

# N.F.L. Notebook; Craig Sets the Pace For Running Backs

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The way Roger Craig sees it, his body should be like a finely tuned automobile. Like rolling into a body shop for oil changes and new filters, Craig three times a week visits a chiropractor and twice a week has a **massage**. He is 6 feet and 212 pounds, having lost 13 pounds since last season.

Roger Craig is a sleek Porsche among National Football League running backs.

He rambled for 146 yards on 26 carries Sunday in the San Francisco 49ers' 16-13 loss to the Denver Broncos. He is the only player in N.F.L. history to rush for 1,000 yards and gain 1,000 yards receiving in the same season (1985). He also holds the record for most receptions (92) by a running back in a season.

He dispenses licks as much as he takes them. At Nebraska he was hurt much of his senior season in 1982. Pro scouts said he was injury prone, and therefore he lasted in the N.F.L. draft until the second round, the 49th pick, with Curt Warner, Michael Haddix, James Jones and Gary Anderson all drafted before him.

Yet, in his sixth season with the 49ers, Craig has missed only one of the team's 92 games played.

"That's something I'm most proud of," Craig said. "Everyone thought I wouldn't be durable. But I love winning, and I'll do whatever it takes to win. I look at taking care of the body just as a businessman would his business. I lost a little weight this season to be quicker, and I can tell the difference." Yet, he hasn't lost his punch. "I've seen all the great ones, O. J. Simpson and Jim Brown and Gale Sayers and Walter Payton," said Dan Reeves, the Broncos' coach. "None of them breaks more tackles than Roger Craig."

Craig is becoming a standard by which N.F.L. backs are being judged. In today's myriad offensive schemes, the best backs are the versatile ones who can run and catch, who can block and can bully for short yardage and sprint for long gains.

He's creeping up the ladder on all of the 49ers' rushing records. He was born in Preston, Miss., but grew up in Davenport, Iowa. Smalltown values. Big-time results. "My father died of cancer when I was a senior in high school," Craig said. "He was a mechanic and a hard worker. I think that's where my work ethic comes from. He impressed on me that no amount of hard work is too much when you're reaching for a goal. I've been lucky to be here in a system that uses me in a lot of ways."

Joe Montana, the 49ers' quarterback, said: "He's a marvel. He affects nearly everything we do on offense. He helps develop our offense in every way, and we go into a game thinking about getting him the ball in the beginning and in the end of every game."

That won't change when the 49ers (4-2) battle the Los Angeles Rams (5-1) in Anaheim, Calif., on Sunday. Craig, who has rushed for 577 yards this season, will counter Greg Bell, the Ram tailback who leads the National Conference with 622 rushing yards.

"The Rams always run the ball well," Craig said, "and that gives us extra incentive to match that." Packers Erupt

They rushed for 207 yards, their first 200-yard rushing game in their last 39 games. They scored their most points in a game since 1984. They intercepted five passes and saw nine New England players suffer injuries, including Stanley Morgan, a receiver who incurred a concussion when he was blocked in mid-air on an interception return.

The Green Bay Packers, who had lost their first five games, finally won one, beating the Patriots by 45-3 in Milwaukee.

"This is a very unfamiliar position for me," said Lindy Infante, the Packers' coach.

And now it is the Patriots (2-4) who are reeling.

"A loss like this isn't embarrassing, it's a just a loss," said Doug Flutie. "We're going to try and make the playoffs. I don't know how, but that's still our goal." Still a Problem

Babe Laufenberg, the San Diego Charger quarterback, who was rocked in a 23-17 loss to the New Orleans Saints: "I'm still having trouble breathing." . . . Rusty Hilger, the former Los Angeles Raider quarterback, who after only three days with the Detroit Lions relieved the injured Chuck Long in Detroit's 24-7 loss to the Chicago Bears: "I told Chuck before the game that if he got hurt, it better be bad enough to go to the hospital or I'd kill him after the game. I want to make a public apology to the organization and to the fans of the Detroit Lions. A veteran ought to be able to come in and play a little better."

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