



REDSKINS

BACK TO WORK

The Washington Redskins completed their first week of practice at the Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center in Richmond, VA., officially kicking off the 2016 season.

Cousins & Co. Want To Own The Air

Anointed the starting quarterback last year, and breaking numerous Redskins records in the process, Kirk Cousins enters 2016 more confident and poised than he's ever been. Now he's ready to distribute the ball to the best receiving corps Washington has ever seen.

By Jake Kring-Schreifels
Staff Writer, Redskins.com

Just after 4 p.m. ET on Oct. 25, 2015, the course of Kirk Cousins' career was dramatically altered.

The aid of hindsight provides us a compendium of moments to confirm the above statement – the “You Like That!” heard round the world, the Redskins' and Cousins' season suddenly shifting into gear, the variety of passing records eventually broken, the first division championship since 2012, the lucrative franchise tag applied months later, the first full offseason granted as the starting quarterback.

But even in the precious hours after Cousins led Washington back from a 24-point deficit to its greatest comeback in team history, a 31-30 statement against the Buccaneers, it was evident the Redskins had found their leader at quarterback. That Tampa Bay game was a “glaring” example, according to quarterbacks coach Matt Cavanaugh.

“Not getting frustrated, being down 24 points, just one drive at a time, just be precise, get the ball out of his hand, get it to our playmakers and being able to come back and win — that game gave him a ton of confidence,” Cavanaugh said.

The latter half of Cavanaugh's series of descriptions is what makes fans more hopeful in 2016. Cousins shed his turnover woes that had plagued him during the intermittent calls of duty over the previous three years, a testament to making better decisions and having the options to do so.

For the first time in his career, he had an arsenal of consistent playmakers at his disposal – tight end Jordan Reed escaping his injury riddled past and becoming one of the best targets at his position; rookie wide receiver Jamison Crowder emerging into a third-down converting machine; Pierre Garçon offering sure hands and a fearlessness to use them; DeSean Jackson, who upon returning from injury, gave his quarterback an unrivaled deep threat – easing Cousins' abrupt transition from backup to starter in 2015.

That the Redskins selected TCU wide receiver Josh Doctson in the first round of this year's NFL Draft now gives Cousins an almost overwhelming number of options as he breaks out of huddles.

“The key is, I just want to be a distributor,” Cousins said. “I want to be like a John Stockton on the basketball court. Just get them the ball, just get the assist, put the ball in their hands, and they're going to make us right, and they're going to make our offense look good. [I] can't wait to



spread it around.”

Owning the offseason

Because of last season – because he broke a team record throwing 4,166 yards, boasted a 69.8 percent completion percentage, second-highest ever from a Redskins quarterback, and then led his team to a home Wild Card playoff game – Kirk Cousins waded in uncharted territory in the months that followed.

Saddled with a hefty franchise tag contract and assurance from his coaches and teammates as the starting quarterback, the fourth-round Michigan State product suddenly had everything he wanted. But how would he handle it – the fame, the expectations, an entire offseason answering questions (“Do you like that, Kirk?”) about it all? He looked into the league's fraternity.

“I've called a few of the starting quarterbacks around the league, a few of the retired guys who had great careers, and just asked them what worked for them in the offseason,” Cousins said in May. “What was their rhythm in January, February, March, when they went back in April, May, June, what's their rhythm? What's their rhythm in the summer, how do they handle family, how do they balance travel and opportunities? I'm still figuring that out, so I don't know that I have a great answer. I'm trying to get to a routine that works for me and my wife and our family.”

During OTAs, coaches saw the difference. This was a stronger Kirk Cousins.

“He's obviously playing with a lot of confidence, having a lot of fun. He's got great command of the offense, that's the one thing that you notice,” Gruden said. “He's got great command over the formations. He's got great command over the snap count, and that's something he didn't so

much have the first year I was here and even last year in this time of year.”

That outward trust shouldn't be taken lightly. It's a direct reflection of what they've seen and heard on the field and in the locker room. As the starting quarterback – one knowing he will take snaps with the first-team offense every day in practice, lead his team onto the field during games and be trusted with a designation only 31 other men are afforded – Cousins has a new perspective in 2016. This team is his.

