SPORTS ANALYSIS

Dak Prescott Has Had 10 Seasons. Dallas Is Still Waiting.

By Kai Schultz



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Dak Prescott is a playmaker in the regular season, but after a decade of evidence, there is little reason to believe he is the quarterback who will finally lead the Dallas Cowboys to a Super Bowl. Cowboys fans love to say, “this is our year,” but history continues to prove them wrong. In 10 seasons with Dallas, Prescott has led the Cowboys to the playoffs five times, never advancing past the divisional round.

While Cowboys fans praise his ability, Prescott has thrown seven interceptions in seven career playoff games. Six of those interceptions resulted in points for the opposing team. Prescott holds a 2-5 playoff record, with both of his wins coming in the wild-card round.

For a quarterback expected to lead one of the NFL’s most recognizable franchises back to championship contention, those numbers are hard to ignore. Prescott has shown throughout his career that he is capable of leading a successful offense. He can make plays through the air, extend drives and give Dallas a chance to win throughout the regular season.

The problem has never been whether Prescott is capable of being a good quarterback. The question is whether he can perform at the same level when the Cowboys reach the postseason. So far, the answer has been no.

Dallas has repeatedly entered the playoffs with high expectations only to see its season end before reaching the NFC championship game. One of the worst examples came after the 2023 season. Dallas finished 12-5 and earned a home playoff game, only to lose 48-32 to Green Bay in the wild-card round.

At some point, playoff losses can no longer be dismissed as bad luck or isolated performances. When the same result continues to occur season after season, it becomes part of a quarterback's legacy. That does not mean every playoff loss should be blamed entirely on Prescott.

Football is a team game, and the Cowboys have had problems beyond the quarterback position. Coaching decisions, defensive performances and mistakes throughout the entire roster have all contributed to Dallas' postseason failures. However, franchise quarterbacks are expected to be the players who help their teams overcome those problems.

Prescott is not being paid like an average quarterback. His four-year, $240 million contract places a significant financial commitment on the Cowboys and gives the organization less flexibility when building the rest of the roster. When a team invests that much money in one position, the expectation cannot simply be regular-season success.

The expectation has to be championships. That is especially true in Dallas, where the Cowboys continue to carry expectations created by the franchise's history. Making the playoffs is not enough for an organization that measures success in Super Bowl trophies.

The Cowboys have not reached the NFC championship game since the 1995 season, when they went on to win Super Bowl XXX. Prescott is obviously not responsible for the entire drought, but he has now been the starting quarterback for a decade of it. Prescott's contract also puts additional pressure on him to perform when the games matter most.

A highly paid quarterback can make roster construction more difficult because there is less money available to strengthen other positions. That means Dallas needs Prescott to elevate the players around him rather than relying on the organization to build a nearly perfect roster. That is where the biggest concern surrounding Prescott remains.

Dallas can surround him with talent. The Cowboys can change coaches, adjust their offensive system and continue adding players around him. None of those changes matter if the same quarterback continues struggling to get the team beyond the divisional round.

Prescott still has an opportunity to change the narrative. A deep playoff run would challenge much of the criticism surrounding his postseason career. Quarterbacks are often remembered differently after one championship run, and Prescott could eventually prove his critics wrong.

But predictions should be based on what a player has shown, not what fans hope eventually happens. After 10 seasons, there is now a substantial body of evidence showing what the Cowboys have been with Prescott at quarterback. They have been competitive.

They have made the playoffs. They have given fans reasons to believe. They just have not gotten close enough to a Super Bowl.

Prescott has proven he can win games in the regular season, but the standard in Dallas has always been championships. After 10 seasons, five playoff appearances, a 2-5 playoff record and no trips beyond the

divisional round, the evidence is becoming difficult to ignore. The Cowboys can keep believing that next season will be different, but until Prescott proves otherwise in January, “this is our year” will remain little more than a familiar promise.