

THE SPORTIER

Miracles Do Happen

There is really only one player that is deserving of the NFL's Comeback Player of the Year Award. While there can be an argument made in favor of Steeler's Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, who has led his team to a near-perfect season up to this point, the only man that should truly receive the honor is Washington QB Alex Smith. The miraculous journey back to the NFL began for Smith in Week 11 of 2018. In a game against the Houston Texans, Smith was sacked, and in the process, [suffered a compound fracture in his right leg](#). This injury was just the start of the chaos that would ensue. Smith was rushed to the hospital to ultimately have successful surgery to repair his leg. He would seemingly be released from the hospital soon thereafter, though even Smith himself knew he would be unable to return to action for the rest of the season. Unfortunately, he experienced unstable blood pressure and extremely high fevers, which proved to be the result of a severe infection related to his leg. On Thanksgiving Day, surgeons came to the conclusion that the bacteria that had infected Smith was in fact very harmful, as it was eating away at his muscle tissue. Necrotizing fasciitis, caused by flesh-eating bacteria, was found in Smith's blood stream, and doctors had told his wife that while saving his leg was extremely important, given the extent of his infection, it would take a miracle for that to happen. The doctors were determined to save the quarterback, and they worked on his leg every single day until the bacteria was eliminated from his system. As a result of the constant work and attempts to salvage his leg, doctors said that Smith had extremely minimal amounts of muscle surrounding his tibia, which they noted was comparable to a military blast. In the most difficult decision the whole Smith family had to make, the doctors presented him with two options. Because of the severity of his injury, and since there was no muscle in the area, his safest option was to amputate his leg and regain all of his strength. The other alternative, a risky one at that, was to transfer muscle from his left unaffected leg to the ailing right leg.

Though there was extreme risk in this decision, as he could potentially be weakening his only good leg if surgery did not go perfectly well, Smith knew that he wanted to get back on the field, and the only way for him to do that was to regain strength in both legs. After a successful surgery, Smith was brought home to recover. With his family at his side, constant medications, and a desire to get back to the field, Alex persevered through one of the most difficult injuries we have seen in recent sports history. He continuously sought opportunities through physical therapy and training in the at-the-time Redskins' practice facility, all to try and get back on the field as soon as possible. After a total of 17 surgeries and 9 months in the hospital, Smith was able to finally return to the NFL. Just under a week ago, on Monday, December 7th, Alex Smith defeated the 11-0 Pittsburgh Steelers on the road, while also dealing with a left ankle that was [gushing blood](#). Though it is clear that Roethlisberger, who has the 5th most passing touchdowns this season with 27, has had a much better statistical year than Smith, it truly is a miracle that a man that almost lost his leg is now helping his team push for a playoff spot. Alex Smith is not only the NFL's Comeback Player of the Year, he may just be Comeback Athlete of the Year.



NFC Least

Guest Editorial by Peter Kasper

Big week for the Giants and Daniel Jones. Coming off a surprise upset at the Seahawks last week, the Giants face a tough test against the Cardinals and Kyler Murray this week. The way I see it, the G-Men need to win 2 of their last 4 games to make their way into the playoffs. After the Cards, the Giants face the Browns, Ravens, and Cowgirls. The other "contender" in the NFC Least is the Washington Football Team. Their remaining schedule includes the 49ers, Seahawks, Panthers, and Eagles. I think it will be near impossible for them to win 3 of those 4 and knowing the Giants own the tiebreaker (head-to-head) gives them the big advantage, and likely only needing to win 2 of 4.

And it's time for Daniel Jones to step up and take a big step forward. He didn't play in last week's win (arguably the most important of the season) and needs to lead this team to a playoff berth - which would be quite remarkable when considering the absence of Saquon Barkley this season. If you told me Saquon would play in 1-½ games this season and then said the G-Men would be leading the division with 4 weeks to go, I would have called you crazy, but here we are. It is imperative Jones take that leap over the last month of the season. I'm not a Giants fan, but I think he can do it.

The other two teams in the division are in shambles and hardly worth a mention. I don't expect much from either of them, so if you give Washington a win over Philly and the Giants one over the Cowgirls, that leaves one W for the Giants to get out of the remaining 3 games. Just a hunch, but I think that win will come against the Browns.

PS - Knicks 1-0 thus far in the preseason.

Sources:

[ESPN](#), [Yahoo! Sports](#), [Team Rankings](#)