“You have permission now to take ownership,” he said. “You know, as a backup or a guy competing for the spot, it doesn't get received real well to try and take ownership. It looks like you are trying to jockey for the position and be one of those guys...I think it helps me as a quarterback to have ownership because at the end of the day, I am the one holding the football in my hands.”

As good as the guys around him

During the first day of minicamp in mid-June, Cousins dropped back, scanned down field and found DeSean Jackson open, streaking left across the field, and lofted a rainbow to the speedster for a touchdown.

Moments later, once the score was confirmed, Cousins began sprinting down the field yelling. “Celebrate!” he screamed, like a giddy kid. Then he turned to the media, and in a quarter sarcastic tone of voice exclaimed, “You all love that!” before slapping fives with Jackson.

It's unclear whether Cousins will continue to lean on the phrase that made him semi-famous, but if he continues to find open receivers and make big plays, that popular slogan will inspire more smiles than eye-rolls. All the evidence so

far suggests fans will be partaking in more of the former.

As Cousins will rightly tell you, “it's really exciting when you look at the list of guys. I know it's been well documented how much talent there is.” By guys, he means receivers, offensive weapons ready to expose defenses down the field. On paper, the opportunities for Cousins & Co. to have another big year are mouth-watering.

“I'll be the first one to say, we have a lot of talent,” Cousins said. “The receiver position, the tight end position, the running back position. It's my job, and the quarterback's job, to just get them the football and let them do the work, you know. Get the ball out of my hand and let them go make plays. It's exciting to have that many talented players on your offense.”

But talented players and a talented quarterback do not a talented offense make, right away. One of the reasons it took Cousins until the middle of the season to find a rapport with his targets was because September and October functioned as May and June. With little opportunity to work directly with the first-team offense in the offseason, trust needed to be built, something that doesn't happen haphazardly the week the team needs it to.

That's why, beginning with that comeback victory against Tampa Bay, Washington went 7-3 in its last 10 games, which included a four-game winning streak to close out the season. In that 10-game span, Cousins recorded an average 119.1 quarterback rating, threw for 2,746 yards and completed 72.3 percent of his passes, 23 of which were touchdowns. Compare that to his first six games – six touchdowns, eight interceptions and a 66 percent completion percentage – and the difference is clear.

The offense found a rhythm. It got used to Cousins' snap count, his audibles, his decision making, which progressed in each game. The results bred confidence, which bred even better results. Now add a full offseason together, getting to gel with the same group, which doesn't have to worry about who will be throwing the football. As Cousins continues to fine-tune deciphering defenses, he'll have better understanding of who will be open, who he can throw open, and, in the case of 6-foot-2, 206-pound Doctson, knowing who will always make it seem as though he is open.

“I think the sky's the limit for him,” Jackson said of Cousins. “He's a guy you want in your huddle when the game's on because he's gonna be there to tell everybody what we need to do, and go out there and execute it.”

REDSKINS

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Confidence At Corner

In mid-April, the Redskins swooped in to steal Josh Norman from free agency after he was unexpectedly released by Carolina. Now, with Bashaud Breeland coming off a career year, Washington's secondary enters 2016 ready to stop anything that comes its way.

By Stephen Czarda
Senior Writer, Redskins.com

"I want to win the granddaddy of the all. I want to win the Super Bowl. And I'm not going to stop until I get back there."

Those were some of the first words out of cornerback Josh Norman's mouth just minutes after his surprise signing with the Washington Redskins.

During a fairly quiet Wednesday afternoon in April, the Carolina Panthers sent shockwaves through the sports world, as the team announced that Norman's franchise tag had been rescinded, instantly making the All-Pro a free agent.

After reports surfaced that the Redskins were among the top suitors to land the 28 year old, Washington got first dibs on getting Norman to visit.

It would be his only visit.

Redskins brass flew to Norman's home in Atlanta on the Friday morning of April 22nd. By late evening, he was a proud member of the organization.

