

NFL Extra

Week 8

Segment	TRT
Kirby Wilson – Pt 1	8:55
Kirby Wilson – Pt 2	6:39

01:00:00 - KIRBY WILSON, PART 1

YOU GOTTA ALWAYS COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS AND NOT YOUR PROBLEMS. TO ME IT WAS A BLESSING THAT I'M STILL ALIVE. I'M STILL HERE FOR MY CHILDREN. I'M STILL HERE FOR THE GUYS THAT I COACH. SO I GOT A STORY TO TELL.

KIRBY'S ALWAYS BEEN VERY ACTIVE, VERY OUTGOING. HE'S ALWAYS BEEN VERY ANIMATED. ALWAYS ENERGETIC. ALWAYS THE LEADER.

FROM HIS HIGH SCHOOL DAYS IN LOS ANGELES, TO HIS COLLEGE CAREER AT ILLINOIS, KIRBY WILSON HAS NEVER BEEN ONE TO SIT STILL. / AFTER TWO YEARS IN THE CFL, HE BEGAN HIS LIFE IN COACHING. (WE HAVE TO GET THIS THING GOING! THAT'S A DAMN GOOD JOB!) / AND HE CONTINUED TO BE A MAN ON THE MOVE.

WILSON COACHED RUNNING BACKS WITH FOUR NFL TEAMS BEFORE BRINGING HIS ENERGY TO PITTSBURGH IN 2007.

FROM DAY 1 HE SHOWS UP HERE AND WE HAVE THESE OTA'S. WE'RE ALL WILEY OLD VETERANS, A LOT OF US. AND KIRBY COMES IN AND HE'S RUNNING DOWN THE FIELD CHASING HIS RB'S YELLING AT THEM. HOLD THE BALL! DO THIS! CUT! AND HE'S SCREAMING THE WHOLE WAY DOWN. I'M LIKE, "WHO IS THIS GUY? WHO IS THIS MANIAC?" BUT THEN YOU KNOW HIM AND THAT'S JUST HOW HE IS.

TOMLIN – HE IS AN EMOTIONAL GUY AND IT IS AUTHENTIC. IT'S REAL. IT ABSOLUTELY IS. AND I THINK THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY HE'S BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL.

IT'S AN EMOTIONAL GAME. I DON'T HAVE A TURN-OFF BUTTON. THERE'S NO OFF SWITCH ON ME. ATTACK THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE!! NOT WALK TO THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE!! ATTACK IT!! YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?!! I LOVE THE GAME. I LOVE COMPETING. ALL I CARE AT THE END OF THE DAY IS THAT DID MY PLAYERS DO WHAT I COACHED THEM TO DO? BECAUSE IF THEY DID, THAT WOULD GIVE US A CHANCE TO WIN.

IN 2011, THE STEELERS WON 12 GAMES, AND PREPARED FOR ANOTHER POSTSEASON RUN.

RADIO – TOUCHDOWN PITTS.!

ON THE MORNING OF JANUARY 6TH, 2012, THEY WERE JUST TWO DAYS FROM A WILD CARD GAME IN DENVER.

ABOUT 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, 3:30ISH, HEARD A BUNCH OF FIRE TRUCKS AND, HONESTLY, WE THOUGHT IT WAS OUR HOUSE. AND I LOOK OUT DOWN THE STREET AND MY WIFE SAYS, "RAY, NO, I THINK THAT'S KIRBY'S PLACE." SO I JUST THROW ON SOME SWEATS AND I DART OVER THERE.

I REMEMBER WAKING UP WITH CHAOS AROUND ME. FIRE, THE SMOKE. PEOPLE SCREAMING AND YELLING, BEATING ON THE DOOR. THE SMOKE HAD OVERTAKEN ME AND I WAS DELIRIOUS. FROM THE SMALL LITTLE BIT I CAN REMEMBER, I'M JUST TRYING TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE ALIVE WHEN YOU CAN'T SEE ANYTHING. NOTHING.

THE FIRE STARTED IN THE KITCHEN, BELIEVED TO BE CAUSED BY HOT GREASE LEFT ON THE STOVE. / WILSON LIVED ALONE IN THE CONDOMINIUM.

