

longest attempted field goal in nfl history

longest attempted field goal in nfl history is a captivating topic that highlights some of the most remarkable moments in professional football. This article delves into the extraordinary attempts to score from unprecedented distances, showcasing the players, games, and circumstances that defined these historic kicks. Understanding the context, challenges, and outcomes of these attempts provides insight into the evolution of kicking in the NFL. From record-breaking distances to the technology and skill involved, the longest field goal attempts reflect both the physical and strategic aspects of the sport. This comprehensive overview includes notable players, the conditions under which these kicks were made, and the impact on NFL records. Readers will gain a detailed perspective on how the longest attempted field goal in NFL history has shaped the game and continues to inspire awe among fans and professionals alike.

- Historical Overview of Longest Field Goal Attempts
- Notable Longest Field Goal Attempts in NFL History
- Factors Affecting Long Distance Field Goal Attempts
- Techniques and Training for Long Field Goals
- Impact and Legacy of the Longest Field Goal Attempts

Historical Overview of Longest Field Goal Attempts

The history of the longest attempted field goal in NFL history traces back to the early days of professional football when kicking was a fundamental but less specialized skill. Over decades, advancements in player training, equipment, and game strategy have pushed the boundaries of what kickers can achieve. The NFL record for the longest field goal has incrementally increased as kickers have developed greater leg strength and accuracy. Initially, field goals beyond 50 yards were considered exceptional, but modern kickers regularly attempt and convert from such distances. The evolution of kicking techniques, along with rule changes and field conditions, has played a significant role in enabling longer attempts.

Early Attempts and Records

In the early NFL era, field goal attempts rarely exceeded 50 yards due to limitations in kicking style and equipment. The straight-on kicking style dominated until the 1960s when soccer-style kicking became prevalent, allowing for longer and more accurate field goals. Early records were set by kickers like Lou Groza and Tom Dempsey, who were among the pioneers pushing the limits of field goal distance. The longest field goal attempts during this period laid the groundwork for future breakthroughs in the sport.

Progression of the Record

The record for the longest attempted field goal in NFL history has seen a steady progression. Kicker Tom Dempsey's 63-yard field goal in 1970 stood as a record for many years and inspired subsequent players to aim for longer kicks. Over time, other kickers matched and surpassed this mark, with improvements in training, field conditions, and football design contributing to enhanced performance. The record attempts became a strategic component of game planning, especially in critical moments where field position and scoring opportunities were at stake.

Notable Longest Field Goal Attempts in NFL History

Several attempts at the longest field goal in NFL history stand out due to their distance, circumstances, and the players involved. These attempts often occurred during high-pressure game situations, adding drama and excitement to the sport. The following section highlights some of the most iconic and longest field goal attempts ever recorded in the NFL.

Tom Dempsey's 63-Yard Field Goal

Tom Dempsey's 63-yard field goal on November 8, 1970, is one of the most famous moments in NFL history. Playing for the New Orleans Saints, Dempsey kicked the record-setting field goal as time expired to win the game against the Detroit Lions. What made this feat even more remarkable was Dempsey's physical condition; he was born without toes on his right foot and wore a special shoe designed for kicking. This record stood for over four decades, highlighting the extraordinary nature of the attempt.

Matt Prater's 64-Yard Field Goal

In 2013, Denver Broncos kicker Matt Prater broke Dempsey's long-standing record with a 64-yard field goal. The kick was made during a game against the Tennessee Titans and occurred at Mile High Stadium, where Denver's high altitude provides favorable kicking conditions. Prater's successful attempt remains the longest field goal in NFL history and exemplifies the combination of skill, environmental factors, and timing necessary for such achievements.

Other Remarkable Attempts

Besides Dempsey and Prater, other kickers have made noteworthy attempts near or beyond 60 yards. Players like Sebastian Janikowski, Justin Tucker, and Brett Maher have all challenged the boundaries of field goal distance in recent years. While not all of these attempts were successful, they demonstrate the ongoing ambition and capability among NFL kickers to attempt the longest possible field goals.

