

= Mark Vlasic =

Mark Richard Vlasic (born October 25 , 1963) is a former American football quarterback who played in the National Football League (NFL) for six seasons . During this time , he played for the San Diego Chargers , Kansas City Chiefs and Tampa Bay Buccaneers . Over the course of his career , he played in 15 games , completed 75 of 142 passes for 762 yards , threw four touchdowns and five interceptions , and finished his career with a passer rating of 63 @. @ 2 .

A graduate of Center High School and the University of Iowa , Vlasic was selected 88th in the 1987 NFL Draft by the San Diego Chargers . He was a backup for Dan Fouts during his first season , then started two games the following year . After not seeing playing time in 1989 , Vlasic started the season opener in 1990 , his last year with San Diego . He played for two seasons with Kansas City and one with Tampa Bay , but was released in 1994 , having not had actual playing time since 1991 .

= = High school and college = =

Vlasic was born in Rochester , Pennsylvania . He attended high school at Center High School in Center Township , Pennsylvania , and was a standout in football and basketball during his time there . He was the starting quarterback for Center in his junior year , throwing for 777 yards in the first eight games of the season . In his junior year of basketball , Vlasic was a starter , in one game scoring 23 points and 11 rebounds with a bad back . He continued to play football and basketball during his senior year , with performances that included a 36 @-@ point effort against Las Vegas Western High School , making 18 of 20 shots . As a result of his high school career , Vlasic was inducted into the Beaver County Sports Hall of Fame in 1999 .

After graduating from high school , Vlasic played college football at the University of Iowa . For four years , he served as a backup to Chuck Long , now a member of the College Football Hall of Fame . During his junior year , as the backup quarterback , he also served as the holder for field goal kicks . After placekicker Rob Houghtlin won a 12 @-@ 10 game against the University of Michigan thanks to a last second field goal , a mob tore down the goalpost , which injured four fans including Vlasic , who was at the bottom of a pile of fans .

The following season Vlasic , now a fifth @-@ year senior , became the starter , as Long graduated . Although he was taking over for the Heisman Trophy runner @-@ up , his strong arm was complimented , albeit backhandedly , by coach Hayden Fry , who said , " He 's got a stronger arm than Long , and he proves it every day by overthrowing his receivers . " In Vlasic 's first game as starter , he threw for 288 yards in a 43 @-@ 7 win against Iowa State University , a game that made Hayden Fry the most victorious coach in Iowa football history . After two more victories , Vlasic went down with a separated shoulder , returning to the lineup after freshmen Dan McGwire and Tom Poholsky took over the starting role . In a late October game against Northwestern , Vlasic threw a 93 @-@ yard touchdown pass to Quinn Early , the longest in Iowa history , in a 27 @-@ 20 victory against Northwestern University . Despite his injury causing him to serve as a backup most of the season , he was given the start for the 1986 Holiday Bowl against San Diego State University . In the Holiday Bowl , Vlasic completed 15 of 28 passes 222 yards and ran for a touchdown as Iowa won , 39 @-@ 38 .

= = Professional career = =

= = San Diego Chargers = =

Vlasic was selected by the San Diego Chargers in the 4th round of the 1987 NFL Draft . Chargers coach Al Saunders chose Vlasic because he wanted to find a young quarterback to observe and succeed Dan Fouts . He signed with the team in late July , and spent the preseason competing with Rick Neuheisel , Tom Flick , and others for the backup quarterback job . While he performed well in

the preseason , the Chargers were looking to have him sit out a year so he could learn the ins @-@ and @-@ outs of pro football . After Flick was cut and Mark Herrmann named the primary backup , Vlasic beat out Neuheisel for the final quarterback spot on the Chargers ' roster , though Neuheisel would rejoin the team later that season due to the strike . Despite making the roster , Vlasic spent most of the season after the players ' strike on the team 's inactive list . However , when Fouts was scratched from a December game against the Denver Broncos due to a shoulder injury , Vlasic was called up to be Herrmann 's backup . He made his professional debut on December 27 , 1987 , playing the final 5 : 29 of the game . He completed three of six passes for eight yards , was sacked , and threw an interception in the Chargers ' 24 @-@ 0 loss against Denver .

Before the 1988 San Diego Chargers season began , Dan Fouts chose to retire from the game after 15 seasons , leaving Vlasic as the main backup to starter Mark Herrmann , and as a result the Chargers began trying to trade for an experienced quarterback . The Chargers also signed Mark Malone and Babe Laufenberg to compete for the starting job , and traded Herrmann to the Indianapolis Colts . After months of training and the 1988 preseason , Vlasic began the season as the third string quarterback behind Malone and Laufenberg , who won the starting job . In November , after Laufenberg was injured , the Chargers decided to make Vlasic the starter instead of Malone due to the latter 's ineffectiveness , as well as a six game losing streak . He made his season debut against the Atlanta Falcons on November 13 , and threw for 190 yards in a 10 ? 7 victory . As a result of his performance , coach Al Saunders said that Vlasic would have the starting job for the rest of the season . Vlasic 's second start came against the Los Angeles Rams where he threw for 80 yards and a touchdown . However , he suffered torn ligaments in his left knee late in the third quarter , and was lost for the season . He finished the season with 25 of 52 passes completed and a passer rating of 54 @.@ 2 .

