

NFL Extra

Week 14

Segment	TRT
Greg Cook Part 1	6:10
Greg Cook Part 2	7:35

02:32:09 - GREG COOK – PART 1

WHO'S THE MOST TALENTED QB IN FOOTBALL HISTORY? SOME SAY JOHNNY UNITAS. OTHERS, ELWAY. A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK IT WAS JOE MONTANA. I SAY IT WAS MY TEAMMATE AND FRIEND, GREG COOK, AND SO DID OUR COACH IN CINCINNATI, BILL WALSH.

WALSH – GREG COOK WAS, I BELIEVE, THE GREATEST TALENT TO PLAY THE POSITION. HE COULD PLAY TODAY OR ANYTIME IN HISTORY OF THE NFL. WHILE HE PLAYED HE WAS THE BEST THERE WAS.

JAWORSKI – IT'S KIND OF SURPRISING THAT BILL WALSH WOULD MAKE THAT KIND OF STATEMENT AFTER BEING WITH A PLAYER FOR ONLY 1 YR. // YOU THINK OF JOE MONTANA AND STEVE YOUNG, HALL OF FAMERS THAT HE COACHED. WHEN YOU SAY GREG COOK COULD'VE BEEN BETTER THAN THOSE GUYS, THAT'S SAYING SOMETHING.

WHEN GREG DIES LAST JANUARY, HIS PASSING WENT LARGELY UNNOTICED BUT, LET ME TELL YOU, HE WAS AS BOLT OF ATHLETIC LIGHTNING. HE ONLY PLAYED 12 GAMES IN 1969, AND I WASN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO THOUGHT HE'D WIN ME A FISTFUL OF RINGS.

WITH HIM WE WENT FROM BEING SORT OF A HUMPTY TEAM TO BEING AS GOOD AS ANYBODY. IT WAS JUST LIKE THAT.

WALSH – AS A ROOKIE HE LED THE NFL IN PASSING. WE WERE AN EXPANSION TEAM. THUS AN INDICATOR OF HOW GREAT HE COULD'VE BEEN.

RADIO – POISE UNDER PRESSURE. THIS IS THE QUALITY GREG COOK SEEMS TO POSSESS. A POISE THAT BELIES HIS AGE.

HE WAS 6'4 AND 218 LBS. I GOT A CHANCE TO COACH JOE MONTANA HIS FIRST 4 YRS. IN THE LEAGUE UNDER BILL WALSH. JOE AND GREG HAD THE SAME POTENTIAL WHEN THEY FIRST STARTED OUT. GREG COOK, ONE OF

THE FEW ROOKIE QBS THAT I'VE EVER SEEN THAT CAN GO TO A 2ND OR A 3RD RECEIVER AND, YET, IS NOT MECHANICAL.

JAWORSKI – AN OMINOUS GUY. LOOK AT THE ACCURACY. THIS IS LIKE A MASTER'S DEGREE IN QB'ING, YET THIS GUY IS A ROOKIE. THIS IS AARON RODGERS-LIKE. PRESSURE IN YOUR FACE, MOVE, RESET, DELIVER THE FOOTBALL DOWN THE FIELD. YOU CAN SEE WHY BILL WALSH FELT SO HIGHLY THAT GREG COOK WOULD'VE BEEN A GREAT GREAT PLAYER.

YOU NOTICE THAT HIS THROWS, AFTER BUYING TIME, ARE STILL WAY DOWN THE FIELD. THEY AREN'T THOSE SHORT ... UNDERNEATH THROWS THAT A LOT OF QBS THROW TODAY.

I COULD PASS ON ANYBODY ANYTIME I WANTED TO. IT WAS LIKE THE TYPE OF THING WHERE YOU SAID, "YOU CAN WALK ON THE FIELD. NO MATTER WHO YOU WALK OUT AGAINST, YOU CAN THROW THE BALL."

WALSH - HE WAS A TRULY OUTSTANDING, A BRILLIANT ATHLETE. HE HAD A VERY QUICK DELIVERY. HE COULD MOVE. HE COULD AVOID. I MEAN HE WAS THE ULTIMATE IN A QB.

I KNOW PAUL BROWN THOUGHT HE WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST PLAYERS AS WELL. AND HE HAD THE HISTORY OF GOING ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE OTTO GRAHAM'S OF THE WORLD.