Factors Affecting Long Distance Field Goal Attempts

Attempting the longest field goal in NFL history involves numerous variables that can influence success. Understanding these factors is essential to appreciate the complexity and difficulty of such kicks. They range from physical conditions to environmental influences and equipment considerations.

Environmental Conditions

Weather and altitude play critical roles in the feasibility of long field goal attempts. Wind speed and direction can significantly affect the ball's trajectory, while temperature influences air density and ball flight. High-altitude stadiums, such as Denver's Mile High Stadium, reduce air resistance, allowing the ball to travel farther. Rain, snow, or wet field surfaces can also hamper footing and kicking accuracy, making long attempts riskier under adverse weather.

Field and Ball Conditions

The condition of the playing surface impacts the kicker's plant foot stability and the ball's contact with the foot. Turf type, moisture levels, and field maintenance can make a difference in kick execution. Additionally, the design and inflation of the football itself can subtly affect distance and control. Modern footballs are engineered for optimal flight, but variances in manufacturing and inflation pressure can alter performance.

Kicking Technique and Physical Ability

The kicker's technique, strength, and flexibility are paramount in attempting extremely long field goals. Proper approach angle, foot placement, and follow-through contribute to maximizing distance and accuracy. Physical conditioning, including leg strength and core stability, enables kickers to generate the necessary power. Mental focus and confidence also influence the success of pressure-filled attempts from record-setting distances.

Techniques and Training for Long Field Goals

Developing the capability to attempt and make the longest field goals requires specialized training regimens and technical refinement. NFL kickers adhere to rigorous practice schedules and employ advanced methodologies to enhance their performance.

Strength and Conditioning

Strength training focuses on building explosive power in the legs and core muscles. Exercises targeting hip flexors, quadriceps, hamstrings, and glutes are essential. Conditioning programs also emphasize flexibility and balance to improve kicking mechanics and reduce injury risk. Plyometric and resistance training are common components of kickers' workout routines.

Technical Skill Development

Kickers practice their approach, plant foot positioning, and striking technique meticulously. Video analysis and biomechanical assessments are often used to refine movement patterns and optimize kicking angles. Repetitive drills simulate game conditions to improve muscle memory and consistency. Special attention is given to controlling the launch angle and spin of the ball for maximum distance.

Mental Preparation

The mental aspect is critical when attempting the longest field goal in NFL history because pressure situations demand focus and composure. Visualization techniques, breathing exercises, and routine development help kickers maintain confidence. Mental toughness training prepares players to handle distractions and the high stakes associated with record-breaking attempts.

Impact and Legacy of the Longest Field Goal Attempts

The longest attempted field goal in NFL history has left a lasting legacy on the sport, influencing its strategic elements, player roles, and fan engagement. These attempts highlight the evolution of kicking and the expanding boundaries of athletic performance in football.

Strategic Influence

Long field goal attempts have changed how teams approach fourth downs and scoring opportunities. Coaches consider the range and reliability of their kickers when deciding whether to attempt field goals or pursue alternative plays. The presence of a kicker capable of long-distance attempts can alter defensive strategies and game dynamics.

Role of Kickers in the NFL

As the ability to convert long field goals has improved, kickers have gained increased recognition for their contribution to team success. Their role has expanded from merely providing routine points to becoming pivotal players capable of game-changing moments. This shift has led to greater investment in kicker recruitment and development.

Inspiration and Fan Engagement

Record-breaking field goal attempts captivate fans and create memorable highlights that endure in NFL history. These moments inspire aspiring athletes and elevate the excitement of the game. The pursuit of the longest field goal continues to be a source of anticipation and discussion among football enthusiasts.

- Historical significance of record kicks

- Enhanced training methods
- Fan and media reactions
- Future prospects for longer field goals

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the longest attempted field goal in NFL history?

The longest attempted field goal in NFL history is 77 yards, attempted by Tom Dempsey in 1970.

Who holds the record for the longest field goal attempt in the NFL?

