

= Carolina Panthers =

The Carolina Panthers are a professional American football team based in Charlotte , North Carolina . The Panthers compete in the National Football League (NFL) , as a member club of the league 's National Football Conference (NFC) South division . The club is worth approximately US \$ 1 @. @ 56 billion , according to Forbes , and is controlled by founder Jerry Richardson and his family , who have a 48 percent stake ; the remainder of the team is held by a group of 14 limited partners . The team president is Danny Morrison , and the head coach is Ron Rivera .

The Panthers were announced as the league 's 29th franchise in 1993 , and began play in 1995 . The Panthers played well in their first two years , finishing 7 ? 9 in 1995 (an all @- @ time best for an NFL expansion team 's first season) and 12 ? 4 the following year , winning the NFC West before ultimately losing to the eventual Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers in the NFC Championship Game . They did not have another winning season until 2003 , when they won the NFC Championship Game and reached Super Bowl XXXVIII , losing 32 ? 29 to the New England Patriots . After recording playoff appearances in 2005 and 2008 , the team failed to record another playoff appearance until 2013 , the first of three consecutive NFC South titles . After losing in the divisional round to the San Francisco 49ers in 2013 and the Seattle Seahawks in 2014 , the Panthers finally returned to the Super Bowl in 2016 , but lost to the Denver Broncos . The Panthers have reached the playoffs seven times , advancing to four NFC Championship Games and two Super Bowls . They have won six division titles , one in the NFC West and five in the NFC South .

The Carolina Panthers are legally registered as Panther Football , LLC . The team is headquartered in Bank of America Stadium in uptown Charlotte ; also the team 's home field . They are one of the few NFL teams to own the stadium they play in , which is legally registered as Panthers Stadium , LLC . The Panthers are supported throughout the Carolinas ; although the team has played its home games in Charlotte since 1996 , it played home games at Memorial Stadium in Clemson , South Carolina during its first season . The team hosts its annual training camp at Wofford College in Spartanburg , South Carolina . The Panthers ' uniform is a black , white , and blue jersey , typically worn with white and silver pants .

= = History = =

On December 15 , 1987 , entrepreneur Jerry Richardson announced his bid for an NFL expansion franchise in the Carolinas . A North Carolina native , Richardson was a former wide receiver on the Baltimore Colts who had used his 1959 league championship bonus to co @- @ found the Hardee 's restaurant chain , later becoming president and CEO of TW Services . Richardson drew his inspiration to pursue an NFL franchise from George Shinn , who had made a successful bid for an expansion National Basketball Association (NBA) team in Charlotte , the Charlotte Hornets . Richardson founded Richardson Sports , a partnership consisting of himself , his family , and a number of businessmen from North and South Carolina were also recruited to be limited partners . Richardson looked at four potential locations for a stadium , ultimately choosing uptown Charlotte . To highlight the demand for professional football in the Carolinas , Richardson Sports held preseason games around the area from 1989 to 1991 . The first two games were held at Carter ? Finley Stadium in Raleigh , North Carolina , and Kenan Memorial Stadium in Chapel Hill , North Carolina , while the third and final game was held at Williams @- @ Brice Stadium in Columbia , South Carolina . The matchups were between existing NFL teams . In 1991 , the group formally filed an application for the open expansion spot , and on October 26 , 1993 , the 28 NFL owners unanimously named the Carolina Panthers as the 29th member of the NFL .

The Panthers first competed in the 1995 NFL season ; they were one of two expansion teams to begin play that year , the other being the Jacksonville Jaguars . The Panthers were put in the NFC West to increase the size of that division to five teams ; there were already two other southeastern teams in the division , the Atlanta Falcons and the New Orleans Saints . Former Pittsburgh Steelers defensive coordinator Dom Capers was named the first head coach . The team finished its inaugural season 7 ? 9 , the best performance ever from a first @- @ year expansion team . They performed

even better in their second season , finishing with a 12 ? 4 record and winning the NFC West division , as well as securing a first @-@ round bye . The Panthers beat the Dallas Cowboys in the divisional round before losing the NFC Championship Game to the eventual Super Bowl champions , the Green Bay Packers . The team managed only a 7 ? 9 finish in 1997 and slipped to 4 ? 12 in 1998 , leading to Capers ' dismissal as head coach .