"It was a whirlwind," Redskins defensive coordinator Joe Barry said. "But the thing with Josh, I mean obviously to get a player of his caliber, the type of work ethic, the type of character... The story I always tell people is that we walked out of the building with Josh and his family and all of us at about 10:30 on that Friday night, he was going back to the airport to fly back home."

Norman said his decision was made by his family, who joined him in the flight from Atlanta to Washington, D.C.

"It wasn't so much my decision, it was a family decision as well because, shoot, once I got on that plane, they didn't let me out the building," Norman said. "I went around and I asked all of my brothers, my mom and pop, it was either here or New Orleans. Sean

Payton, who is my long-time, good friend, wanted me out there but I asked and I went around the room and it was like, 'Hey man, what do you guys think?'

Each and every one of them gave me my spiel, gave them their spiel, the pros and the cons - we weighed that - and they started to speak and I said, 'OK, N.O. [New Orleans]! Maybe one or two raised their hand. Then I said, 'Redskins! I don't know what the president did, the owner and the GM, but everybody raised their hand and I looked at it like, 'Well, here we go. This is done, sealed, signed and delivered me over.' So I was here. I loved it every step of the way."

While Redskins general manager

Scot McCloughan prefers to be a limited dabbler in free agency, the opportunity to bring in Norman was one on which he couldn't pass.

"The thing that's good about this organization and my personnel department is we always try to be one step ahead," McCloughan said. "We're always on to stuff, and there's possible cap casualties, there's possible stuff with the franchise tag. Very lucky to be the first ones in there. A lot of teams got in-

alongside someone coming off an All-Pro season.

Breeland still feels like he's the Redskins' top cornerback, but, with Norman around, the Clemson product has been pushed to the No. 2 cornerback position.

That bodes well for the Redskins in both the short- and long term.

"I'm excited," Breeland said. "I feel like we've got a good tandem. The work and style he brings in is gonna help a



involved. We got him here ASAP. We were the first team he visited. That's huge, because he's in the prime of his career. And I understand the contracts and all that, but that's part of the process. That's part of the business. But we're getting a really good football player that's going to help us win games."

Breeland's opportunity

Over the next few weeks, while Norman grabbed all of the headlines, third-year cornerback Bashaud Breeland quietly went to work.

Breeland - a fourth-round pick in the 2014 NFL Draft - has been the Redskins' best cornerback over the last two seasons.

As a rookie, Breeland appeared in all 16 games, making 15 starts. His 15 starts were the third-most by a Redskins rookie cornerback behind only Pro Football Hall of Famer Darrell Green and 1999 first-round pick Champ Bailey.

He enters 2016 with 143 career tackles (112 solo), 30 passes defended, five forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries and four interceptions. But for the first time in his career, Breeland is working

lot."

Redskins defensive backs coach Perry Fewell, who is entering his 18th season as an NFL coach, believes Norman's presence will only benefit Breeland.

"The best thing that could happen for Breeland is to have Norman come, because Norman has worked, he's a worker," Fewell said. "Breeland's a worker also, so if you can channel that and get that work ethic. He can learn a few trick of the trade, by example from Josh and that just elevates him."

Breeland said the "technically sound" Norman has kept him on his "P's and Q's."

"He's very good at it and that's something he's made me work on this offseason," Breeland said.

Redskins head coach Jay Gruden doesn't think Norman's presence will change anything for Breeland.

"He is considered a top corner," Gruden said. "You kind of laugh at how you'd say you've got a No. 1 receiver, No. 2 receiver. You need two to three good receivers, and you need three to four good cornerbacks. You know, we may

or may not travel a lot, so it depends on the formation, who he's going to get, but he's a quality corner. He can play nickel also, he's very versatile, he's an excellent special teamer. But his role won't change. He's going to play a lot of football for us in a lot of different ways and he's going to help this team win a lot of games."

DeAngelo Hall, a 13-year veteran who is now a full-time safety, says Norman will also allow Breeland, 24, even more time to hit a high potential ceiling.

"We were out there working out a little bit, and Josh is kind of interjecting to Bree a little bit and they're going back and forth on how they see different things," Hall said during the offseason.

"And it's that kind of insight that any young player can use to get better at his craft."

