

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Russell Wilson



Too Short? *No . . .* *Too Good!*

When coaches look at a quarterback, they are often looking for size. They want a big, strong, tall guy who can throw over the reaching arms of defensive linemen. Short QBs are rarely favored in the NFL.

Russell Wilson is the answer to all those who say you have to be tall to succeed at quarterback. He's only 5-11, but he's clearly among the standouts at the position.

Russell grew up in Virginia, and it didn't matter to those teams then how tall he was. They just loved all the touchdowns he scored. In three high school seasons, he passed for more than 6,000 yards and led his team to three straight state championships!

How good of an overall athlete was Russell? Along with all those touchdowns, passing yards, and state titles, he was drafted by the Baltimore Orioles in 2007 for his baseball skills! But he chose to go to college for football.

He actually didn't have a lot of choices for college. As great as he had been in high school, many top schools did not think that he could succeed in college at his size. But as he had always done, he let his play on the field answer that objection.

At North Carolina State, he soon earned the starting job. In his first two seasons, he set an NCAA record by throwing 379 straight passes without an interception. By his junior year, he was the leading passer in NC State's Atlantic Coast Conference and helped the Wolfpack earn a bid to a bowl game.

However, NC State wanted to try another passer. Russell still had one more year in college, but he considered becoming a pro baseball player. In 2010, the Colorado Rockies drafted him and would have been glad to have him as a speedy outfielder. He played minor league baseball in the summer of 2011 but headed to the University of Wisconsin for one more season in college. The Badgers were happy he did! He led them to a Big Ten championship and a spot in the Rose Bowl. For the season, he continued his remarkable accuracy, with a 72.8 completion percentage. He also set a Wisconsin record, with 33 TD passes. At the time it was the second most in Big Ten history.

Though he had great success at two schools and was clearly an athletic star, Wilson was still overlooked by many NFL teams. Seattle took a chance on him, however, picking him in the third round.

Seattle coach Pete Carroll soon saw that he had something special in his young passer. Wilson came complete