

TB12 On the Move?

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After agreeing to a contract extension with the New England Patriots last week, it appeared that the 42 year old Tom Brady would end his NFL career in the same uniform he began with. Though this will likely be the case, the contract details lead me to believe that there is an opening for Brady to land in a new destination of his choosing in 2020. For any who haven't kept up with offseason news, this probably sounds like 'Fake News' or some article that belongs on the Onion, but I promise there is some substance behind this storyline.

Diving into the specifics of the contract, Brady earned an \$8 million pay raise for next season coming off his sixth Super Bowl win to end the 2018 campaign. On top of this, the Patriots also included team options for 2020 and 2021, in which they would pay him \$30 million and \$32 million respectively. Though all of this seems nice and dandy for Patriots fans, there is a catch that could prove detrimental to the continuing partnership of the QB and the team. New England has opt out opportunities in both 2020 and 2021, that would effectively make Tom Brady an unrestricted free agent as soon as next year. Assuming the strategic Patriots are reluctant to bring out the Brinks Truck for the oldest quarterback in the league, it isn't so farfetched to believe that Tom would explore his options on the open market if the time comes. Taking that into consideration, I will explore the potential teams in play for landing Brady in free agency should this come to fruition.

Las Vegas Raiders



The signing of Tom Brady will likely drive Raider Nation into a Black Hole of madness and PTSD from Tuck Rule flashbacks, but I promise this move wouldn't be entirely bad. In fact, I see this as an unbelievable opportunity for the Raiders both football wise AND investment wise. What could possibly spark season ticket sales and generate a buzz around the Raiders new brand in Las Vegas than the addition of the greatest quarterback of all time to your team?

We are all aware of Jon Gruden's larger than life personality and understand that he is more than willing to take big risks in order to reshape the culture of a franchise that has suffered for so long. Addressing the Derek Carr shaped elephant in the room, it should be noted that the team has opt out clauses throughout the remainder of his hefty contract that will allow them to move on from him with only a miniscule burden to the salary cap. In other words, it would be relatively easy for the team to move on from the underperforming Carr without suffering much financially moving forward.

As for Tom Brady, this team could offer him somewhere upwards of \$30 million (assuming they cut Carr), a figure much larger than the Patriots have expressed interest in paying him. Though this number seems ridiculously high for a QB in his mid-forties, it should not be forgotten that Brady finished in the top 10 in the NFL in both passing yards and touchdowns as recently as last season. Plus, the presence of an elite WR1 in Antonio Brown can't hurt in convincing Tom to consider running a new offensive system.

If one thing is for sure, its that the Raiders are long overdue for a new identity and reputation as they move to a new city. Who better could they choose to promote a new winning culture and put butts in seats of their fancy new stadium!?

San Francisco 49ers



Joe Montana. Steve Young. Tom Brady? Growing up in the shadows of the famous Candlestick Park, Brady is no stranger to the Bay Area. In fact, he was an avid fan of the 49ers throughout his youth, and even sat in the stands to see *The Catch* by Dwight Clark in the 1981 NFC Championship. As he enters the final lap of his storied career, a homecoming should definitely not be ruled out as a possibility if New England doesn't want to pay him.

The injury history of Jimmy Garoppolo is in the front of every 49ers fans' mind, and one more major injury could spell the end of his stint in San Francisco. There is no question that Jimmy G's arm is phenomenal and that he knows how to win, but \$127 million is a lot of money to pay someone who can't stay healthy and play. For this reason, San Francisco should heavily consider taking a gamble on another New England QB should their current one get hit with the injury bug again.

Looking at the fit for Tom Brady, there is no doubt that he will get along nicely with the bright offensive minded head coach Kyle Shannahan. Plus, the team has done a nice job upgrading at all of the skill positions in recent years, making it a priority in the last couple of offseasons. Perhaps Brady might even rekindle the magic he once had with Gronk with the young star tight end George Kittle, who torched the NFL with inferior quarterbacking last year.

Coming home is definitely a possibility for Brady if he hits free agency in 2020, and this roster provides an unmatched level of upside at the skill positions. Beyond football, I think it's pretty safe to say Brady and his family would enjoy riding off into the California sunset to cap off a legendary career.

Tennessee Titans



More so than any other period in NFL history, a shockingly large percentage of teams have their quarterback position figured out for their long term plan. On the short list of teams who don't fall in this category, are the Tennessee Titans. Though the team has managed to win 9 games each of the last 3 seasons, Marcus Mariota has been far from a reliable starter in this league since being drafted in 2015. If the Titans see another subpar year from Mariota in 2019, it is very possible that they move on from him altogether at the conclusion of next season. The trade for Ryan Tannehill this offseason leads me to believe that Mariota's job is not secure at all.

Brady's move to Nashville would also mean reuniting with his friend and former teammate Mike Vrabel, who has sprung onto the scene as a solid head coach after his playing days. The big red flag for Tom is the lack of talent at the receiver position, with no true number one guy and not much depth in the position group. This could and should be a huge concern for Brady, as he doesn't have the luxury of time in developing young receivers around him. For him to see this as a potential fit, the team would need to make a few other signings to signal that they are on the same page in win NOW mode.

As I mentioned earlier, this team is not far off from climbing over the hump as they've won 9 games the last 3 seasons with unimpressive squads. They have the defensive side of the ball figured out and even finished top 10 in total defense in 2018, but the Titans lack a franchise QB and a true WR1 to run the offense. This could all be changed with the snap of a finger (or the signing of a contract), and the Titans should definitely be on the short list of teams Tom Brady should consider if he hits the open market.

The Rest of the Pack



Beyond the front runners listed above, there are quite a few dark horse teams that would likely enter the bidding war for Brady if he hits the open market. Among those are the Broncos, Chargers, and even the Dolphins if a few dominoes fall in unexpected directions.

Starting with the Broncos, they would definitely be in the market for a QB if Drew Lock pans out to be Paxton Lynch part II. I don't believe this will be the case, but we all know that John Elway is quick to move off of quarterbacks and roll the dice on whoever he can get his hands on. Ever since the retirement of Peyton Manning, the clock has been ticking on the effectiveness of their talented defense, and they have wasted the last few years with pedestrian play at the quarterback position. It shouldn't be forgotten that the Broncos won a Super Bowl 4 years ago with an old man at quarterback, and maybe they believe Tom has one left in him.

Staying in the AFC West, the Chargers could also be very much in play to sign Tom Brady if Philip Rivers decides to retire at the end of next season. His play indicates that he can sling the ball at a high level in the league, but I wouldn't be surprised if the veteran Rivers throws in the towel to help out around the house with his 17 kids. In the event that this takes place, the Chargers would be thrust into the position to sign a veteran QB because their team is built to win now. This would put the two parties on the same page and would be a tremendous fit for both sides.

Lastly, I don't think the Dolphins should be completely ruled out of the pitch to land the legendary Brady. Of all teams listed, they could offer him the most money for his services, but I feel that their big constraint in signing him would be the lack of experience on their young roster.