

Kiszla: His Broncos teammates have a man crush on quarterback Trevor Siemian. Here's why.

By Mark Kiszla
Denver Post
September 21, 2017

There was Broncos quarterback Trevor Siemian on a jumbo screen at the stadium, 30 feet tall and immortal.

Now, if there's one thing Siemian likes less than throwing an interception in the red zone, it might be talking about himself. But there he was, doing an interview on television with ESPN's Scott Van Pelt during halftime of "Monday Night Football."

You should have seen how his teammates, mingling with fans during the Taste of Broncos event, reacted to seeing Siemian's big, goofy face on the big TV, talking about Denver's big victory over Dallas, as if their buddy Trev was Tom Brady, Aaron Rodgers or any other big-time NFL quarterback.

"I was tripped out," confessed Broncos safety Will Parks, delighted Siemian is getting national pub. "That boy's working. You work and you get recognized. But here's the thing: He's so humble, you can't even use it against him."

With a 2-0 record and an offense averaging 33 points per game, the Broncos have again become buzz-worthy throughout the league. Siemian, the self-described slappy who twice won a starting job meant for somebody else, has thrown six TD passes and his QB rating is a gaudy 106.9 (better than the rating of either Brady or Rodgers). He must be loving this life, right?

So I asked Siemian how a 25-year-old young man on a cusp of becoming a breakout star celebrates face time on ESPN with SVP. A big steak and a bigger cigar? Is that how Siemian rolls? Livin' large?

"I wish," Siemian said, "but it's good to get some sleep on those off days."

OK, let me get this straight: Siemian outplayed Dallas quarterback Dak Prescott and wrecked the Cowboys 42-17, then celebrated by putting on his pj's and hitting the pillow early?

"During the week, your mind's racing pretty good and you're getting up early," Siemian said. "I try to take advantage of sleep every chance I get."

With the 250th pick in the 2015 NFL draft, Broncos executive John Elway got himself a slappy and a sleeper to play quarterback. Which, come to think about it, might explain why teammates love Siemian. And they do love Siemian.

Peyton Manning was The Sheriff. He was the law, with a big shiny star, sometimes more feared than adored in the locker room.

Siemian is Mr. Skittles. Sweet but not a wallflower. There's this story of how Manning, a notorious walnut-cracker, tried to crack wise on a Broncos rookie in the QB room three seasons ago, and Siemian

gave it right back to the NFL legend. But, more times than not, Siemian is as easy as Sunday morning with his teammates.

Some Broncomaniacs with very active imaginations like to imagine when Siemian grows up, he will be just like Brady, primarily based on the narrative Handsome Tom was also once an underrated Big Ten quarterback drafted late (199th overall, by New England in 2000).

In 16 professional starts, Siemian has won 10 times with a QB rating of 87.0. That's not chopped liver. That's Alex Smith, whose career QB rating is 86.0, while compiling a record of 81-56-1 with San Francisco and Kansas City.

Asked to describe his role in the 16-yard TD pass to running back C.J. Anderson that put the Broncos ahead to stay against Dallas, Siemian humbly said: "I gave it to 22 (Anderson's jersey number) and let him figure it out."

Siemian is the rare NFL quarterback that doesn't believe the game — or the universe — revolves around him. Siemian has sold Denver's playmakers he's there to serve them, not vice versa.

"I want to get the ball to those guys and get out of the way," Siemian said. "It's not going to be me running around making plays. That's not how we're going to be really, really good. It's going to be 10 (Emmanuel Sanders), 88 (Demaryius Thomas), 22 (Anderson) and 28 (Jamaal Charles), all those guys making explosive plays."

And now you know why teammates have a man crush on Siemian.

Even when his face is 30 feet tall and immortal on a jumbo TV, Siemian acts as if he's just a regular guy, lucky to be going to work every day in Broncos Country.

Broncos' Siemian starting to make believers across the NFL

By Arnie Stapleton
Associated Press
September 20, 2017

Trevor Siemian is finally starting to get some love around the NFL.

Through two weeks, the Denver Broncos' third-year pro is tied for the league lead with six TD passes and the Broncos (2-0) are tops in the NFL with a 57 percent third-down conversion rate.

Siemian spent his rookie year learning from Peyton Manning and Brock Osweiler, an apprenticeship he parlayed into the starting job by beating out the franchise's supposed future QB, Paxton Lynch, in back-to-back summers.

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones is among the believers in the former part-time starter at Northwestern who thought long and hard about getting his real estate license when his college career ended on crutches.