AND ONE OF THE NEIGHBORS THERE, I ASKED THEM, "WELL DID HE GET OUT?" THEY SAID, "YEA HE GOT OUT BUT, MAN, WHEN HE CAME OUT HE DIDN'T LOOK GOOD. IT LOOKED LIKE HE WAS A WALKING PIECE OF WAX WHERE ALL THE SKIN WAS JUST MELTING OFF. OFF HIS BODY."

AND ONCE I GOT OUT EVERYTHING WENT BLANK.

THEN YOU GET TO THE HOSPITAL, AND WHEN I WALKED IN ALL YOU COULD SEE WAS HIS EYES BECAUSE THEY HAD HIM BANDAGED UP. HE'S UNDER A BUNCH OF WHITE SHEETS. COULDN'T TELL WHAT HIS BODY LOOKED LIKE. I ASKED ONE OF THE NURSES AND SHE TOOK ME TO THE SIDE AND WE TALKED ABOUT IT. SHE SAID, "THAT'S THE WORST CASE OF A BURN PERSON THAT SHE HAD EVER WITNESSED. AND THE TOUGHEST PART OF IT FOR ME REALLY IS WHEN I GOT ON THE PHONE WITH HIS SISTER.

AND I JUST SAT THERE. TOLD MY BROTHER, "I'M ON MY WAY." AND HE SAID, "I WILL." AND I JUST SAID, "DON'T LEAVE MY BROTHER BY HIMSELF." AND HE SAID, "I WOULD NOT. I WON'T LEAVE YOUR BROTHER." AND I SAID, "O.K. JUST TELL MY BROTHER I'M COMING."

NIKKI JONES IMMEDIATELY LEFT HER HOME IN LOS ANGELES, AND PLANNED TO BE IN PITTSBURGH INDEFINITELY.

GOT TO THE HOSPITAL AND ...WHEN I GOT TO THE HOSPITAL...O.K., COULD I STOP?

KIRBY WAS CRITICAL. NOT ONLY DID HE HAVE THE BURNS THAT MADE UP MUCH OF THE UPPER TORSO, HIS SCALP, HIS HANDS, HIS FEET. BUT HE HAD INHALATION INJURIES WHICH REQUIRED HIM TO BE ON A VENTILATOR FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. AND IN THE

ACUTE FIRST I WOULD SAY 3 TO 7 DAYS OF HIS STAY HERE, MANY OF US DIDN'T THINK HE WAS GONNA MAKE IT.

AND I HAD TO LIVE WITH THAT FOR A FEW DAYS, THAT THEY SAID HIS LIFE EXPECTANCY WAS HOUR BY HOUR. THEY HAD TO PREPARE ME FOR THE WORST BUT I JUST DID NOT WANT TO BELIEVE IT. I CHOSE NOT TO BELIEVE IT. HE'S ALWAYS HAD TOO MUCH ENERGY TO LIE STILL. HE WAS GOING TO FIGHT.

THE STEELERS INJURY IN THE POST-SEASON WITHOUT THEIR RB'S COACH KIRBY WILSON WHO IS, ACCORDING TO THE PITTS. POST GAZETTE, IN A MEDICALLY INDUCED COMA AFTER BEING BADLY BURNED IN A FIRE IN HIS HOME EARLY FRIDAY MORNING. THE PAPER'S REPORTING THAT WILSON SUFFERED BURNS ON 30 TO 50% OF HIS BODY.

CONGRATULATIONS MAN. ALL THE BEST TO YOU GUYS. (HOW'S KIRBY?) YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT EASY BRO. I AIN'T GONNA TRY TO PUT ... FACE ON IT. (I KNOW. WE'RE ALL PRAYING FOR HIM.) THANK YOU MAN. IT'S TOUGH. (THINK ABOUT HIM ALL THE TIME.) MUCH APPRECIATED. SEE YOU. (ALRIGHT BROTHER)

INJURIES TO THE STEELERS TOP RUNNING BACKS FORCED NO. 33 ISAAC REDMAN INTO JUST HIS SECOND CAREER START.

