

= Scott Zolak =

Scott David Zolak ( born December 13 , 1967 ) is a broadcaster and retired American football quarterback who played in the National Football League ( NFL ) for nine seasons . Over the course of his career , he played in 55 games for the New England Patriots and Miami Dolphins , completed 124 of 248 passes for 1 @, @ 314 yards , threw eight touchdowns and seven interceptions , and finished his career with a passer rating of 64 @. @ 8 .

A graduate of Ringgold High School and the University of Maryland , Zolak was selected 84th in the 1991 NFL Draft by the New England Patriots . He did not play in 1991 , but started a few games in 1992 and had his most productive season statistically . When Drew Bledsoe was drafted in 1993 , Zolak became his backup for the next six seasons . He appeared as a replacement for Bledsoe when he was hurt , but only started three games during this time . He was released at the end of the 1998 season , and signed with the New York Jets and Miami Dolphins in 1999 , playing in one game for Miami before retiring . After his retirement , he became a sportscaster and football analyst in the New England area .

= = Early life = =

= = = High school = = =

Zolak was born on December 13 , 1967 in Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania . As a child , he acted as the waterboy for the football team at Ringgold High School in Monongahela , Pennsylvania , where his father , Paul , worked as head coach and athletic director . Future NFL quarterback Joe Montana played for Ringgold during this time and gave Zolak a football , which he later rubbed for good luck before every game . When Zolak attended Ringgold High School himself , he was the team 's starting quarterback and punter , and lettered four times . Zolak also played on the Ringgold basketball team as a forward , and was a four @-@ time letterman in that sport as well . As a result of his football performance , he was invited to participate in the Big 33 Football Classic , which featured the top high school football players in Pennsylvania .

= = = College = = =

After graduating from high school , Zolak played college football at the University of Maryland . He sat out his freshmen year , and became the third @-@ string quarterback behind Dan Henning and Neil O 'Donnell after two quarterbacks transferred . By the end of his sophomore season , Zolak was challenging O 'Donnell for the starting job after Henning graduated . As his junior year began , in the summer of 1988 , offensive coordinator Bob Valesente said that Zolak was making tremendous strides as a quarterback , but O 'Donnell was the starting quarterback that year . Zolak 's first collegiate appearance came against West Virginia . He completed four of six passes for 28 yards , but had an interception returned for a touchdown by Bo Orlando in a 55 ? 24 loss . He appeared in four games for Maryland that season .

Zolak was again the backup behind O 'Donnell in 1989 . He played in eight games , completing 33 of 69 passes for 407 yards and two touchdowns . In 1990 , after O 'Donnell graduated and began his NFL career , Zolak became the starter for Maryland , and head coach Joe Krivak had high hopes for him heading into the season . In his first start as a senior , Zolak completed a school record 28 passes in 46 attempts for 303 yards and two touchdowns , including a 51 @-@ yard pass to Gene Thomas with 61 seconds left that gave Maryland the win against Virginia Tech , 20 ? 13 . The following week , he once more featured in a dramatic conclusion , throwing a 59 @-@ yard touchdown pass to Gene Thomas with 2 : 27 left to beat 25th ranked West Virginia , 14 ? 10 . However , he was struggling in other aspects of his game . In an October game against Georgia Tech , Zolak was sacked 10 times . In four games , he had been sacked 23 times and had a pass intercepted 12 times . By the end of the season , as Maryland was preparing to face Louisiana Tech

in the 1990 Independence Bowl , he had thrown 225 completed passes in 418 attempts for 2 @, @ 589 yards and 10 touchdowns . The teams tied , 34 ? 34 , in Zolak 's final collegiate appearance . At the time of his graduation , he ranked fifth in school history with 270 pass completions , seventh with 3 @, @ 124 career passing yards , and second with 2 @, @ 589 passing yards in a season . He was also named Atlantic Coast Conference Offensive Player of the Week four times .

= = Professional career = =

= = = New England Patriots = = =

With the 84th pick in the fourth round of the 1991 NFL Draft , Zolak was selected by the New England Patriots . Scouting reports noted that his size and arm strength were great for the NFL , though there were concerns about his accuracy . Upon drafting him , Patriots Vice President of Player Operations Joe Mendes agreed that his size and arm would translate to the NFL , and he was not worried about any accuracy issues . His drafting led to a shakeup with the Patriots ' current quarterbacks , as Marc Wilson announced his retirement and longtime starting quarterback Steve Grogan was released . Zolak agreed on a contract with the Patriots in July , and was the second @-@ to @-@ last person to hold out after Leonard Russell . Zolak spent the 1991 season as the third @-@ string quarterback , behind Hugh Millen and Tom Hodson , and did not take the field .