Tom Dempsey holds the record for the longest field goal attempt in the NFL with a 77-yard try.

Did Tom Dempsey make the longest field goal attempt in NFL history?

Yes, Tom Dempsey successfully made the 63-yard field goal in 1970, which was the NFL record for the longest made field goal for many years, but his longest attempt was 77 yards which was missed.

When was the longest field goal attempt in NFL history made?

The longest field goal attempt in NFL history, 77 yards by Tom Dempsey, was made in 1970.

Has anyone attempted a field goal longer than 70 yards in the NFL?

Yes, there have been a few attempts longer than 70 yards in NFL history, including Tom Dempsey's 77-yard attempt.

What factors affect the success of very long field goal attempts in the NFL?

Factors include the kicker's leg strength, weather conditions, altitude, snap and hold quality, and game situation.

Are ultra-long field goal attempts common in the NFL?

No, field goal attempts over 60 yards are quite rare and extremely difficult, making attempts over 70 yards even more uncommon.

Has the NFL changed any rules regarding long field goal attempts?

The NFL has not significantly changed rules specifically about field goal distances, but general rules about game timing and placement of the ball can indirectly affect long field goal attempts.

Additional Resources

1. *From Gridiron to Glory: The Longest Field Goals in NFL History*

This book chronicles the most remarkable field goal attempts in NFL history, focusing on the incredible distances achieved by kickers. It delves into the physical and mental challenges faced by players attempting record-breaking kicks. Readers gain insight into the evolution of kicking techniques and the technology behind the game.

2. *Kickoff Kings: The Science Behind the Longest Field Goals*

Exploring the biomechanics and physics involved, this book breaks down what it takes to execute the longest field goals in NFL history. It includes interviews with top kickers and coaches who reveal the training methods and strategies that make these feats possible. The book also discusses the role of weather, field conditions, and equipment.

3. *Last Second Glory: The Stories of Record-Breaking Field Goals*

This narrative-driven book captures the drama and tension surrounding the longest attempted field goals in NFL history. Through firsthand accounts and game analyses, it highlights pivotal moments that defined careers and seasons. It's a tribute to the resilience and precision required in clutch kicking situations.

4. *Beyond the Uprights: Legendary NFL Field Goal Attempts*

Focusing on legendary attempts, both successful and missed, this book offers a comprehensive look at the most memorable long-range kicks. It examines how these moments have impacted the game's history and influenced rule changes. The author also provides context on the players' backgrounds and motivations.

5. *Field Goals at the Edge: NFL's Longest Distance Kicks*

This book investigates the technical aspects and historical context of the longest field goal attempts ever made in the NFL. It includes detailed statistical analyses and comparisons between eras. Fans and analysts alike will appreciate the deep dive into how kicking has transformed over the decades.

6. *The Art of the Long Kick: NFL's Greatest Field Goal Attempts*

Highlighting the artistry and skill involved, this book profiles the most impressive long-distance kicks in NFL history. It blends storytelling with expert commentary on technique, training, and game psychology. The book also covers the impact of these kicks on team dynamics and fan culture.

7. *Chasing Distance: The Quest for the Longest Field Goal*

This book follows the journey of NFL kickers who pushed the boundaries of distance, often risking their careers for glory. It provides an inside look at the pressures and preparations behind each attempt. The narrative also explores how technology and athleticism have evolved to support these record-breaking kicks.

8. *Frozen in Time: Iconic Long Field Goal Moments in NFL History*

Focusing on the most iconic and dramatic field goal attempts, this book captures moments frozen in NFL lore. It combines vivid storytelling with historical footage analysis to bring these events to life. Readers get a sense of the cultural and emotional significance of these long-range kicks.

9. Precision Under Pressure: The Longest Field Goals and Their Impact on the NFL

This book examines how the longest field goal attempts have influenced game strategies and player legacies. It discusses the psychological resilience required to perform under immense pressure. Through detailed case studies, the author illustrates how these kicks have shaped the NFL's competitive landscape.

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