

NFL Predictions: Washington Redskins NFC East Preview

Contributed by Matt Foust
Wednesday, 13 August 2008
Last Updated Wednesday, 13 August 2008

The second Joe Gibbs era in Washington ended without a Super Bowl victory; however, Gibbs was able to lead the Redskins to two playoff appearances in four seasons. Owner Daniel Snyder seemed to take a different approach to things this off season by hiring a fresh face to replace Gibbs. Jim Zorn was tabbed to lead the Redskins into the future with the hope of achieving past results. NFL Betting odds at SBGglobal.com currently list Washington at +3000 odds to win the Super Bowl.

The Redskins featured a middle of the road offense in 2007, making the hire of former Kansas City coordinator Al Saunders a failure. Washington was not able to break the top 10 in any offensive category and they never resembled the high powered attack Saunders put together in KC. However, some former Redskins indicated that Gibbs occasionally dabbled in Saunders plans and at times took over play calling duties. Zorn is clearing the air and implementing the same West Coast style of offense that Mike Holmgren runs in Seattle.

Zorn brought Sherman Smith with him from the Seahawks to be the Redskins new offensive coordinator. Smith will be working with largely the same personnel that Saunders did, but it appears that they will be much healthier in 2008. Last year the offensive line was devastated by injuries and they never developed any sort of rhythm. Also, quarterback Jason Campbell suffered a season ending knee injury in week 12. The line, while sporting some pretty good age, is now ready to go, as is Campbell. The Redskins also have some top-notch skill position players in running back Clinton Portis, wide receiver Santana Moss, and tight end Chris Cooley.

Defensively Washington was more than respectable last year. They will be even better in 2008 with the additions of Jason Taylor and Erasmus James. The Redskins should definitely improve upon the 33 sacks they had last year. Against the run, Washington ranked fourth in the league in 2007 by holding teams to 91.3 yards rushing per game. There is no reason why the team should drop off here as the new coordinator will be Greg Blanche. Blanche has been the defensive line coach for the past four seasons.

This unit is solid in every capacity and they should without question be a top 10 defense in 2008. For this reason, Washington should finish out of the NFC East cellar.

NFL Betting odds at SBGglobal.com list the Redskins at +1500 odds to win the NFC Championship and +750 odds to win the NFC East. The team's win total is set at 7.5 with the over a -125.

Prediction: 3rd Place NFC East.