The Panthers hired former San Francisco 49ers head coach George Seifert to replace Capers , and he led the team to an 8 ? 8 record in 1999 . The team finished 7 ? 9 in 2000 and fell to 1 ? 15 in 2001 , winning their first game but losing their last 15 . This performance tied the NFL record for most losses in a single season and it broke the record held by the winless 1976 Buccaneers for most consecutive losses in a single season (both records have since been broken by the 2008 Lions) , leading the Panthers to fire Seifert .

After the NFL 's expansion to 32 teams in 2002 , the Panthers were relocated from the NFC West to the newly created NFC South division ; The Panthers ' rivalries with the Falcons and Saints were maintained , and they would be joined by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers . New York Giants defensive coordinator John Fox was hired to replace Seifert and led the team to a 7 ? 9 finish in 2002 . Although the team 's defense gave up very few yards , ranking the second @-@ best in the NFL in terms of yards conceded , they were hindered by an offense that gained very few yards , ranking as the second @-@ worst in the league in terms of yards gained . The Panthers improved to 11 ? 5 in the 2003 regular season , winning the NFC South and making it to Super Bowl XXXVIII before losing to the New England Patriots 32 ? 29 in what was immediately hailed by sportswriter Peter King as the " Greatest Super Bowl of all time " . King felt the game " was a wonderful championship battle , full of everything that makes football dramatic , draining , enervating , maddening , fantastic , exciting " and praised , among other things , the unpredictability , coaching , and conclusion . The game is still viewed as one of the best Super Bowls of all time , and in the opinion of Charlotte @-@ based NPR reporter Scott Jagow , the Panthers ' Super Bowl appearance represented the arrival of Charlotte onto the national scene .

Following a rocky 1 ? 7 start in 2004 , the Panthers rebounded to win six of their last seven games despite losing 14 players for the season due to injury . They lost their last game to New Orleans , finishing the 2004 season at 7 ? 9 . Had they won the game , the Panthers would have made the playoffs . The team improved to 11 ? 5 in 2005 , finishing second in the division behind Tampa Bay and clinching a playoff berth as a wild @-@ card . In the first round of the playoffs , the Panthers went on the road to face the New York Giants , beating them 23 ? 0 for the NFL 's first playoff shutout against a home team since 1980 . The following week , they beat Chicago 29 ? 21 on the road , but lost key players Julius Peppers , a defensive end , and DeShaun Foster , a running back , who were both injured during the game . The Panthers were then defeated 34 ? 14 by the Seattle Seahawks in the NFC Championship Game , ending their season . Although the Panthers went into the 2006 season as favorites to win the NFC South , they finished with a disappointing 8 ? 8 record . The team finished the 2007 season with a 7 ? 9 record after losing quarterback Jake Delhomme early in the season due to an elbow injury . In 2008 , the Panthers rebounded with a 12 ? 4 regular season record , winning the NFC South and securing a first @-@ round bye . They were eliminated in the divisional round of the playoffs , losing 33 ? 13 to the Arizona Cardinals after Delhomme turned the ball over six times . Delhomme 's struggles carried over into the 2009 season , where he threw 18 interceptions in the first 11 games before breaking a finger in his throwing hand . The Panthers were at a 4 ? 7 record before Delhomme 's season @-@ ending injury , and his backup , Matt Moore , led the team to a 4 ? 1 finish to the season for an 8 ? 8 overall record .