I WAS PRETTY MUCH PLAYING FOR KIRB. I WANTED HIM TO, WHEN HE RECOVERED, TO BE ABLE TO LOOK BACK ON THE GAME AND BE LIKE, "HE WENT OUT THERE AND DID HIS THING." I WANTED TO MAKE HIM PROUD.

REDMAN RUSHED FOR A THEN CAREER-HIGH 121 YARDS.

RADIO – ISAAC REDMAN HAVING THE GAME OF HIS LIFE! PURE IRON WILL FOR REDMAN! HE WOULDN'T GO DOWN!

REDMAN, HOWEVER, COULDN'T WILL HIS TEAM TO VICTORY.

THE STEELERS FACED A LONG OFFSEASON, AND ONE OF THEIR COACHES FACED AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE.

REDMAN - COACH KIRB GOING THROUGH WHAT HE'S GOING THROUGH. KIND OF UPSET THAT I COULDN'T BRING THE GAME BALL HOME FOR HIM.

TOMLIN – I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT, TO BE HONEST WITH YOU. MORE THAN ANYTHING, IF YOU REALLY WANT TO TALK REALITY, WE'RE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM JUST LIVING AND MAINTAINING SOME QUALITY OF LIFE AFTER DOING THAT.

IT WASN'T ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT HE'S GONNA BE MY COACH AGAIN. IT WAS ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT HE'S GONNA LIVE. WHETHER OR NOT HE'S GONNA BE ABLE TO BE WITH HIS FAMILY.

WILSON'S CHILDREN FACED THE SAME UNCERTAINTY.

THE SIGHT OF HIM THERE IN THIS CONDITION JUST WAS SCARY AND I'D NEVER SEEN MY DAD LIKE THAT BECAUSE HE'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE A SUPERHERO TO ME. LIKE I'VE ALWAYS LOOKED UP TO HIM, AND JUST TO SEE HIM IN THAT POSITION WAS VERY VERY STRANGE.

IT SEEMED AS IF HE WASN'T GONNA MAKE IT, THE WAY THEY EXPLAINED THE SITUATION WITH HIS LEGS AND HIS KIDNEYS; AND IN THE BACK OF MY MIND I SAID TO MYSELF, "THEY'RE LYING. THERE'S NO WAY HE'S NOT GONNA MAKE IT BECAUSE I KNOW MY DAD. THEY DON'T KNOW MY DAD."

HE CAME OUT OF THE COMA MAYBE ABOUT 3 WKS. HOUR OR SO AFTER. WHEN I SAW MY BROTHER'S EYES, THAT WAS JUST LIKE THE MOST AMAZING THING. HE STILL WASN'T QUITE THERE BUT HE DID OPEN HIS EYES. THEY WOKE HIM UP AND THEN THE REAL ...ORDEAL STARTED FOR HIM.

COMING UP....

KIRBY - I WAS IN SO MUCH PAIN. THAT WAS TORTURE. YOU KNOW, I WOULDN'T WISH THAT ON THE WORST ENEMY.

01:09:00 – KIRBY WILSON, PART 2

THREE WEEKS AFTER NEARLY LOSING HIS LIFE, KIRBY WILSON AWOKE FROM HIS COMA.

KIRBY – WHEN I WOKE UP I DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE OF WHO I WAS, WHAT WAS GOING ON, WHY WAS I HERE? I WAS IN SO MUCH PAIN AND I COULDN'T MOVE. I COULDN'T TURN ON MY SIDE WITHOUT THE ASSISTANCE OF ANYBODY. I WAS TOTALLY 100% OPPOSITE OF WHAT I'VE BEEN ALL MY LIFE. I WAS AN ATHLETE. SOMEONE WHO'S ALWAYS BEEN IN CONDITION. SOMEONE WHO'S ALWAYS BEEN AT THE TOP. ALL OF A SUDDEN, I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR MYSELF.

HYDROTHERAPY WAS ONE OF THE WORST THINGS HE HAD TO GO THROUGH AT THE HOSPITAL. THAT WAS, AS FAR AS HIS REHAB.