Committed to winning a super bowl

The Monday following his signing, Norman was already back at work. Between interview requests with the media and initial introductions with his new teammates, Norman was in his comfort zone inside the Redskins' weight room.

Instead of cashing in on his expensive payday, Norman - who has worked his way up from a walk-on at Coastal Carolina to one of the top cornerbacks in the NFL - was right back at his season preparation.

"He wasn't one of those guys that said, 'Hey, I'll get there when OTAs start.' He was literally there 48 hours later and in the building at 8:00 in the morning with his new teammates working with Coach [Mike] Clark," Barry said. "To me, that said a lot about him. We obviously see all of the clips on NFL Network and the plays that he makes on the field, but his true character is his work ethic, his passion, and he wants to be great and he wants to make his teammates around him great. I think that is a huge attribute that he has that a lot of people don't see."

That sort of worker's mentality hasn't gone unnoticed by Norman's teammates.

"I think he is very exceptional because with him he is super competitive; he does everything the right way and he loves football," safety Will Blackmon said. "Just to work out and practice with him, his ball skills are awesome. His main thing is that he is super competitive and extremely confident and if you're a confident player that's going to help you because it's half the battle."

DOUBLE COVERAGE



OFFICIAL FAN REFRESHMENT
OF
THE WASHINGTON REDSKINS



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Redskins Salute Holds Military Appreciation Day

Redskins Salute last Saturday held a Military Appreciation Day for service men and women, providing them an opportunity to see practice and mingle with the players.



cousin serves in the military. "I've got the utmost respect for what they do, and it's a real life situation. Because of that, I don't take what I do too seriously...the fact that they're going over and laying their life on the lines for us all the time is definitely something I appreciate."

For some veterans, seeing younger generations give thanks was moving.

"I feel kind of good inside, I feel special that in today's day and age that the military is appreciated," Sgt. 1st Class Mark McPherson Sr. said. "It's long overdue. And what the Redskins do for us, just something as small as this, it touches my heart."

McPherson, who retired after 23 years in the U.S. Army, was optimistic about both society appreciating the armed forces as well as the Redskins chances to repeat as division champions.

"As soon as I heard about Redskins Salute I had to sign up," Master Chief Rhonda Killmon also noted. "I try to go to as many events as they have, they treat us so wonderfully and great, it's just a privilege to be a member of it."

It was a day many won't forget any time soon.

"The Redskins Salute Program being the first program of it's kind, I think all NFL teams should do the same thing," Sgt. 1st Class Jim McCulley Jr. said. "I know they do military appreciation month and salute to service games but Redskins Salute is unique, the veterans actually get an interaction with the NFL. Some of the things they do through the program are awesome. It really helps out veterans and they appreciate it. I'm so proud of the Redskins."

By Danny Heifetz
Contributing Writer, Redskins.com

Redskins Salute, the official military appreciation club of the Washington Redskins, held Military Appreciation Day presented by GEICO Military last Saturday at the Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center in Richmond, Va.

The first 50 military members in attendance were given VIP passes to enjoy practice. The day featured giveaways, raffles and discounts for service members, but was truly represented by the mutual admiration of service members and the Redskins players.

"It's very great to give back to us and give us the opportunity to meet some of the players and treat us like we mean something," MM3 Petty Officer Chris James said. James, a Redskins fan since 2005, returned from his second deployment in May. He left Norfolk, Va., at 4 a.m. on Saturday morning to arrive in time to enter the VIP section.

The players were quick to offer their gratitude to service members as



they came off the field.

"I don't think there's anything more important than the military to our country, so to be able to go over (to the veterans) and show some appreciation for them, and that we couldn't play this game if it weren't for what they do is huge," defensive end Trent

Murphy said.

Players were humbled to spend time with the troops in a reminder that football isn't the only job where you put your body on the line.

"It's important to us, obviously they do their best to defend our country," said safety Will Blackmon, whose

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Bobby Beathard To Be Inducted Into The Redskins' Ring Of Fame

Bobby Beathard's teams appeared in seven Super Bowls during his lengthy NFL career in various front offices, but none of his tenures were more exciting than his time with the Redskins.

