

DALLAS COWBOYS Reading Comprehension

The Dallas Cowboys were formed on January 28, 1960. Dallas would become the first city south of Washington DC to have a football team. According to legend, the formation of a team south of Washington DC was met with resistance from the owners of Washington's NFL team (the Redskins). The Redskins finally agreed to allow Dallas to host an NFL team after Dallas officials bought the rights to the Redskins' official team song, "Hail to the Redskins." Cowboys officials refused to let the Redskins use the song until they agreed to allow for a team in Dallas, which they eventually did.

Before the team was called the Cowboys, they were known as the Steers and then the Rangers. When the Cowboys' first owner, Clint Murchison, Jr., finally settled on the "Cowboys," he hired Tom Landry as the team's first coach.

Being a new team in the NFL was hard. The Cowboys failed to win an NFL game until the beginning of their second season, when they defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers. It took six seasons before the Cowboys finally had a winning season. In 1966, however, the Cowboys would begin a streak of twenty consecutive winning seasons, which is still an NFL record today. In 1969, after the rival Dallas Texans of the AFL (a competing football league) left for Kansas City, the Cowboys began work on Texas Stadium in nearby Irving, Texas. It was completed in 1971 and could hold over 65,000 fans. That same year, the Dallas Cowboys made it to their first Super Bowl, Super Bowl V. Although they were defeated by the Baltimore Colts 16–13, the future looked bright for the Dallas Cowboys.

The Cowboys, however, struggled in their new stadium. Halfway through the 1971 season, Coach Tom Landry decided to replace starting quarterback Craig Morton with Navy graduate Roger Staubach. The move proved to be brilliant. Staubach led the Cowboys to ten consecutive victories including their first Super Bowl victory over the Miami Dolphins on January 16, 1972. Roger Staubach would be named MVP of the Super Bowl. Staubach also led the Cowboys to Super Bowls X and XIII, both of which proved to be tightly contested losses to the Pittsburgh Steelers and their famed "Steel Curtain" defense. He also led the Cowboys to victory in Super Bowl XII, 27–10 over the Denver Broncos. After this victory, Dallas became known as "America's Team." After the 1979 season, Roger Staubach retired. In all, Staubach led the Cowboys to four Super Bowls in the 1970s.

Although the Cowboys made the playoffs five times in the 1980s, they failed to make the Super Bowl. A major turning point for the Cowboys occurred in 1989 when Arkansas businessman Jerry Jones purchased the team. Jones immediately fired Coach Tom Landry, who had been the only head coach in Cowboys history to that

point. He hired University of Miami Head Coach Jimmy Johnson. They also traded star running back Herschel Walker and drafted UCLA quarterback Troy Aikman with the first pick of the NFL draft. The 1989 season, however, would prove to be one of the worst in Cowboy history. That year they won only one game and lost fifteen. Things would soon get better. In 1990, the Cowboys drafted University of Florida running back Emmitt Smith with their first round pick. With the combination of Troy Aikman, Emmitt Smith, and University of Miami wide receiver Michael Irvin, the Cowboys would soon become one of the most exciting teams in the NFL. By 1991, the Cowboys were back in the playoffs, and by 1992, they were back at the Super Bowl, defeating the Buffalo Bills 52–17, in the second most lopsided Super Bowl score in history. Coach Jimmy Johnson became the first coach to win the Super Bowl and an NCAA Championship. The following year, the Cowboys once again dominated their competition and defeated the Buffalo Bills for a second time, 30–13. During the 1992 season, eleven Dallas Cowboys were named to the Pro Bowl, a new NFL record. The Cowboys would also win Super Bowl XXX (30) against the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1995, by the score of 27–17.

Although the Cowboys have failed to make it back to the Super Bowl since their 1995 victory, the team remains the NFL's most valuable, worth an estimated \$1.1 billion. Troy Aikman, Michael Irvin, and Emmitt Smith have all been elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and Emmitt Smith holds the NFL rushing record for most yards from scrimmage in a career. In 2009, the new Cowboys stadium was unveiled with a capacity of over 110,000 people. It is the largest domed stadium in the world and hosted the 2011 Super Bowl.

- 1.) **In which two decades did the Cowboys fail to make it to the Super Bowl?**
 - a.) 1970s and 1980s
 - b.) 1960s and 1970s
 - c.) 1960s and 1980s
 - d.) 1990s and 2000s

- 2.) **Who holds the NFL rushing record?**
 - a.) Troy Aikman
 - b.) Emmitt Smith
 - c.) Roger Staubach
 - d.) Michael Irvin

- 3.) **Why did the Washington Redskins allow a team to be located in Dallas?**
 - a.) Because it was good for business
 - b.) Because Dallas had purchased the rights to the Redskins' stadium
 - c.) Because Dallas had purchased the rights to the Redskins' fight song
 - d.) Because they knew Tom Landry would be named coach

- 4.) **How many Super Bowls did Tom Landry WIN as coach of the Dallas Cowboys?**
 - a.) 1
 - b.) 2
 - c.) 3
 - d.) 4

- 5.) **What happened in 1989?**
 - a.) The Cowboys traded Herschel Walker.
 - b.) The Cowboys drafted Troy Aikman.
 - c.) The Cowboys lost 15 games.
 - d.) All of the above

- 6.) **The Dallas Cowboys defeated the _____ in two consecutive Super Bowls.**
 - a.) Pittsburgh Steelers
 - b.) Buffalo Bills
 - c.) Washington Redskins
 - d.) Denver Broncos

- 7.) **The Dallas Cowboys were...**
 - a.) the first team to win a Super Bowl.
 - b.) originally the Washington Redskins.
 - c.) the first team to be located south of Washington DC.
 - d.) the NFL's first team.

8.) One win and two losses would describe the record of the Dallas Cowboys vs. the _____ in Super Bowls.

- a.) Pittsburgh Steelers
- b.) Buffalo Bills
- c.) Washington Redskins
- d.) Denver Broncos

9.) When did the Cowboys become known as "America's Team"?

- a.) In 1966
- b.) After their first Super Bowl victory.
- c.) After their second Super Bowl victory.
- d.) When Jerry Jones bought the team.

10.) Which of the following is NOT true about Roger Staubach?

- a.) He attended Navy.
- b.) He led the Cowboys to ten straight victories in 1971–1972.
- c.) He led the Cowboys to two Super Bowl victories.
- d.) As quarterback of the Cowboys, he never lost a Super Bowl.