BIG MAN. FAST. TREMENDOUS ARM. TREMENDOUS PRESENCE, EVERYTHING. AND HE WAS CARRYING US. HE WOULD'VE BEEN OUR QB FOR 10, 12, 15 YRS.

BILL AND PAUL WERE ALWAYS TRYING TO COACH HIM BUT GREG, HE DID THINGS HIS OWN WAY, LIKE HIS GUNS BLAZING DROP FROM CENTER.

HE HAD A MOTION THAT WAS FULL OF FLAWS. I MEAN HE'D TAKE THE BALL BACK WITH 1 HAND. HE DIDN'T TAKE THE BALL BACK WITH BOTH HANDS LIKE MOST COACHES COACH.

JAWORSKI – LOOK AT THAT CARRIAGE. EVERYONE'S COACHED NOW. 2 HANDS ON THE BALL. 2 HANDS ON THE BALL. WELL GREG COOK HAD A UNIQUE WAY OF GETTING BACK WITH 1 HAND ON THE FOOTBALL.

WHEN HE WOULD COME AWAY FROM CENTER HIS HEAD AND EYES WERE UP FIELD. A LOT OF QBS HEAD AND EYES DROP SLIGHTLY. THEN THEY COME BACK UP. IT'S JUST A BLINK OF AN EYE THAT YOU LOSE VIEW OF THE DEFENSE. HIS HEAD AND EYES ARE UP FIELD. CAME OUT OF THE BLOCKS DOING THAT.

JAWORSKI – CHECK THIS OUT MAN. 3 GUYS READY TO RIP HIM DOWN. YOU KNOW A LOT OF GUYS LOOK AT THE RUSH. NOT GREG COOK. WATCH THEM EYES. SNAP THEM AROUND. LOOK AT THAT. DOWNFIELD LOOKING FOR SOMEBODY. HE GETS OUT OF THE POCKET, FINDS TRUMPI. BIG TIME THROW. EYES DOWNFIELD.

IN ALL MY YEARS OF BEING AROUND THE NFL, GREG WAS AS ACCURATE AS ANY QB I'VE BEEN AROUND OR OBSERVED AS A PLAYER OR A COACH.

GREG COOK SHOT HOLES IN THE CHARGERS SECONDARY, FIRING 3 TD. PASSES...

WATCH AFTER THIS PLAY RIGHT HERE. HE'S SO QUICK. BOOTLEGGED TO THE LEFT IN PERFECT STRIDE, PERFECT SPIRAL. WILLIE BROWN JUST THROWS THE BALL IN THE AIR. WATCH, HE'S GONNA YANK HIS HELMET. YOU CAN'T COVER ANY BETTER THAN THAT AND HE STILL GOT IT IN. THAT'S WHAT'S GOING THROUGH HIS MIND.

JAWS – THIS IS RIDICULOUS. DEFENSE IS IN PERFECT POSITION. I GOTTA THROW HIM OPEN. I GOTTA LAY THIS BALL IN THE CORNER. THIS IS A TIGHT WINDOW. ONLY 1 PLACE TO PUT THE FOOTBALL. 1 PLACE. IT'S LIKE THROWING IT THROUGH A TIRE ABOUT 40 YDS. DOWNFIELD. THIS IS WHAT GREAT QBS DO TO DEFENDERS.

THIS PICTURE THROUGH ALL THE YEARS THAT I KNEW GREG AS GREG COOK. HOW COULD YOU NOT FOLLOW THAT GUY? THIS COULD'VE BEEN JUST AFTER HE SCORED A TD. AND LATER IN LIFE...JUST AFTER HE GOT OFF A CITY BUS COMING HOME LATE AT NIGHT. HE ALWAYS HAD THAT SMILE. IT WON HIM A LOT OF FRIENDS. BUT IT ..THERE WAS NOTHING BEHIND THAT SMILE HE WAS FAKING, AND HE LED A TERRIBLE LIFE AFTER FOOTBALL, UNFORTUNATELY.

WHEN WE RETURN HOW DESTINY WAS TORN FROM GREG COOK'S GRASP.

02:38:30 – GREG COOK – PART 2

WHAT HE DID ON THE FOOTBALL WAS ARTISTRY. I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER BEEN AROUND ANY PLAYER WHERE THERE WERE MORE OOHS AND AHH'S. THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. FOR ONE YEAR IT WASN'T AND THEN IT WAS FOREVER. IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.

WE WERE PLAYING K.C. HE WAS CHASED OUT OF THE POCKET.

COME ON, PUT PRESSURE ON THAT QB!