By Stephen Czarda
Senior Writer, Redskins.com

Sixteen years after Bobby Beathard left the ranks of NFL general managers, he remains one of the best men to ever hold the position in league history.

In total, Beathard appeared in four Super Bowls in the role of general manager, the first three of which came with the Washington Redskins.

Starting on Feb. 24, 1978, when he was named Redskins general manager, Beathard would go on to help Washington earn two Super Bowl titles while accumulating a regular season record of 105-63 before leaving the organization after the 1988 season.

On Saturday, Beathard stepped to the podium alongside Redskins president Bruce Allen at the Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center in Richmond, Va., for a press conference to announce his soon-to-be induction into the Redskins' Ring of Fame.

Beathard will be inducted during a ceremony that will take place during the Redskins' annual homecoming against the Minnesota Vikings on Nov. 13.

"I was in the NFL a long time with different teams, but our favorite memories are certainly here because when we were with the Redskins, our kids were growing up here, went to high school in Virginia, and went on to college [in] different places," Beathard said. "Just being able to be around this - I came to the Redskins from the Miami Dolphins, and the years at the Miami Dolphins including the '72 season of undefeated teams and being with [Don] Shula, I learned a lot more than I ever had up until that time about football. So I felt coming into a situation like this that I felt prepared because I never wanted to go into a situation that I felt was too big for me or where I wasn't prepared."

One of Beathard's biggest decisions came in 1981.

After the Redskins parted ways with head coach Jack Pardee in 1980, Beathard decided to bring in Joe Gibbs as the team's next head coach.

Gibbs had slowly worked his way up the coaching ranks, eventually becoming the San Diego Chargers' offensive coordinator under Don Coryell.

But Beathard saw head coaching potential in Gibbs after receiving

confirmation from one of his friends - Ernie Zampese - that the future Pro Football Hall of Famer was more than ready for the job.

"I called Joe and said, 'Do you want the job?' He said 'yeah,'" Beathard recalled. "So, I said, 'I've got some coaches on our staff here at the Redskins that I would like you to keep, you pick some coaches on offense that you want and we will put a staff together.'"

Not everyone was initially on board with the Gibbs decision, though.

the Redskins opened up the 1981 season on a five-game losing streak.

But the combination of Beathard and Gibbs slowly turned around that season, as the team posted a respectable record of 8-8.

That season laid the foundation for an incredible run that collected three Super Bowl appearances and two Lombardi Trophies.

"We started winning and I'd start to go to [Cooke's] house and he'd bring Joe out once in a while and he'd say, 'Joe,

but the seven-time Pro Bowler was one-of-a-kind.

"A little-bitty corner, but he had the fastest 100-meter time in the world that year and all that," Beathard recalled of Green's selection. "I knew that coach down there (at Texas A&I), Coach [Gil] Steinke, and he had a number of players come out of there. So anyway, I decided Darrell was going to be our guy, if he's still there. I couldn't believe he'd still be there. And Richie Petitbon was our secondary coach, our defensive coordinator. I told Richie that I had found a guy and he said, 'Who is it?' and I said, 'I'll tell you later because somehow it will get out.'"

Even though Green was just 5-foot-8, Beathard admitted he looked even smaller in person.

"[Petitbon] said, 'Bobby, there's nobody - nobody - that little that can play in this league,'" Beathard said.

Just one guy could, though.

"It worked out pretty good," Beathard said with a smile.

Working his magic

Just two games into the 1987 season, NFL players went on strike. Unlike the 1982 season where team operations completely shut down during that strike, teams created makeshift rosters full of undrafted free agents and castoffs.

That's when Beathard was at his best.

Over the three-week span that replacement players took the field, the Redskins were just one of three teams to win all of their games.

Instead of winning with the likes of Doug Williams at quarterback, they were doing so with Ed Rubbert and Tony Robinson.

As Art Monk stayed away, Anthony Allen was racking up 200-yard games.