Jones was aware of the Broncos' brilliant defense but was admittedly surprised to see Siemian carve up his Cowboys with four TD passes in a 42-17 shellacking in Denver last weekend.

"We were a little taken aback by how well they did offensively," Jones said. "Their quarterback played outstanding."

Siemian has now started 16 games, the equivalent of a full season, and he's gone 10-6 while throwing for 3,851 yards with 24 touchdowns and 12 interceptions — the kind of numbers that would be impressive for a first-round pick, let alone a seventh.

"Definitely room for a lot of improvement, you know, all over the place, I can tell you," Siemian said Wednesday. "But it's just playing you get more comfortable certainly, just feel for the game, things happen a little slower for you. So, it's like anybody else, the more you play the more comfortable you get and usually the better off you are."

Siemian is the only Broncos QB with two dozen TD throws in his first 16 career NFL starts (his boss, John Elway, had 11).

So, isn't it high time that Siemian gets some respect, wondered Phil Simms, a Super Bowl winner and longtime CBS commentator.

"I love the way he plays. I don't think he gets the credit he deserves. He hangs in there, takes big hits, he throws the ball on time, he throws it with anticipation and he throws a perfect spiral almost every single throw," Simms said "I wish everybody would get over the fact that he is their quarterback. And, 'Oh he wasn't a high draft pick,' or 'He's not a franchise guy.' Well, you know what? I think he really is."

Sean McDermott, whose Bills (1-1) host the Broncos this weekend, was one of Siemian's earliest converts.

"I had the chance to go against Trevor a year ago when I was with the Panthers, the opening game of the year . I was impressed with him then. I continue to be impressed," McDermott said. "He's smart. He does a lot in between plays in terms of at the line of scrimmage. He knows where to go with the football based on coverage looks. He gets in and out of plays at the line. He's efficient."

Sort of like another Broncos QB hailed as much for his above-the-shoulders acumen as anything he could do physically.

Siemian acknowledged he didn't think he'd get drafted when the Broncos chose him with the 250th overall pick in 2015 while he was recovering from knee surgery. But he forced his way onto a Super Bowl-bound roster as a rookie and spent his last two summers dispatching much-hyped first-round QBs Lynch and Mark Sanchez.

Siemian might be the biggest bargain in the league, too.

While his backup, Osweiler, is making \$16 million, and Lynch is getting \$880,000, Siemian is pulling in \$615,000 this season.

His \$36,176 weekly paycheck is slightly more than the \$30,000 that running back Jonathan Williams is pulling in every week on Denver's practice squad.

Big paychecks are almost certainly in his future, but Siemian is singularly focused on today .

"Trevor works, man. He's not really looking for the numbers or if he stands next to Matt Ryan or this person or that person," running back C.J. Anderson said. "Trevor's just a grinder. I think his goal is like all our goals: be the best you can be on Sunday, correct it on Monday and then move on."

Siemian spent much of his offseason in the film room to understand defenses better and in the weight room to get better at escaping the rush, both of which are paying off.

He already has 33 yards and his first career touchdown on 11 runs after averaging just two runs and 2.0 yards per game last year.

Anderson said the proof in Siemian's progress is in his pre-snap adjustments.

"Yeah, I think third-and-6 run check was just, you know, something that 18 would have done," Anderson said of Siemian's Manning-like decision Sunday that resulted in a 9-yard run and ignited a 15-play, 75-yard touchdown drive that salted away the Cowboys.

"He's definitely understanding the game more," Anderson said.

Notes: OLB Von Miller (knee) was limited at practice Wednesday, as was nickel CB Bradley Roby (ankle), but coach Vance Joseph said he had no concerns about their availability Sunday.

Trevor Siemian has remained true to himself through two years of Broncos QB competitions

By Nicki Jhabvala
Denver Post
September 14, 2017

Something changed in Trevor Siemian the first week of August, when training camp practices hit a rhythm and coordinator Mike McCoy installed more and more of his complex offense. The switch was noticeable to most, as Siemian appeared more consistent on the field and more sarcastic off.

In his weekly addresses to media he humorously referred to himself as “slappy” — twice. “I just think I’m a ‘slappy’ in general,” he said.

In responding to persistent questions about the pressure of competing for the starting job, again, he remained optimistic. “Shoot, they haven’t fired me yet,” he said.

And, in seeing a reporter fumble at a press briefing, as so often they did, he couldn’t help but to jokingly point it out. “Jeez, Mike. Really?!” he’d say. (That one was and still is used quite often.)