In 2010 , after releasing Delhomme in the offseason , the Panthers finished with a league @-@ worst (2 ? 14) ; their offense was the worst in the league . John Fox 's contract expired after the season ended , and the team did not retain him or his staff . They hired Ron Rivera to replace Fox as head coach and drafted Auburn 's Heisman Trophy @-@ winning quarterback Cam Newton with the first overall pick in the 2011 NFL Draft . The Panthers opened the 2011 season 2 ? 6 , but finished with a 6 ? 10 record , and Newton was awarded the AP Offensive Rookie of the Year award after setting the NFL record for most rushing touchdowns from a quarterback (14) in a single season and becoming the first rookie NFL quarterback to throw for over 4 @,@ 000 yards in a

single season . He also was the first rookie quarterback to rush for over 500 yards in a single season . In 2012 , the Panthers again opened the season poorly , losing five out of their first six games , leading longtime general manager Marty Hurney to be fired in response . The team slid to a 2 ? 8 record before winning five of their last six games , resulting in a 7 ? 9 record . This strong finish helped save Rivera 's job . The Panthers would have a winning season the following year , finishing with a 12 ? 4 record and winning their third NFC South title and another playoff bye , but they were beaten by the 49ers in the Divisional Round . In 2014 , the Panthers opened the season with two wins , but after 12 games sat at only 3 ? 8 ? 1 due in part to a seven @-@ game winless streak . A four @-@ game winning streak to end the season secured the team their second consecutive NFC South championship and playoff berth , despite a losing record of 7 ? 8 ? 1 . The Panthers defeated the Arizona Cardinals 27 ? 16 in the wild card round to advance to the divisional playoffs , where they lost to eventual NFC champion Seattle 31 @-@ 17 . The 2015 season saw the Panthers start the season 14 ? 0 and finish the season 15 ? 1 , which tied for the best regular season record in NFC history . The Panthers also secured their third consecutive NFC South championship , as well as their first overall top seeded playoff berth . In the 2015 ? 16 playoffs , the Panthers defeated the Seattle Seahawks in the NFC Divisional playoffs 31 ? 24 , after shutting them out in the first half 31 @-@ 0 and the Arizona Cardinals 49 ? 15 (highest score in NFC Championship history) in the NFC Championship Game to advance to Super Bowl 50 , their first Super Bowl appearance since the 2003 season . The Panthers lost a defensive struggle to the AFC Champion Denver Broncos 24 @-@ 10 .

= = Logo and uniforms = =

In choosing the team name , the Richardsons did not run focus groups with potential fans . Their intention had always been the ' Panthers ' ; Jerry Richardson began driving a car with the license plate ' PNTHRS ' near the end of 1989 . By the time they had been announced as the 29th NFL team in October 1993 , the Panthers ' logo and helmet design had already been finalized , but the uniform design was still under creation . After discussion , the Panthers organization decided on jerseys colored white , black , and blue , and pants colored white and silver . The exact tone of blue , which they decided would be " process blue " (a shade lighter than Duke 's and darker than North Carolina 's) , was the most difficult color to choose .

The team 's uniform has remained largely the same since its creation , with only minor alterations such as changing the sock color of the team 's black uniforms from blue to black and changing the team 's shoes from white to black . Richardson , a self @-@ described traditionalist , said that no major uniform changes would be made in his lifetime , but the Panthers changed their logo and logotype in 2012 , the first such change in team history . According to the team , the changes were designed to give their logo an " aggressive , contemporary look " as well to give it a more three @-@ dimensional feel .

The Panthers have three main jersey colors : black , white , and blue . Their blue jerseys , designated their alternate uniforms , are the newest and were introduced in 2002 . NFL regulations allow the team to use the blue jersey up to two times in any given season . In all other games , the team must wear either their white or black jerseys ; in NFL games , the home team decides whether to wear a dark or white jersey , while the away team wears the opposite . The Panthers typically pair their white jerseys with white pants , while the black and blue jerseys are paired with silver pants ; there have only been a few exceptions to these combinations . The first such instance was in 1998 , when the team paired their white jerseys with silver pants in a game against the Indianapolis Colts . The second instance was in 2012 during a game against the Denver Broncos , when they paired their black jerseys with new black pants ; this created an all @-@ black uniform , with the exception of blue socks and silver helmets . The decision to wear blue socks was made by team captain Steve Smith , who felt the blue socks gave the uniforms a more distinct appearance compared with other teams that have all @-@ black uniforms . The all @-@ black uniforms won the " Greatest Uniform in NFL History " contest , a fan @-@ voted contest run by NFL.com in July 2013 . In July 2013 , the team 's equipment manager , Jackie Miles , said the Panthers intended to use the all @-@ black

uniform more in the future . The Panthers wore the all @-@ black uniform three times the following season , once each in the preseason and regular season , and the third time during the home divisional round playoff game vs the 49ers . During the Panthers ' 2015 Thanksgiving Day game against the Dallas Cowboys , they debuted an all @-@ blue uniform as part of Nike 's " Color Rush " series .