Vlasic spent the 1989 off @-@ season recovering from his injury , while the Chargers added another quarterback to the roster upon drafting Billy Joe Tolliver . After working out with the team during the preseason , he started the season on the Physically Unable to Perform list . With the Chargers having a reliable starter in Jim McMahon , who had been signed to the team , Vlasic was kept on the list for the season . In 1990 , McMahon was released and John Friesz was drafted out of the University of Idaho , leaving Vlasic to compete with Friesz and David Archer for the backup quarterback job . As the preseason began for the 1990 San Diego Chargers season , the team released Archer , and the plan was for Friesz to split backup quarterback duties during the preseason . After an impressive preseason by Vlasic and only a pedestrian one by Tolliver , Chargers coach Dan Henning named Vlasic as the starting quarterback against the Dallas Cowboys in the season opener , citing that he was " steadier " than Tolliver . After losing the game 17 ? 14 , the switch was made back to Tolliver as the starting quarterback , and was eventually named starter for the rest of the season . Despite this , Vlasic remained optimistic , saying , " I feel confident in my ability , and I always have . I know I can get the job done whatever the situation . I have to believe that . " Over the course of the 1990 season , Vlasic played in six games , completing 19 of 40 passes for 168 yards , one touchdown , two interceptions , and a passer rating of 46 @.@ 7 .

At the end of the season , coach Henning said that Tolliver was to be the starter heading into next season , and that the team would not protect Vlasic under Plan B free agency , meaning he could sign with any interested team . As a result , he began to meet with other teams that were looking for a quarterback , including the Cowboys and Green Bay Packers .

== Kansas City Chiefs ==

After meeting with the Cowboys and Kansas City Chiefs , it was reported that Vlasic signed a two @-@ year deal with the Chiefs in March , with Vlasic 's agent confirming but Chiefs general manager Carl Peterson denying it . The Cowboys stated that they would not enter a bidding war , and the signing was confirmed shortly afterward . Vlasic spent the 1991 preseason competing with Steve Pelluer and Mike Elkins for the backup quarterback job . By the end of the preseason , both Pelluer and Elkins were cut , leaving Vlasic as the backup behind Steve DeBerg . He spent most of the season backing up DeBerg and getting occasional action . His most significant day as a backup

came on November 17 against the Denver Broncos . Vlasic relieved DeBerg , who had thrown four interceptions , and completed nine of 14 passes for 91 yards and a touchdown in a 24 ? 20 loss . The highlight of Vlasic 's season was a matchup on December 8 against his old team , the Chargers . After replacing DeBerg in the second half with the Chiefs down by 14 points , Vlasic completed 12 of 18 passes for 150 yards and a touchdown as the Chiefs beat the Chargers in overtime , 20 ? 17 , and giving the Chiefs a playoff berth in the process . As a result of this performance , Vlasic was given the start for next week 's game against the San Francisco 49ers . However , he sprained his knee in the second quarter , and did not play the final regular season game . Vlasic missed the wild card playoff game against the Oakland Raiders , but was available for the divisional playoff series against the Buffalo Bills . After DeBerg left in the second quarter due to injury , Vlasic entered the game in what was his only playoff appearance . He completed nine of 20 passes for 124 yards and threw four interceptions in a 37 ? 14 blowout that marked the end of the Chiefs ' playoff run . Vlasic 's stats for 1991 were 28 completions in 44 attempts , 316 yards , two touchdowns , and a passer rating of 100 @.@ 2 .

As the 1992 Kansas City Chiefs season began , the team 's first big move was the signing of quarterback Dave Krieg to compete with DeBerg and Vlasic . A couple weeks after Krieg 's signing , DeBerg signed with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers , leaving Vlasic as the primary backup to Krieg . The Chiefs went into training camp and went through the preseason with Krieg , Vlasic , and rookie draft pick Matt Blundin . Krieg ended up playing every snap of the season , leaving both Vlasic without a year 's worth of playing time as his contract expired . The trading of Joe Montana to the Chiefs put a definitive end to Vlasic 's time in Kansas City .

= = = Tampa Bay Buccaneers = = =

On April 30 , 1992 Vlasic signed a two @-@ year contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers , reuniting himself with former teammate Steve DeBerg . Vlasic began the preseason competing the third string quarterback job behind Mike Pawlawski while DeBerg and Craig Erickson competed for the starting job . At the end of preseason , however , Vlasic was among the final group cut by the Buccaneers . When DeBerg was cut from the team in early November , Vlasic was re @-@ signed to the team in his place . He remained on the roster for the 1994 preseason , but his only preseason pass was intercepted and returned for a touchdown , and he was waived shortly afterward . This marked the end of Vlasic 's professional football career .

= = Personal life = =

Before his inaugural season of pro football , Vlasic , a finance major at Iowa , got a real estate license in case pro football did not work out . Vlasic is currently a Senior Wealth Advisor with Mariner Wealth Advisors in Leawood KS .

He has a wife , Amy , two daughters , Erica and Vanessa , a son , Ethan , and a dog Lola .