in a win now mentality with a free agency filled with veterans that could make them relevant once again. Drafting a quarterback would take time to develop and if the Colts are really in a win now mentality, they would have to stick with Brissett another year, opt for a trade or rely on what is available in free agency.

Dereck Carr: Raiders

Dereck Carr (28) will be entering the fourth year of his five-year, \$125 million contract extension. While the Raiders fell to 7-9 last season, Carr did finish with the best passer rating (100.8) of his career with 4,054 passing yards and a 21:8 TD/INT ratio. While the losses of wide receivers Amari Cooper and Antonio Brown hurt the offense, Carr was able to create magic with the rookie receiving core he was dealt with.

Under coach Jon Gruden, the Raiders have gone 11-21 and his feelings about the quarterback position have been hazy. Though cutting Carr would create \$16.5 million in extra cap space, picking up a veteran quarterback in free agency may cost the Raiders more. Picking up a veteran quarterback such as Phillip Rivers would create buzz for the Raiders as they start their first year in Las Vegas. Keeping Carr and picking up a backup such as Teddy Bridgewater or Marcus Mariota, on the other hand, could set the much needed fire underneath Carr to take him over the hill. If not that, the quarterback competition would at least tell Gruden what he needs to do moving forward.

Mitchell Trubisky: Bears

Another quarterback treading lightly is Chicago's 2017 2nd overall draft pick, Mitchell Trubisky. At the end of his rookie contract, Trubisky faces a make it or break it year. Finishing 8-8 after finishing 12-4 the year before, Trubisky's stocks have dropped. Trubisky threw for 3,138 yards and had a 17:10 TD/INT ratio in 2019. It should be noted that Trubisky suffered a shoulder injury which dramatically affected his game in 2019.

Although Trubisky had surgery in January that should allow him to be ready by training camp, the Bears may not want to risk further injury. By signing another quarterback this offseason, coaches will be able to give Trubisky enough time to come back 100% so they can further evaluate whether or not to keep him next year. Much like the Titans last year, the Bears do have a full team able to make a playoff run. Bringing in another quarterback would create competition as well as give the Bears another option to get where they want to be.

Tom Brady: The Patriots

I'll humor this just because it is a hot topic. For the first time in his career, Brady will be a free agent. The Patriots have been rumored to have offered him a \$30 million per year contract, though team owner Robert Kraft has said he wanted to give Brady his well deserved time and space. You may choose to believe that the former 6x Superbowl Champion will end his Patriots legacy with a pick 6 in a wild-card game, but I just do not see this happening.

Cam Newton: Panthers

Growing concerns over his history with injuries, future contract and beliefs he has peaked, have gotten Cam on this list. With new team owner David Tepper going in a new direction with coaching, after firing Ron Rivera in December, speculation has grown concerning if he will do the same with the quarterback position.

At 100% Cam is still a force to be dealt with and a new home could help bring that out of him. Well-rounded teams such as the Bears, Chargers and Titans, would be solidified with Cam as their starter.

Dak Prescott: Cowboys

As of this writing, Prescott and the Dallas Cowboys have yet to agree on a new contract. Prescott has stuck to his guns and as a result the Cowboys may be forced to franchise tag him this offseason. Team owner, Jerry Jones, has praised the young quarterback, but has also been known for not putting one player above the rest of the team. Cowboy fans were hammering for a change in coaching, leading to Jason Garrett's release after the Cowboys went 8-8 and failed to make the playoffs last season. Jones won't allow a player to dictate the movement and if he has to let Prescott go to prove a point, he will. Prescott will hopefully get a new contract when all is said and done, just do not be surprised if a free agent quarterback is added to fuel the drama in Dallas this offseason.

With seven months still left before the season starts, there are hundreds of scenarios that can occur. Between the free agency and the draft, no one is truly safe. The 2020 off-season begins February 25th when teams can begin to franchise tag players, while free agency opens March 18th.