The team 's uniform did not change significantly after Nike became the NFL 's jersey supplier in 2012 , but the collar was altered to honor former Panthers player and coach Sam Mills by featuring the phrase " Keep Pounding " . Nike had conceived the idea , and the team supported the concept as a way to expose newer fans to the legacy of Mills , who died of cancer in 2005 . Mills had introduced the phrase , which has since become a team slogan , in a speech that he gave to the players and coaches prior to their 2003 playoff game against Dallas ; in the speech , Mills compared his fight against cancer with the team 's on @-@ field battle , saying " When I found out I had cancer , there were two things I could do ? quit or keep pounding . I 'm a fighter . I kept pounding . You 're fighters , too . Keep pounding ! "

= = Stadium and practice facilities = =

The Panthers played their first season at Memorial Stadium in Clemson , South Carolina , as their facility in uptown Charlotte was still under construction . Ericsson Stadium , called Bank of America Stadium since 2004 , opened in the summer of 1996 . Bank of America Stadium is owned entirely by the Panthers , making them one of the few teams in the NFL to own the facility they play in . The stadium was specially designed by HOK Sports Facilities Group for football . It also serves as the headquarters and administrative office of the Panthers . On some days of the week , the stadium offers public tours for a fee . Private tours for groups are offered for a fee seven days a week , though there are some exceptions , and such tours must be arranged in advance . Two bronze panther statues flank each of the stadium 's three main entrances ; they are the largest sculptures ever commissioned in the United States . The names of the team 's original PSL owners are engraved on the base of each statue . The two people in the Panthers Hall of Honor , team executive Mike McCormack and linebacker Sam Mills , are honored with life @-@ sized bronze statues outside the stadium . Mills , in addition to being the only player in the Hall of Honor , is the only player to have had his jersey number (# 51) retired by the Panthers as of 2016 .

The Panthers have three open @-@ air fields next to Bank of America Stadium where they currently hold their practices ; during the 1995 season , when the team played their home games in South Carolina , the team held their practices at Winthrop University in Rock Hill , South Carolina . Because the practice fields , along with the stadium , are located in uptown Charlotte , the fields are directly visible from skyscrapers as well as from a four @-@ story condominium located across the street . According to Mike Cranston , a running joke said that the Panthers ' division rivals had pooled their resources to purchase a room on the building 's top floor , and that a fire at the condominium was caused by the Panthers organization . In order to prevent people from seeing inside the field while the team is practicing , the team has added " strategically planted trees and a tarp over the ... fence surrounding the fields " . Additionally , they employ a security team to watch for and chase away any people who stop alongside the fence surrounding the field . In the event of bad weather , the team moves their practices to an indoor sports facility about 10 miles from the stadium . The team does not own this facility . The Panthers have hosted their annual training camp at Wofford College in Spartanburg , South Carolina , since 1995 .

= = Culture = =

Pat Yasinskas of ESPN.com observed that while there is " a bit of a wine @-@ and @-@ cheese atmosphere at Panthers games ... there is a strong core of diehard fans who bring energy to Bank of America Stadium . Charlotte lives and dies with the Panthers because there aren 't a lot of other options in the sports world " . The Panthers are also supported in South Carolina ; Nikki Haley , the state 's Governor , declared July 30 , 2012 , " Carolina Panthers Day " in her state , saying that "

when it comes to professional teams , the Carolina Panthers are the team that South Carolina calls their own " . Sports Illustrated graded the Panthers as having the 10th highest " NFL Fan Value Experience " in 2007 , attributing much of the fan atmosphere to the team 's newness when compared to the established basketball fanbase . They also observed that the stadium has scattered parking lots , each of which has a different tailgating style . Some have fried chicken , pork , or Carolina @-@ style barbecue , while others have live bands and televisions . Pickup football games in the parking lots are common , but fans tend to " behave themselves " , in part due to blue laws that prevent the sale of alcohol before noon on Sundays .