IT WAS NOTHING ILLEGAL ABOUT IT. IT WAS JUST A FREAK ACCIDENT. JIM LYNCH TACKLES HIM, FALLS FUNNY ON HIS RIGHT SHOULDER, AND THAT WAS THE START OF THE END OF A GREAT CAREER.

THE CHIEFS FINALLY FOUND A WAY TO STOP GREG COOK. THEY RUINED HIS THROWING ARM.

IT WAS KIND OF A NOTHING PLAY. I REMEMBER IT NOT BEING ALL THAT PHYSICAL AT ALL. WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS INJURED ON THAT PLAY I WAS VERY VERY SURPRISED. AT THE TIME WE DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE THAT HE WAS HURT. YET, THAT WAS THE INJURY THAT TOOK HIM DOWN.

DESPITE PLAYING THE REST OF THE YEAR WITH WHAT WAS EVENTUALLY DIAGNOSED AS A TORN ROTATOR CUFF. GREG AVERAGED 17 ½ YDS. PER COMPLETION FOR THE 1969 SEASON, A FEAT THAT HAS ONLY BEEN EQUALED ONCE IN THE LAST 4 DECADES.

FROM THAT POINT FORWARD, EVERY MOTION WAS PAINFUL TO HIM. YOU SEE HIM STANDING ON THE SIDELINE TALKING TO PAUL BROWN. HE'S HOLDING THAT ARM, BRACING IT WITH HIS LEFT ARM, JUST TO TAKE A LITTLE BIT OF THE PRESSURE OFF OF IT. THIS IS AFTER HIS INJURY. YOU CAN SEE THE DIFFERENCE IN HIS MOTION. EVERYTHING IS BACK MUSCLE AND LEG MUSCLE. IT'S NOT JUST AN ARM. IT ALMOST HURTS ME TO SEE HIM THROW IT.

GREG WENT THROUGH SURGERY AFTER SURGERY BUT WAS NEVER ABLE TO COME BACK.

GREG WAS A HIGHLY-SENSITIVE PERSON. NOT TOTALLY STABLE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF BEING ABLE TO DEAL WITH ADVERSITY. CONSEQUENTLY, IT AFFECTED HIM I THINK A LITTLE BIT PSYCHOLOGICALLY.

IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR ME TO READJUST TO THE INABILITY OF DOING WHAT I COULD DO. MY MIND REALLY WASN'T IN THE GAME ANYMORE. AS PAUL BROWN USED TO SAY, "IT'S TIME TO GET ON WITH YOUR LIFE. TRY TO FIND YOUR LIFE'S WORK."

BUT HAPPINESS AND HIS LIFE'S WORK ALWAYS SEEMED JUST BEYOND GREG'S GRASP.

WHEN HE COULDN'T PLAY AND HE KNEW WHAT HE COULD DO WHEN HE WAS HEALTHY, I THINK IT PUT HIM INTO ALMOST DEPRESSION AT TIMES. I WAS HIS ROOMMATE. I SAW IT. HE WAS SO DOWN. I WORRIED ABOUT, HOPEFULLY YOU'RE NOT GONNA DO ANYTHING STUPID. HE DIDN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW THE PAIN HE WAS IN. I DON'T THINK HE WANTED ANYBODY TO KNOW. HE SAID, "I'M EMBARRASSED." I SAID, "YOU'RE EMBARRASSED FOR WHAT?" HE

SAID, "I DIDN'T FULFILL EVERYBODY'S DREAM. THEIR DREAM WAS I'D LEAD THEM TO S.B. WE'D WIN CHAMPIONSHIPS, AND I DIDN'T FULFILL THAT DREAM." AND I SAID, "WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHAT WAS YOUR DREAM?" HE SAID, "IT WAS MY DREAM TOO."

THERE IS THAT AWE OF KIND OF LET PEOPLE DOWN. I LET MYSELF DOWN. MAYBE IT WAS UNCONTROLLABLE. IT WAS A TANGIBLE THING THAT I COULDN'T GRASP. ONE OF THESE DAYS I PERCEIVE MYSELF AS BEING, AGAIN, A TOTALLY CREATIVE PERSON ALL OF THE TIME. FOOTBALL WOULD'VE ALLOWED ME TO DO THAT MORE READILY THAN I'M ABLE TO DO IT NOW.

GREG WAS, IN HIS HEART, AN ARTIST, AND THAT WAS WHAT HE BECAME.