Siemian, the seventh-round pick out of Northwestern who was never supposed to make it, has done just that. And he finally seems comfortable in his arrival. He has won the Broncos starting job two years in a row, each time with a different head coach and different offense, validating his long-held belief that he indeed earned his spot.

“You have to understand your role as a quarterback,” he said. “You’re a leader of the team and you have to embrace that, and I do. But also, I’m just going to be myself, be authentic, a good teammate and be a good quarterback. Hopefully, guys can rely on me. That’s my mind-set.”

When Gary Kubiak pushed to select Siemian at No. 250 overall in the 2015 draft, it got little notice. The team had a future Hall of Famer in Peyton Manning, a ready successor in Brock Osweiler and Siemian limped into his first NFL camp limited by a knee injury.

But Kubiak knew what he saw and knew what Siemian could become, so when Osweiler left for Houston after the Broncos’ Super Bowl 50 victory, Siemian entered a race few expected him to finish, let alone win. Twice.

In 2016, the unlikely candidate beat out veteran Mark Sanchez, whom the Broncos traded for with plans to start him, and 2016 first-round pick Paxton Lynch. Joseph, upon his hiring in January, announced the quarterback competition would be “50-50,” in other words wide open. Siemian beat out Lynch once more in a system many thought was tailored for Lynch, the tall kid with better arm strength and an ability to run the ball.

The truth is it was also built for Siemian.

“Mike built the system for both guys. It wasn’t built for Paxton; it was built for the quarterback,” Joseph said. “... You know, Trevor gets no credit for being a guy with a great arm. That’s never been talked about.”

And in an ironic twist of fate, now Osweiler will be Siemian’s backup. The veteran re-signed with Denver for the veteran’s minimum to serve as Siemian’s backup while Lynch recovers from a right shoulder sprain.

When healthy, Year 2 for Lynch will be another for development. Although Lynch improved drastically from his rookie season, Siemian was the more consistent quarterback throughout training camp and especially the first two preseason games, after which Joseph anointed him the starter.

Expectations are high for a first-round pick, and they’ll remain as such for Lynch.

“Moving forward, he knows that he is one play away from playing,” Joseph said. “He can’t lose his enthusiasm to keep getting better as a quarterback. That’s a big deal for him. Just keep his focus, be a good teammate and keep working.”

They’re even higher for Siemian as he enters his second season as the starter. In his 14 starts last year, he threw for 3,401 yards, recorded three 300-yard games, and also left plenty of room for improvement.

Throughout Kubiak’s final year as head coach, he said his young quarterback had to do a better job of protecting himself, even when the blocking broke down. Doing so was on Siemian’s personal checklist when he returned to Dove Valley this spring.

“I think the way to stay on the field and the way you stay healthy is just decision-making,” he said. “Look at some of the older guys who manage to stay healthy — I mean everybody gets dinged up, no doubt. That’s going to happen. But, getting the ball out when you have to and moving around when you have to. Some of the older guys in the league that are never off the field aren’t the strongest guys in the world but are obviously very smart players that know how to take care of their bodies.”

Siemian’s decision-making, as well as his consistency and ball-placement all helped him maintain a firm grip on the starting job.

And it will be key to the Broncos’ hopes of returning to the playoffs.

“He won nine games last year and probably could have won 10 or 11,” Joseph said. “So I’m excited about Trevor. Protecting him more than we did last year, running the football better and continue to play great defense, I think he fits the bill for us.”

Trevor Siemian Applying The Lessons He Learned from Peyton Manning

By Robert Klemko
MMQB
September 12, 2017

This is how it was supposed to look, more or less. It wasn't always pretty or high-flying, but Trevor Siemian got the job done. In his first start since winning the quarterback job for the second season over Paxton Lynch, Siemian was methodical, connecting with seven different receivers on 17 of 28 passes for 219 yards, three scores (two through the air, one rushing) with an interception in a 24–21 season-opening win vs. the Los Angeles Chargers.

Anything less, and you'd have a good chunk of Broncos Nation wondering aloud whether the coaching staff was right to hand the starting gig to a seventh-round pick from three years ago instead of former first-round pick Paxton Lynch.

Was Siemian perfect on Monday night? Hardly. Were it not for Chargers cornerback Casey Hayward's sudden butterfingers, a first-quarter throw might have gone the other way. And a second-half interception on a batted ball thrown into tight coverage facilitated a Chargers comeback that came down to a missed field goal which would've forced OT. If either Hayward holds on or the field goal connects, we'd be having a different conversation right now.

But after his handful of missteps, Siemian, 25, did what veteran quarterbacks do. He forgot about them. Or at least he appeared to in the eyes of his teammates. "That's the Trevor we know," Broncos running back C.J. Anderson said. "Calm and collected."