The Carolina Panthers have sold out all home games since December 2002 , and their home attendance has ranked in the NFL 's top ten since 2006 .

= = = Mascot , cheerleaders , and drumline = = =

Sir Purr , an anthropomorphic black cat who wears a jersey numbered ' 00 ' , has been the Panthers ' mascot since their first season . During games , Sir Purr provides sideline entertainment through skits and " silly antics " . The mascot participates in a number of community events year @-@ round , including a monthly visit to the patients at Levine Children 's Hospital . Sir Purr also hosts the annual Mascot Bowl , an event which pits pro and college mascots against each other during halftime at a selected Panthers home game .

The team 's cheerleaders are the Carolina Topcats , a group of 24 women who lead cheers and entertain fans at home games . The TopCats participate in both corporate and charity events . The team 's drumline is PurrCussion , an ensemble of snare , tenor , and bass drummers as well as cymbal players . PurrCussion performs for fans outside the stadium and introduces players prior to home games ; it consists of drummers from across the Carolinas .

= = = Keep Pounding Drum = = =

Starting with the 2012 season , the Panthers introduced the Keep Pounding Drum , inspired by the aforementioned motivational speech by Sam Mills before the team 's 2004 playoff game against the Cowboys . Prior to each home game , an honorary drummer hits the six @-@ foot tall drum four times to signify the four quarters of an American football game . According to the team , the drummers " come from a variety of backgrounds and occupations , but all have overcome a great trial or adversity that has not only made them strong but also pushes them to make others around them stronger " . Drummers have included current and former Panthers players , military veterans , Make @-@ A @-@ Wish children , and athletes from other sports , including NBA MVP and Charlotte native Stephen Curry , US women 's national soccer team players Whitney Engen and Heather O 'Reilly , and 6 @-@ time NASCAR Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson .

= = = Songs and Traditions = = =

During the inaugural season of the Panthers , the team had an official fight song , which the team played before each home game . The song , " Stand and Cheer " , remains the team 's official fight song , but the team does not typically play it before home games . Due to negative fan reaction " Stand and Cheer " was pulled in 1999 . Since 2006 , the song has returned . In recent seasons the team has played Neil Diamond 's " Sweet Caroline " and Chairmen of the Board 's " I 'd Rather Be In Carolina " immediately after home victories . A " keep pounding " chant was introduced during the 2015 season which starts before the opening kickoff of each home game . As prompted by the video boards , one side of the stadium shouts " keep " and the other side replies with " pounding " . The chant is similar to ones that take place at college football games .

= = = Charity and community work = = =

The Carolina Panthers support a variety of non @-@ profits in North and South Carolina through

the Carolina Panthers Charities . Four annual scholarships are awarded to student athletes through the Carolina Panthers Graduate Scholarship and the Carolina Panthers Players Sam Mills Memorial Scholarship programs . Carolina Panthers Charities also offers grants to non @-@ profits that support education , athletics , and human services in the community . The Panthers and Fisher Athletic has provided six equipment grants to high school football teams in the Carolinas each year since 2010 . Carolina Panthers Charities raises funds at three annual benefits : the Countdown to Kickoff Luncheon , the team 's first public event each season ; Football 101 , an educational workshop for fans ; and the Weekend Warrior Flag Football Tournament , a two @-@ day non @-@ contact flag football tournament . Another annual benefit is Taste of the Panthers , a gourmet food tasting which raises funds for Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina .

In 2003 the Panthers and Carolinas HealthCare Foundation established the Keep Pounding Fund , a fundraising initiative to support cancer research and patient support programs . The Panthers community has raised more than \$ 1 @. @ 4 million for the fund through direct donations , charity auctions , blood drives , and an annual 5k stadium run . The Panthers and Levine Children 's Hospital coordinate monthly hospital visits and VIP game @-@ day experiences for terminally ill or hospitalized children .

