

## QB Injuries & Odds

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1. Possible story lines

a. Drafted QBs still rule

- i. Across 2000–2024, teams with drafted QBs are more likely to make the playoffs (45% vs 34%) and much more likely to reach the Super Bowl (8% vs 4%).

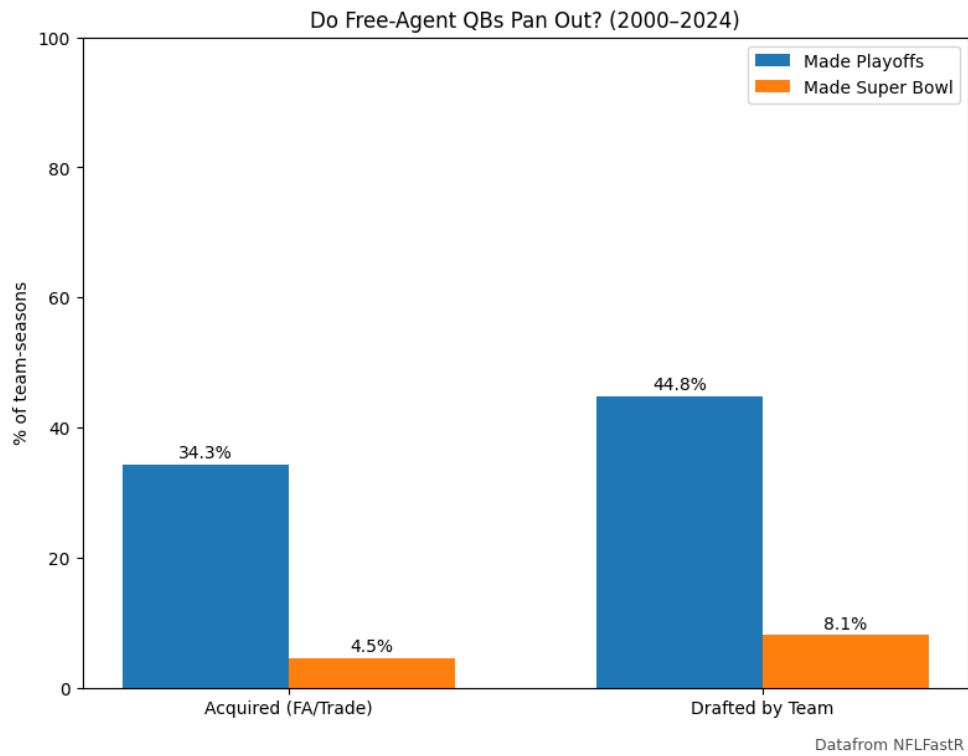


Figure 1: Playoff/SB vs QB Type

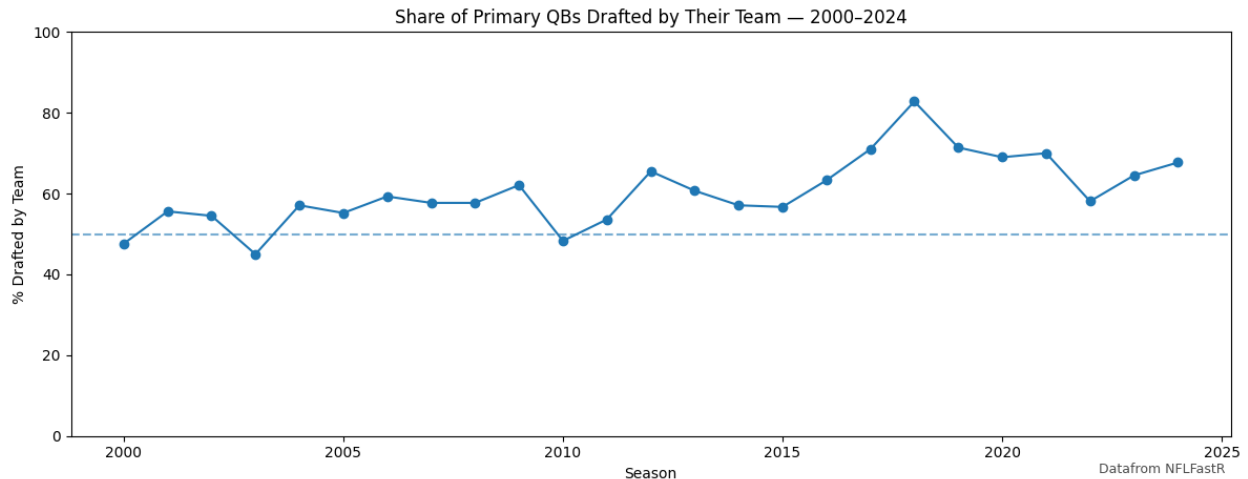


Figure 2: Share of Primary QBs Drafted by Their Team

- b. Free-agent bumps are rare
    - i. Acquired quarterbacks occasionally break through (think Peyton Manning in Denver, Tom Brady in Tampa), but over the long run, they're half as likely to deliver Super Bowl appearances.
  - c. Recent years echo the trend
    - i. From 2020–24, the playoff gap widened slightly (48% vs 40%), while Super Bowl odds remained firmly in favor of drafted QBs (8% vs 4%).
  - d. Shorter leash for free agents
    - i. Tenure analysis shows acquired QBs average only ~1.6 consecutive seasons as a team's primary starter since 2020, compared to ~2.1 for drafted QBs. Over the full 2000–24 window, drafted QBs last longer as well (3.3 vs 3.0 years).
2. Caveats & Methodology Notes
- a. Data coverage: Play-by-play and player metadata from **NFLFastR (2000–2024)** were used to identify starting quarterbacks and link them to draft information.
  - b. Defining starters: The “primary starter” for each team-season was defined as the quarterback with the most pass attempts. For playoffs and Super Bowls, the starter was taken from the team's first playoff game or Super Bowl appearance.