At the start of the 1992 season , Zolak also looked unlikely to appear , being behind Hodson and Millen on the depth chart . Millen started the first five games before being injured , and then Hodson became the starter . In early November , Zolak made his professional debut in the fourth quarter against the New Orleans Saints . Relieving Hodson , he completed five of nine passes and threw an interception as the Patriots lost , 31 ? 14 . The next week , Zolak made his first career start when the still winless Patriots faced the Indianapolis Colts . He completed 20 of 29 passes for 261 yards , two touchdowns , and an interception in the Patriots ' first win of the season , 37 ? 34 . As a result of his performance , he was named the American Football Conference ( AFC ) Player of the Week . The next week , Zolak led his team to their second victory of the season against the New York Jets . He completed seven of 16 passes for 102 yards , getting help from Jon Vaughn who had 110 rushing yards , and the Patriots won , 24 ? 3 . However , the following week 's performance against the Atlanta Falcons was less impressive . He completed nine of 16 passes for 58 yards and two interceptions in the Patriots ' losing effort , and he said it felt like he was " on a desert island by myself . " After Zolak 's performance against Atlanta , he lost the starting job , and Millen again filled that role . However , Millen suffered a shoulder injury against the Colts , and after Zolak played part of the game against Indianapolis , he again became the starter for the game against the Kansas City Chiefs . Zolak injured his ankle at the end of the third quarter , making the appearance against Kansas City his last for the season as Jeff Carlson took over quarterbacking duties . Zolak finished the season with 52 pass completions in 100 attempts , 561 yards , two touchdowns , four interceptions , and a quarterback rating of 58 @. @ 8 .

In 1993 , the Patriots and new head coach Bill Parcells were looking to improve the quarterback spot on their roster . They signed Scott Secules , and attempted to sign Steve Beuerlein , but the latter deal did not happen . They also gave Hugh Millen permission to seek a trade . In April , Millen was traded to the Dallas Cowboys , and the Patriots chose Drew Bledsoe with the first pick in the 1993 NFL Draft . During the offseason , Carlson was released , leaving Secules , Zolak , Bledsoe , and Hodson to compete for the three spots on the roster . By the end of the preseason , Bledsoe had won the starting job and Hodson had been cut , with Secules as the backup and Zolak as the third @-@ string quarterback . Zolak saw playing time in three games in 1993 , and threw two incomplete passes . He became a restricted free agent in the offseason , but re @-@ signed with the Patriots for three years . As Secules was released during preseason , Zolak was set as Bledsoe 's backup as the 1994 season began . As was the case in the 1993 season , he did not make a starting appearance , as Bledsoe played the full 16 games , however Zolak did see action in every game , primarily as the holder for extra point and field goal attempts . Over the course of the season

, he completed five of eight passes for 28 yards in the two games in which he saw time at quarterback . The 1995 season was similar , with Bledsoe starting and Zolak backing him up . In September , Bledsoe separated his left shoulder in a game and sat out a week to heal , allowing Zolak to make his first start since 1992 . On October 1 , 1995 , Zolak took the field against the Atlanta Falcons , and completed 24 of 45 passes for 252 yards and a touchdown , though the Patriots lost the game , 30 ? 17 . Although Bledsoe 's doctors wanted him to sit out another week , he refused and played the next week 's game against the Denver Broncos . This again relegated Zolak to the backup position , where he remained for the rest of the season . He finished the season with 28 completed passes in 49 attempts for 282 yards , a touchdown , and a quarterback rating of 80 @.@ 5 .

The 1996 season began well for Zolak , whose contract was extended through 1998 . However , to remain with the Patriots , Zolak took a \$ 250 @,@ 000 pay cut to work around the salary cap . While he appeared set to keep his backup job heading into training camp , he faced tough competition from Jay Barker . While Zolak welcomed the challenge , his status as the backup quarterback began to seem uncertain a few weeks into training camp . By the end of training camp , Barker had been cut , and Zolak 's quarterback job was safe . He took the role of emergency quarterback throughout the 1996 season , with Bledsoe taking nearly all the snaps and Tom Tupa serving as the backup upon his signing . Zolak played in three games , completing one pass for five yards . He saw some playing time in the playoffs against the Pittsburgh Steelers , but did not play in Super Bowl XXXI . Parcells ordered Zolak to lose weight , which Zolak did throughout much of the season . The 1997 season was more of the same for Zolak , backing up Bledsoe , though the Patriots did have a new coach in Pete Carroll . As training camp ended , Zolak gained significantly more playing time during drills and the preseason matchups than he had under Parcells . As the regular season came and went , however , he had minimal playing time . Zolak saw action in four games , completing six of nine passes for 67 yards and two touchdowns , giving him a quarterback rating of 128 @.@ 2 .