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT A METAL TUB THAT THEY HAVE TO PUT HIM IN AND HOSE HIM DOWN, AND GET ALL HIS DEAD SKIN OFF, AND SCRUB HIM.

KIRBY - THAT WAS TORTURE. I WOULDN'T WISH THAT ON THE WORST ENEMY.

THERE IS NOTHING MORE PAINFUL THAN A BURN. BURNS ARE EXCRUCIATING, AND KIRBY WAS ONE OF THESE PEOPLE THAT HAD THIS THRESHOLD AND THIS WILL THAT WAS, WILL REALLY STANDOUT FOREVER IN MY MIND BECAUSE THIS GUY WAS GONNA WIN AT ALL COST.

WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE BOOST UP.

KIRBY WAS OBSESSED WITH GETTING BACK TO NORMALCY. HE WOULD SAY, "WHEN AM I GONNA WALK? WHEN AM I GONNA DO THIS? CAMP OPENS AT THIS POINT." AND IT WAS VERY HARD IN THE BEGINNING TO HEAR THIS BECAUSE IN MY MIND, WITHOUT VOICING IT, I REALLY DIDN'T THINK HE'D HAVE LEGS.

DOES THIS TINGLE, YOUR FEET?

KIRBY - MY LEGS.

LEGS TOO?

YEA, I WASN'T SURE THAT WE WERE ABLE TO SAVE HIS FEET. MORE OR LESS, I DIDN'T THINK HE WAS GONNA WALK ON THEM.

KIRBY – MY LEGS. IT WAS LIKE WALKING ON 1,000 NAILS. THAT'S WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO STAND UP ON MY FEET; AND I KNEW I COULDN'T WALK, AND THAT WAS VERY HUMBLING. I WOULD HAVE MOMENTS. I'D WAKE UP AND IT FELT LIKE SOMEONE HAD BEEN PUSHING ME GENTLY IN THE BACK, NUDGING ME IN THE BACK; AND I'D WAKEUP AND I'D LOOK AROUND AND THERE WOULDN'T BE ANYONE IN THE ROOM. AND AS I SHARED THAT STORY WITH PEOPLE, A LOT OF PEOPLE SAID THAT WAS GOD. THAT WAS GOD. THAT WAS GOD'S ANGELS BEING THERE FOR YOU, ENCOURAGING YOU, TELLING YOU TO FIGHT TO GET UP. GET OUT OF THAT BED. // I STARTED REHABING TO WALK SOME TIME IN FEBRUARY. (ADJUST YOUR FEET.) I WAS JUST SO HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO WALK. THE FIRST TIME I DID I TOOK THOSE FIRST 2 STEPS. IT JUST REMINDED ME OF WALKING LIKE A BABY. SO THAT WAS MY STARTING POINT. I SAID, "I GOTTA GET BETTER THAN THIS MAN. I CAN'T WALK LIKE THIS."

I REMEMBER THAT KIRBY TOLD MIKE TOMLIN THAT HE WOULD BE THERE APRIL 6, APRIL 16TH OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT FOR THEIR OTA'S; AND MIKE TOMLIN SAID, "O.K. WE'LL EXPECT YOU THERE."

LESS THAN THREE MONTHS AFTER THE FIRE THAT NEARLY TOOK HIS LIFE, THE COACH LEFT THE HOSPITAL, AND PREPARED TO GET BACK TO WORK.

AND I'LL NEVER FORGET WE WERE GETTING READY FOR THE DRAFT LAST YEAR AND HE SURPRISED EVERYBODY. HE WAS LIKE, "RAY, DON'T TELL EVERYBODY I'M COMING." AND HE SURPRISED US. WE WERE IN THE DRAFT ROOM GETTING READY AND HE COMES IN THERE WALKING.

KIRBY - WHEN I SAW THOSE GUYS I TEARED UP BECAUSE IT WAS AN EMOTIONAL MOMENT FOR ME TO BE BACK IN THAT MEETING AND BE BACK IN THAT BUILDING.