"We brought a bunch of rag-tag guys in but our coaching staff was great because our coaching staff took it seriously and thought, 'If we can just win a few games in these strike years, then we'll still be in the running,'" Beathard said. "We won all our games in the strike year and then when the strike ended, we actually kept a lot of those guys on the team. They got Super Bowl pay. It was one of the real highlights all the time I was in the NFL. That strike year was one of the real great memories I had. That was because when you get coaches like that, that are willing to do that, it made it all better."



So I went into [former Redskins owner] Mr. [Jack Kent] Cooke and he said, 'What are we going to do about a coach?' I said 'I've got a coach.' He said 'What do you mean you've got a coach? You didn't even tell me about the coach,'" Beathard said. "I said, 'Well, we haven't hired him but I got a coach I am thinking of. He had some ideas and he said 'OK, who is it?' I said 'Well, you probably haven't heard of him. It's a guy named Joe Gibbs.' He said 'Joe Gibbs? Who in the hell is Joe Gibbs?' He said, 'When we announce a guy named Joe Gibbs, they will crucify me!' He is talking about not me but he is talking about him. So he did not want us to hire Joe Gibbs. I said, 'I already told him he could have the job and we have already put the staff together.'"

The situation only got worse when

you're the coach I always wanted! I told Bobby to get Joe Gibbs - I don't want you to screw this up. We've got to have Joe Gibbs here," Beathard said with a smile. "That was a story I always liked from him."

Bringing Darrell Green on board

Unlike the Redskins under George Allen's control, Beathard liked to keep the team's first round picks by the time the NFL Draft rolled around.

After defeating the Miami Dolphins in Super Bowl XVII, the Redskins held the 28th and final pick in the first round of the 1983 NFL Draft.

Beathard used it on little-known cornerback by the name of Darrell Green.

Green's diminutive size and college background wasn't the normal concoction for an NFL superstar,

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Homegrown And Here To Stay

Since Redskins general manager Scot McCloughan began his tenure at the start of 2015, he has made sure to reward several of the team's homegrown talents with multi-year contracts, laying a sturdy foundation for the franchise.

By Stephen Czarda
Senior Writer, Redskins.com

Scot McCloughan has a very precise way of how he wants to build a football team's roster. On Jan. 9, 2015, McCloughan first laid out his vision for where he wanted to go with the Washington Redskins.

Instead of a team created through pricey free agent moves, McCloughan would mold the Redskins through homegrown talent.

It was something he learned early in his career as a scout with the Green Bay Packers in the 1990s.

"The first thing I learned...is to not dabble in free agency," McCloughan said. "It's always the draft. I'm a little different - I'm a little more aggressive than that. ... You don't do kneejerk reactions. You're very, very thorough, not just from the standpoint of how they play on tape but how they're wired."

A little more than six months after McCloughan was first introduced as Redskins general manager, the team announced a multi-year contract extension for linebacker Ryan Kerrigan.

A month later, perennial Pro Bowl left tackle Trent Williams also agreed to new terms with the Redskins.

Both homegrown talents will be cornerstone players for Washington over the next few years.

"To get to a moment like this where you get a chance to play out the rest of your NFL career with the team that drafted you, the team that you love, the city that you love, it hasn't really hit me yet, but it's an awesome feeling," Kerrigan said in July 2015.

"Now it's my job to go reward the Redskins for the faith they put in me by playing well this year, and for the rest of my career."

"It feels great to know that I'll be ready to go for another five seasons," Williams said a month later. "It's a dream come true."

Trent Williams

Since being drafted by the Redskins in the 2010 and 2011 NFL Drafts, respectively, Kerrigan and Williams have been two of the most consistent players in the NFL.

Williams - who has been selected to four-straight Pro Bowls and is now a mainstay on the NFL's annual "Top 100 Players" list - has appeared in 85 games with 84 starts over the last six seasons.

With his four Pro Bowl appearances, Williams became just the third Redskins tackle to make four consecutive appearances in the NFL's all-star game, joining Chris Samuels and Joe Jacoby.

Williams has also blossomed into one of the team's leaders, as he's been voted on by his teammates as a captain each of the last four seasons.