With Zolak coming to the final year of his contract in 1998 , he sat in his usual spot on the depth chart , in between starter Bledsoe and third stringer Tupa . He saw playing time in three games during the first three months of the season in relief of Bledsoe . His most significant appearance during this time came against the Atlanta Falcons on November 8 , 1998 , where he completed three of ten passes for 33 yards and an interception in a 41 ? 10 loss . Near the end of the month , Bledsoe was sidelined with an injury and was questionable for the final November game . Bledsoe played in three more games , but his injury kept him from playing in the final two , giving Zolak his first starting appearance since 1995 . Zolak 's first start came against the San Francisco 49ers on December 20 . He completed 14 of 30 passes for 205 yards , two touchdowns and two interceptions and won the game , 24 ? 21 . He faced the New York Jets the following week , completing 14 of 31 passes for 127 yards and a touchdown , but lost the game 31 ? 10 . Zolak finished the season with his most productive totals since 1992 . He played in six games and started two , completed 32 of 75 passes for 371 yards , three touchdowns , 3 interceptions , and had a passer rating of 61 @.@ 8 . Zolak 's last appearance for the Patriots occurred in the playoffs , as Bledsoe was still injured , against the Jacksonville Jaguars . He completed 21 of 44 passes as the Jaguars eliminated the Patriots from playoff contention in a 25 ? 10 loss . He became an unrestricted free agent after the season ended , but was not asked back by the Patriots , ending his tenure there .

= = = Miami Dolphins = = =

After leaving the Patriots , Zolak was signed to a one @-@ year contract by the New York Jets . With Vinny Testaverde considered the starter , Zolak was competing against Ray Lucas for a backup job . He was the second @-@ string quarterback as training camp began , but his competition increased when the Jets signed Rick Mirer and left three quarterbacks to battle for two open spots on the team . Two days after acquiring Mirer from the Green Bay Packers , the Jets released Zolak . In October , Zolak was signed to a one @-@ year deal by the Miami Dolphins to serve as the backup quarterback behind Damon Huard and Jim Druckenmiller . He was later made the backup behind Huard , and made his only appearance of the season on November 21 , failing to

complete a pass in four attempts against the Patriots . As the 1999 season wrapped up , the Dolphins signed Zolak to a contract extension , keeping him on the team for another year . Despite the retirement of Dan Marino , the Dolphins cut Zolak in May 2000 . Zolak trained for the Detroit Lions during the summer after they lost Mike Tomczak for the season , but instead he signed on as a host for Patriots Gameday alongside Bob Lobel in August , ending his professional football career .

His career ended after an unfortunate accident shagging fly balls at a charity softball event .

= = Life after football = =

Zolak resides in Massachusetts with his wife Amy and his three children ( Hadley , Samantha , and Brody ) . His daughter , Samantha , was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes , and Zolak has since been investigating causes of the disease .

After retirement , Zolak became a co @-@ host of a morning sports radio talk show on Rhode Island sportstalk station " The Score " ( WSKO / 790 & WSKO @-@ FM / 99 @.@ 7 ) until the show was canceled in 2008 . He was also a football analyst for the CBS College Sports Network , as well as on the New England sports program Out of Bounds on the Comcast channel hosted by Gregg Murphy . In addition , Scott was a frequent guest host on The Big Show on WEEL in Boston before joining Gary Tanguay for the midday slot on " The Sports Hub " 98.5FM WBZ @-@ FM , which covers the Boston area . Zolak is currently co @-@ host of " Zolak and Bertrand " on " The Sports Hub " with Marc " Beetle " Bertrand .

For the 2008 NFL season , Zolak joined WCVB ( ABC Boston ) as the station 's Patriots analyst and also appeared on " SportsCenter 5 OT " on Sundays with Mike Lynch . The previous year , he had worked with Lynch covering high school games . In September 2010 , the United Football League announced that Zolak would do color commentary during live games on the New England Sports Network . Zolak also contributes to " Patriots All Access " , part of the New England Patriots ' website . On August 8 , 2012 , Zolak was named the new color analyst for Patriots radio broadcasts joining Gil Santos and replacing Gino Cappelletti .

During a game versus the New Orleans Saints on October 13 , 2013 , Zolak 's unbridled reaction to a comeback game @-@ winning Patriots touchdown pass from Tom Brady to Kenbrell Thompson alongside play @-@ by @-@ play announcer and broadcast partner Bob Socci went viral . He and Socci were the Patriots radio broadcasting team for the team 's fourth Super Bowl win in Super Bowl XLIX against the Seattle Seahawks ( Santos and Cappelletti had been the broadcasters for the first three . )