  - c. Draft linkage: Draft team and year were pulled from NFL player tables and supplemented with manual corrections for older players (early 2000s).
  - d. Analysis scope: Results focus only on team-seasons where the quarterback's draft origin could be confidently established; seasons with missing or ambiguous draft data were excluded.
  - e. Interpretation: Probabilities represent the share of team-seasons that reached the playoffs or Super Bowl given the QB's origin. These are descriptive comparisons rather than causal claims.

### 3. Key Stats

- a. Sample size:
  - i. 688 total team-seasons with known QB draft status (2000–2024).
  - ii. Drafted QBs: 420; Acquired QBs: 268.
- b. Playoff probability:
  - i. Drafted QBs: 44.8% (95% CI 40–50)
  - ii. Acquired QBs: 34.3% (95% CI 29–40)
- c. Super Bowl probability:
  - i. Drafted QBs: 8.1% (95% CI 6–11)
  - ii. Acquired QBs: 4.5% (95% CI 3–8)
- d. Recent window (2020–24):
  - i. Drafted QBs: Playoffs 48%, Super Bowl 8%
  - ii. Acquired QBs: Playoffs 40%, Super Bowl 4%
- e. Tenure (consecutive seasons as primary QB):
  - i. Drafted QBs: Mean 3.3 (2000–24), 2.1 (2020–24)
  - ii. Acquired QBs: Mean 3.0 (2000–24), 1.6 (2020–24)

### 4. Conclusion

- a. The myth of the free-agent savior QB is largely overstated. While outliers like Brady and Manning prove it can happen, the broader trend is clear: teams are more likely to win with quarterbacks they draft and develop. Drafted QBs give teams both better odds of postseason success **and** longer stability under center. Acquired quarterbacks can plug short-term holes, but they rarely pan out as lasting solutions or Super Bowl ticket-punchers.