Prior to his arrival in Washington last year, offensive line coach Bill Callahan had worked with 22 Pro Bowl players over his first 17 years as an NFL coach. His 23rd Pro Bowl player has all of the qualities that those enshrined in Canton had during their playing careers.

"Well I consider him the best," Callahan said. "I've been very fortunate to be around a lot of all-pro tackles and this



guy's off the charts athletically, I mean I tell him that all the time. And what can do with his talent level whether it's on the perimeter, at the point of attack, downfield on screens, it's scary, it really is."

Callahan added: "He's got the type of feet that Hall of Famers have. And, boy, as he keeps putting together these years, stacking these years, back-to-back Pro Bowls and All-Pros, someone will have a decision somewhere down the line."

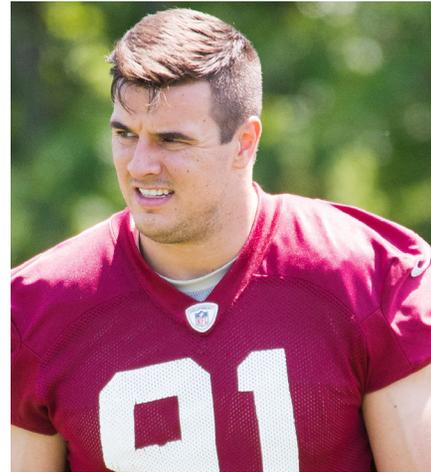
Ryan Kerrigan

Kerrigan, meanwhile, is already third all-time in Redskins history in sacks with 47.5 entering the 2016 season.

Since joining the Redskins as the No. 16-overall pick in the 2011 NFL Draft, Kerrigan, a unanimous All-Pro during his senior season at Purdue, has been the defense's top contributor.

He's started all 80 regular season games he's appeared in, becoming only the third Redskins player to start all 16 games in a season in each of his first five NFL seasons.

His 17 forced fumbles are also the



into his third year here. We got him a little bit late [in 2014]. We didn't really have full season to work with him. He's continuing to improve so I'm encouraged with what Tress is doing. The good thing about Tress is that he is a hard worker, he's diligent in his craft, and he wants to get better."

Jordan Reed

Then in May, the Redskins sent waves through the NFL with the signing of tight end Jordan Reed to an extension. Reed was able to shed the injury-prone label some had placed on him during the 2015 season, as he hauled in 87 receptions for 952 yards and 11 touchdowns in 14 games. Leading the Redskins in all three statistical categories, Reed became the first tight end for the franchise to come out on top of all three receiving marks since Jean Fugett did so in 1978.

"You know, it's a great testament to him and the work that he's put in, obviously learning the system, production and then in the weight room," Redskins head coach Jay Gruden said. "He's worked extremely hard, and he's earned

second most by any player in the NFL since 2011, trailing only two-time Pro Bowler Charles Tillman.

"Ryan Kerrigan is a classic warrior. I mean every day is exactly the same," Redskins defensive coordinator Joe Barry said.

"I think what's unbelievable is that it does not matter if it's September or if it's February, I see Ryan Kerrigan every single day. There's no offseason with this guy, he is in the building every single day and I think he's a great example of a true professional because he works his tail off."

But Kerrigan and Williams aren't the only players the Redskins have pulled the trigger on for long-term deals.

Tress Way

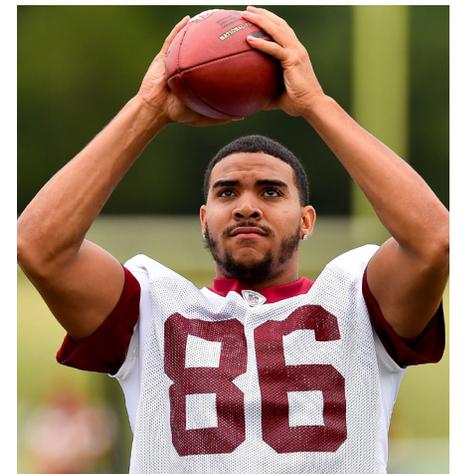
In March, the Redskins signed punter Tress Way to a five-year contract extension. While Way started his NFL career with the Chicago Bears, it was in Washington where he got the opportunity to prove himself.