In addition to these team @-@ specific efforts , the Panthers participate in a number of regular initiatives promoted by the NFL and USA Football , the league 's youth football development partner . These include USA Football Month , held throughout August to encourage and promote youth football ; A Crucial Catch , the league 's Breast Cancer Awareness Month program ; Salute to Service , held throughout November to support military families and personnel ; and PLAY 60 , which encourages young NFL fans to be active for at least 60 minutes each day .

= = = Radio and television = = =

Radio coverage is provided by flagship station WBT (1110 AM) and through the Carolina Panthers Radio Network , with affiliates throughout the Carolinas , Georgia , and Virginia . The Panthers ' radio broadcasting team is led by Mick Mixon , Eugene Robinson , and Jim Szoke . The radio network broadcasts pre @-@ game coverage , games with commentary , and post @-@ game wrap @-@ ups . It also live @-@ broadcasts Panther Talk , a weekly event at Bank of America Stadium which offers fans a chance to meet a player and ask questions of the staff .

National broadcasting and cable television networks cover regular season games , as well as some preseason games . Locally , Fox owned and operated station WJZY airs most regular @-@ season games , while any home games against an AFC team air on CBS affiliate WBTV . Any appearances on Monday Night Football are simulcast on ABC affiliate WSOC @-@ TV , while any late @-@ season appearances on Thursday Night Football are simulcast on WBTV . Sunday night and some Thursday night games are aired on NBC affiliate WCNC @-@ TV .

All preseason games and team specials are televised by the Carolina Panthers Television Network on flagship station WCCB in Charlotte and fourteen affiliate stations throughout the Carolinas , Georgia , Virginia , and Tennessee . The television broadcasting team consists of play @-@ by @-@ play commentator Mike Morgan , color analyst and former Panthers player Mike Rucker , and sideline reporter Pete Yanity . The network also hosts The Panthers Huddle , a weekly show focusing on the Panthers ' upcoming opponent . Panthers Gameday , the Panthers ' postgame show , is hosted by sports anchor Russ Owens and former Panthers lineman Kevin Donnalley on WCNC @-@ TV .

The Panthers also offer game broadcasts in Spanish on an eight @-@ station network fronted by WGSP @-@ FM in Pageland , South Carolina , as well as additional radio affiliates in Mexico . Jaime Moreno provides the play @-@ by @-@ play while his nephew , Luis Moreno , Jr . , is the color commentator . They have become popular even among English @-@ speaking Panther fans for their high @-@ energy , colorful announcing style .

= = Rivalries = =

The Panthers have developed heated rivalries with the three fellow members of the NFC South (the Atlanta Falcons , Tampa Bay Buccaneers , and New Orleans Saints) . The team 's fiercest rivals are the Falcons and Buccaneers .

The Falcons are a natural geographic rival for the Panthers , as Atlanta is only 230 miles (370 kilometers) south on I @-@ 85 . The two teams have played each other twice a year since the Panthers ' inception , and games between the two teams feature large contingents of Panthers fans at Atlanta 's Georgia Dome .

The Panthers ' rivalry with Tampa Bay has been described as the most intense in the NFC South . The rivalry originated in 2002 with the formation of the NFC South , but became particularly heated before the 2003 season with verbal bouts between players on the two teams . It escalated further when the Panthers went to Tampa Bay and beat them in what ESPN.com writer Pat Yasinskas described as " one of the most physical contests in recent memory " . The rivalry has resulted in a number of severe injuries for players on both teams , some of which have been caused by foul play . One of these plays , an illegal hit on Tampa Bay punt returner Clifton Smith , sparked a brief melee between both teams in 2009 .

During their time in the NFC West , the Panthers began developing a rivalry with the San Francisco 49ers . This rivalry faded after the NFL moved the Panthers out of the NFC West .

The Panthers also have a new rivalry with the Seattle Seahawks after playing them six times since the 2012 season , including twice in the playoffs . Carolina is 2 ? 4 against Seattle during this stretch and 1 ? 1 in the NFL playoffs .

= = Players = =

= = = Current roster = = =

= = = Hall of Honor = = =

The Carolina Panthers Hall of Honor was established in 1997 to honor individuals for their contributions to the Carolina Panthers organization . Each inductee is honored with a life @-@ sized bronze statue outside of Bank of America Stadium 's North Entrance , while the names of each original PSL owner are written on the black granite base at each of the six panther statues . A rule added in the mid @-@ 2000s by the Panthers organization requires all potential inductees to be retired for at least five years before they are eligible for induction .

