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Peterson rewriting the rookie record book 'All Day' long



Nov. 7, 2007
By **Lesley Visser**
CBS Sports

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Maybe we should get Alex Trebek on this -- best running back for \$1,000. Is it LaDainian Tomlinson? Is it a healthy Steven Jackson? Or is it the electrifying rookie **Adrian Peterson**, who has been with the **Vikings** for all of two months?



After playing in only eight games, people are already comparing Peterson to Eric Dickerson, O.J. Simpson, Bo Jackson, even Jim Brown. Last week Peterson set the single-game rushing record with 296 dynamic yards against the Chargers while Tomlinson finished with 40 yards.

Here's what Peterson did against San Diego: He rushed for more than 200 yards for the second time this season, an accomplishment no rookie has ever matched. He scored three touchdowns, two in the second-half comeback.

He has now totaled 1,036 yards, putting him on pace to smash Dickerson's rookie record of 1,808 yards set in 1983. He might even go after Dickerson's all-time record of 2,105 set 23 years ago.

"In this case, the numbers don't lie," said Vikings coach Brad Childress. "He's got everything -- speed, instinct, desire."

Peterson is already being mentioned in the same breath as Dickerson. (Getty Images) And he gets it done, even when everyone knows he's going to get the ball. The Vikings don't use the pass to set up the run, they use the run to set up the run. And they run the most basic play in football, off tackle, usually behind left guard Steve Hutchinson and left tackle Bryant McKinnie. Peterson, just like Emmitt Smith did for so many years, gets up close to his block and makes the perfect cut.

"He has great vision," said Marshall Faulk. "He's strong and he's comfortable however the play develops."

Childress admits there's no great deception going on.

"We've kind of had musical chairs at quarterback," he said. "It's a testimony to Adrian that he's so successful when everyone knows what's going on."

Even Childress had a change of plans. The Vikings brought in Chester Taylor last year and the veteran free agent rewarded them with 1,200 yards. But when Peterson was still available at No. 7 in the draft, Childress said he was "just too good to pass up." Six teams might have to someday explain why they took Sam Bowie over Michael Jordan.

At the beginning of the year, Childress went with Taylor, but last week, Peterson carried it 30 times and the coach even showed a sense of history. The rookie had 293 yards after 29 carries with less than a minute to go. Instead of taking Peterson out, Childress had Brooks Bollinger hand off to him one more time, allowing Peterson to break Jamal Lewis' single-game rushing record of 295 yards.

"He's a pleasure to coach," said Childress. "In this age of entitlement, he's extremely grounded, with small-town values."

Peterson grew up in Palestine, Texas, in the heart of the East Texas forest filled with pine trees and dogwood. One of the most charming towns in Texas, Palestine is south of Dallas and north of Houston, not far from the Louisiana border. It's also just south of Tyler, where the great Earl Campbell grew up.

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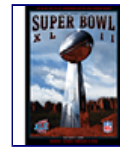


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