SO I JUST WALKED, PEAKED MY HEAD INTO OUR MEETING ROOM AND THERE HE WAS SITTING THERE AT THE DESK. I SAID, "KIRB!" HE SAID, "HEY MAN." I SAID, "MAN, WE CAN'T KEEP YOU OUT OF HERE. WE CAN'T KEEP YOU OUT OF HERE." HE SAID, "NO, I AIN'T GOING NOWHERE." HE DIDN'T MISS A DAY. I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. I WAS LIKE HOW STRONG IS THIS GUY?

KIRBY – DO WHAT I'M ASKING YOU TO DO. IT WORKS! FOR 15 YRS. IT'S BEEN WORKING! DO WHAT I'M COACHING YOU TO DO! ALRIGHT? DON'T MAKEUP ANYTHING! I'M BEGGING YOU! JUST DO...

EVER SINCE I'VE SEEN COACH WILSON GO THROUGH THAT SITUATION I DON'T REALLY COMPLAIN AT ALL ANYMORE. NO MATTER HOW TIRED I AM AND HOW ACHY MY BODY IS, LOOK AT KIRB. HE'S OUT THERE JUMPING AROUND. NO MATTER HOW HE FEELS, HE'S STILL GIVING US ALL HE HAS. WHY CAN'T WE DO THE SAME FOR HIM?

KIRBY - PUT US ON YOUR BACK AND GET THIS VICTORY! YOU GOT ME?!! (YES SIR.)

IN 2012, THE COACH WHO NEVER LIKED TO SIT STILL EVENTUALLY GOT UP TO SPEED AGAIN. / NOW, HE'S IN HIS SECOND SEASON BACK SINCE THE FIRE.

KIRBY – DISCOMFORT? YEA. THERE'S PROBABLY STILL GONNA BE SOME DISCOMFORT FOR A LITTLE WHILE BUT THE ACTUAL PAIN IS GONE. I COULDN'T DO ANY OF THIS WITH MY HANDS BEFORE; AND NOW THE SKIN'S ALREADY TURNING BACK TO A SINGLE COLOR, AND YOU CAN SEE THE INJURIES WHERE THEY HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY WHITE OR PINK AND THE PIGMENTATION'S FILLING BACK IN AND THE SKIN'S SMOOTHING OUT. SO IT'S A PROCESS. I'M BACK TO DOING EVERYTHING I LOVE TO DO. RUN, SPRINT, SWIM, PLAY BASKETBALL, BOWL. YEA! YEA!

IT'S MENTAL TOUGHNESS REALLY THAT I CAN SEE IN HIM NOW KNOWING THAT HE WENT THROUGH ALL THAT PAIN AND ALL THAT THERAPY AND EVERYTHING HE JUST WENT THROUGH. OHH!! HE HAD TO BE TOUGH TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I WOULD BE PROUD IF I COULD EVER BE HALF THAT STRONG. NOW SOMETIMES WHEN I FEEL LIKE THINGS ARE BAD OR THINGS THAT I THINK I CAN'T DO...I ALWAYS SAY THAT I CAN DO ANYTHING. BASED ON WHAT I SAW HIM DO, I NOW KNOW ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

KIRBY – I'VE GOT SO MANY BLESSINGS, AND THAT'S WHAT I'M GRATEFUL FOR OUT OF ALL OF THIS. LET'S GO BELIA! IS THAT I'VE GOT SOME BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN WHO NEED THEIR DAD AND GOD HAS ALLOWED ME TO STAY HERE AND CONTINUE TO TEACH THEM AND MY PLAYERS AND THOSE THAT WILL COME AFTER THESE PLAYERS. SHOW WHAT YOU GOT. YOU'RE FULL OF THAT RIGHT THERE. THEY CAN'T STOP YOU. YOU'RE NOT GONNA BE DENIED. I'LL CONTINUE TO SHARE MY STORY BECAUSE IT'S POWERFUL. I THINK IT CAN CHANGE LIVES. I THINK IT CAN HELP PEOPLE MOVE ON. I THINK IT CAN HELP PEOPLE FIGHT AND BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES. SO I'M ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR THAT.

(END)