= = = Pro Football Hall of Fame enshrinees = = =

Nominees for the Pro Football Hall of Fame , which " honor [s] individuals who have made outstanding contributions to professional football " , are determined by a 46 @-@ member selection committee . At least 80 % of voters must approve the nominee for him to be inducted .

= = Ownership and administration = =

Jerry Richardson is the owner and founder of the Carolina Panthers . Richardson and his family own about 48 % of the team , with the remaining 52 % owned by a group of 14 limited partners . Richardson paid \$ 206 million for the rights to start the team in 1993 ; according to Forbes , the Panthers are worth approximately \$ 1 billion as of 2012 . They ranked the Carolina Panthers as the 16th @-@ most valuable NFL team and the 23rd most valuable sports team in the world .

Mike McCormack , a Hall of Fame lineman for the Cleveland Browns and former coach and executive for the Seattle Seahawks , was the Panthers ' first team president , presiding in that role from 1994 until his retirement in 1997 ; McCormack was inducted as the first person in the Carolina Panthers Hall of Honor later that year . Jerry Richardson 's son , Mark , was appointed as the team

's second president in 1997 and served in that role until he stepped down in 2009 . His brother Jon , who had been president of Bank of America Stadium , stepped down at the same time . The resignations of Mark and Jon Richardson were unexpected , as it was thought that the two would eventually take over the team from their father . Mark Richardson was replaced by Danny Morrison , who had previously served as the athletic director of both Texas Christian University and Wofford College , Richardson 's alma mater .

= = = Coaches = = =

The Carolina Panthers have had four head coaches . Dom Capers was the head coach from 1995 to 1998 and led the team to one playoff appearance . Counting playoff games , he finished with a record of 31 ? 35 (.470) . George Seifert coached the team from 1999 to 2001 , recording 16 wins and 32 losses (.333) ; he is the only head coach in team history not to have led the team to a playoff appearance . John Fox , the team 's longest @-@ tenured head coach , led the team from 2002 to 2010 and coached the team to three playoff appearances including Super Bowl XXXVIII which the Panthers lost . Including playoff games , Fox ended his tenure with a 78 ? 74 (.513) record , making him the only Panthers coach to finish his tenure with the team with a winning record . Ron Rivera , the team 's current head coach , has held the position since 2011 and has led the team to three playoff appearances including Super Bowl 50 which the Panthers also lost . Counting playoff games , he has a career record of 50 ? 35 ? 1 (.587) . Statistically , Rivera has the highest winning percentage of any Panthers head coach .

= = = Current staff = = =

= = Team records = =

Since they began playing football in 1995 , the Panthers have been to four NFC Championship Games ; they lost two (1996 and 2005) and won two (2003 and 2015) . The Panthers have won six division championships : the NFC West championship in 1996 and the NFC South championship in 2003 , 2008 , 2013 , 2014 , and 2015 . They are the first and only team to win the NFC South back to back and have won the NFC South more times than any other team in the division . They have finished as runners @-@ up in their division six times , finishing second @-@ place in the NFC West in 1997 and 1999 and finishing second @-@ place in the NFC South in 2005 , 2006 , 2007 , and 2012 . They have qualified for the playoffs 7 times , most recently in 2015 .

Kicker John Kasay is the team 's career points leader . Kasay scored 1 @,@ 482 points during his 16 seasons (1995 ? 2010) with the Panthers . Quarterback Jake Delhomme , who played with the team from 2003 to 2009 , is the career passing leader , having thrown for 19 @,@ 258 yards over his seven seasons with the team . Running back DeAngelo Williams is the career rushing leader for the Carolina Panthers . Williams , during his tenure with the team (2006 ? 2014) , rushed for 6 @,@ 846 yards with the Panthers . Wide receiver Steve Smith , the team 's leading receiver , recorded 12 @,@ 197 receiving yards during his 13 @-@ year (2001 ? 2013) tenure with the team .