In his first season with the team in 2014, Way, a late preseason addition, became the first member of the Redskins to lead the NFL in punting for a season since Sam Baker in 1958.

The Oklahoma product finished with the fourth-best gross average in team history, trailing only Sammy Baugh's full-season NFL record (51.4 yards per punt in 1940) and Baugh's 1941 and 1942 campaigns (48.7 and 48.2).

Way followed up his debut performance with an average of 38.8 net yards per punt in 2015, the second-best single-season average in team records available back to 1976.

At just 26 years old, Way is only on the upswing. "I would say that it's safe to say that he is an improving young player," Redskins special teams coordinator Ben Kotwica said. "I think that you've got to remember that he is only going



that contract. You know, I love the fact that when you have guys that you draft and you build through the system that perform, you reward them and he's a perfect example of that. It's a great message to send to the rest of the guys."

Kerrigan said seeing players get long-term efforts is giving everyone "a great bout of confidence."

"It lets you know that what you've been doing for the past three or four years is appreciated," Kerrigan said. "And it's great to know that you're going to be around the team that drafted you, great to know that you're going to be around the community that you've come into, it's just, like I said, a great bout of confidence."

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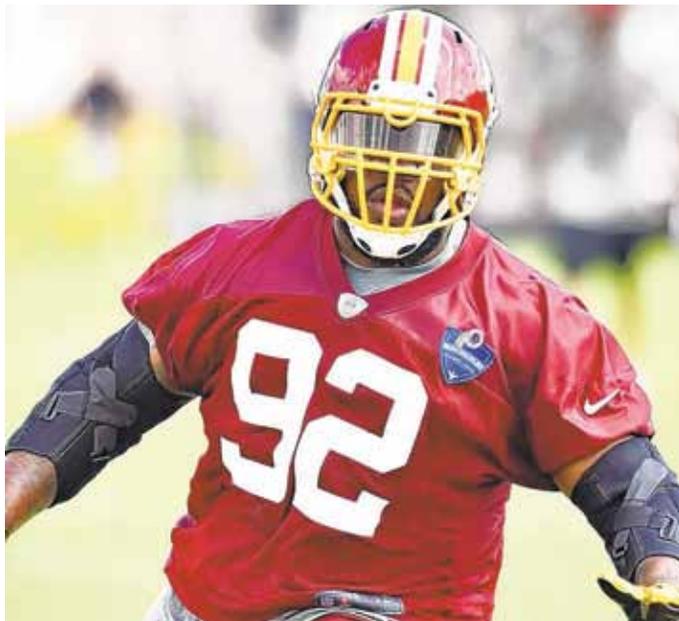
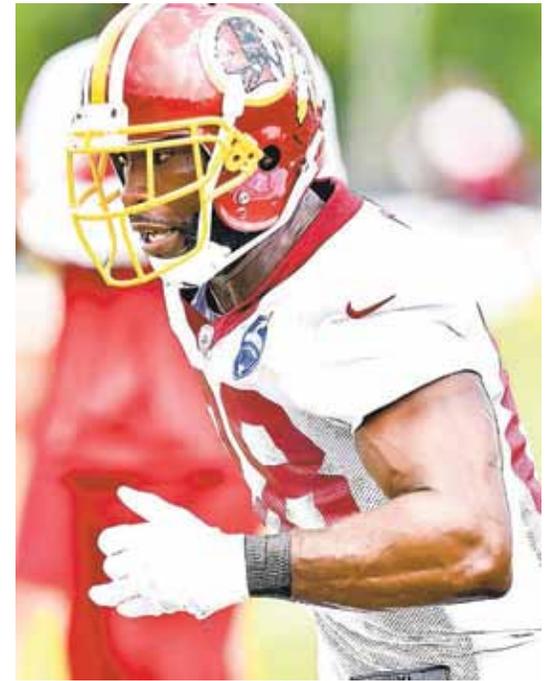
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Washington Redskins Training Camp In Photos

The Washington Redskins got right back to work at the Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center in Richmond, VA., continuing to prepare for the 2016 season.

Photos by Garrett Campbell - Team Photographer - Washington Redskins







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