HE LOST HIS MARRIAGE. HE LOST HIS CAREER. HE LOST HIS FUTURE. HIS ONLY LIFE WAS PAINTING.

HE WAS TALENTED. HE REALLY WAS. HE DID A LOT OF THINGS WITH FOOTBALL MOTIFS AND WATERCOLOR. WISH HE'D HAVE DONE MORE. WE WOULD'VE BOUGHT AS MANY AS HE COULD'VE PAINTED. THIS IS A PICTURE THAT GREG COOK GAVE ME. IT'S JUST A LANDSCAPE OF A FLOWERBED. THIS WAS GREG COOK. THIS IS THE KIND OF THINGS THAT TOUCHED HIM.

IT WAS HARD TO WATCH. AS A PAINTER, GREG'S WORK BECAME A CASE OF ART IMITATING LIFE.

HE COULDN'T FINISH THE PAINTS. UPSTAIRS IN A GARAGE HE HAD HIS ART UP THERE AND YOU COULD SEE WHERE HE'D STARTED SEVERAL PAINTINGS. NONE OF THEM FINISHED. HE NEVER ABLE TO DO IT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ANSWER TO THAT IS BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT IT. HE HAD A LOT OF THEM THAT HE NEVER EVER COMPLETED.

WE ARE AT GEORGE WEBER'S CAFÉ. THIS IS WHERE GREG GOT HIS MAIL, HIS CHECKS, LOANS, ALCOHOL. THE GUY THAT OWNS THIS PLACE BOUGHT THESE 2 PAINTINGS. THEY ARE FINISHED. I SAY THESE ARE 2 FINISHED PAINTINGS BUT LOOK AT THE LEGS ON THIS GUY. THIS IS JIM LYNCH. GREG DREW THIS PAINTING OF WHEN HE GOT HURT. NOW WHY GREG WOULD PICK THE POINT OF INJURY TO PAINT IS, I DON'T KNOW. FOR YEARS GREG WOULDN'T TELL ME WHERE HE LIVED. HE'D ALWAYS WANT TO MEET SOMEPLACE. I FINALLY SAID, "WE'RE DONE WITH THAT. I DON'T CARE WHERE YOU LIVE. I WANT TO SEE WHERE IT IS." SO HE BRINGS ME DOWN TO THIS PLACE. IT WAS A HELLHOLE. THEY MAKE PIGMENT HERE. SO ALMOST EVERYTHING THAT GREG HAD WHEN YOU SAW IT OUT IN THE SUNLIGHT, IT HAD A BLUE TINT TO IT. HE LIVED UP THERE WITH A FAMILY OF RACCOONS THAT WERE PARTIALLY BLUE. THEY WERE UP IN THE CEILING. HE THOUGHT IT WAS GREAT FUN LIVING WITH A RACCOON. I SAID, "IS THIS THE ONLY PLACE

YOU CAN LIVE?" AND HE SAID, "WELL I CAN CATCH A BUS RIGHT THERE ON THE CORNER. SO THAT'S ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS I LIVE HERE." HE ALWAYS GAVE YOU THE FRONT THAT THINGS ARE FINE. FOR AS LITTLE AS HE HAD, FINANCIALLY, HE ALWAYS DRESSED VERY WELL. HE CUT HIS OWN HAIR BECAUSE HE COULDN'T AFFORD TO GO TO A BARBER. SHINED HIS SHOES RELIGIOUSLY. HE WORE THOSE ___ SUNGLASSES THAT ARE LIKE \$200 BUCKS EACH. HIS SON TOLD ME, WHEN I WENT THROUGH THE LAST PLACE THAT GREG LIVED, THEY FOUND 100 PAIR OF THOSE SUNGLASSES. THEY'RE \$200 EACH. THERE ARE 1,000 PEOPLE IN THIS CITY THAT WOULD'VE DONE ANYTHING FOR GREG COOK. HE WOULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR HIMSELF. SO THE NET RESULT IS, THE SHOOTING STAR...DIDN'T LAST LONG.

GREG COOK LIVED AN UNFINISHED LIFE, LIKE DA VINCI'S ADORATION OF THE MAGI. IT WAS A MASTERPIECE. THE ARTIST NEVER COMPLETED. WOULD HE HAVE BEEN THE GREATEST OF THEM ALL? WE'LL NEVER KNOW. HE HAD ALL THE GIFTS IT TOOK EXCEPT THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE OF ALL. THE GIFT OF TIME.

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