Siemian's apparent popularity in the locker room and current command of the starting job is the latest chapter in a professional journey that began in the summer of 2015, when the Northwestern alum was competing with Zac Dysert for the No. 3 spot on the depth chart behind Peyton Manning and Brock Osweiler. Limited by a knee injury for all of that rookie minicamp, Siemian gave coaches a clue that he might one day soon be the guy in his first interactions with Manning.

"I knew Trevor had a little moxie in one of the first quarterback meetings in the room with him," says Greg Knapp, Denver's quarterback coach from 2013–16. "I've been around a couple other guys in the room with Peyton who were college free agents or late draft picks, and guys get intimidated. Even for a coach it can be intimidating to be in a room with Peyton. He'll challenge you, and he's a bulldog about it."

"I won't say exactly what he said, but Peyton threw a zinger at Trevor, and it was incredible to hear how Trevor spit one back in Peyton's face. And I'm going, I love this. Mr. Manning, you've got a little bit of a challenge with this rookie. Trevor doesn't get intimidated easily."

Siemian laughed at the memory: "That's funny Knapp remembers that. We had a great room and a good back and forth. Maybe a little too much."

Siemian beat out Dysert that season, and won a Super Bowl ring as the third-string QB. Osweiler left for greener pastures, signing a four year, \$72-million dollar contract with the Texans, only to return to

Denver this month after a blip in Cleveland. In the meantime, John Elway, the former Super Bowl winning quarterback, drafted quarterback Paxton Lynch in 2016, only to concede in both '16 and '17 that Lynch wasn't as ready as Siemian.

How big was the gap? Depends on the year and who you ask.

The original decision to hand Siemian the keys in 2016, coaches say, was a tough one. Lynch had all the physical tools coming out of the draft, and Siemian was still catching up after backing up Manning and Osweiler in '15. "I think it came down to the wire," Knapp said. "Paxton's skillset is really impressive, but he came out of an offense that wasn't as much of a pro style offense. There's growing pains there."

And what about 2017? There's some disagreement. New offensive coordinator Mike McCoy, Manning's coordinator in 2012 before taking the head coaching job with the Chargers, echoed head coach Vance Joseph in calling it a tough decision. "They all did a great job, all three quarterbacks," McCoy said. "The great thing about this business as coaches is you've got to make tough decisions from time to time."

But two team sources familiar with the coaches' evaluation of both quarterbacks said the competition in training camp wasn't close. Following OTAs, Siemian demonstrated a mastery of the playbook while Lynch lagged behind, the sources said.

If it came down to habits, Siemian benefited greatly from playing behind Manning in 2015, the veteran's last season. Siemian observed Manning taking copious notes on material simple and complex alike, so he, too, took up the habit and started filling up notepads with concepts he was already familiar with, in chicken scratch handwriting only he could read.

"It's something I still do," Siemian says. "Being in the same room with a guy that's done it really, really well for a number of years. If it worked for him, I figured it might work for me. You process things a little better when you put pen to paper. I still write down too much. It's just kind of a habit I've started myself."

When Siemian arrived at training camp in a competition with Lynch, he was able to direct teammates on the finer points while Lynch was still putting down a base of knowledge in a new offense. McCoy watched Siemian tutor teammates in meetings with a focus on being accountable to execute assignments on any given play.

"There are days you're with the ones, days you're with the twos, and he did a good job of leading in every situation," McCoy said. "In the meetings he's great, saying to guys this is what we're expecting on this play. This is where you need to be in this situation."

Fast-forward two months, and there's Siemian in the opener, barking out pre-snap instructions in the face of defensive alignments he'd never seen before. The Chargers had been careful to show very little in the preseason, and Broncos players say some of the fresh alignments and coverage disguises might have thrown a lesser quarterback for a loop.

Veteran running back Jamaal Charles came away impressed with his quarterback after a third-quarter goal line sequence in which Los Angeles offered an unfavorable look on the edge and Siemian audibled from pass to run, handing off to Charles for a third-and-one conversion that ended a yard away from paydirt.

“It was a great decision,” Charles said Monday night after the game. “I really should have scored. ... The good thing about him is that he’s more of a vet who understands the game. These guys who played with Peyton and are still here, they all have high football IQs.”

These are happy players, knowing that with Siemian, they’re being put in a position to win. And it’s what the staff envisioned when they made the competitive—if unsexy—decision to start him.

As Broncos approach regular-season opener, it's 'Trevor's team'

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

September 5, 2017

For the bulk of the last two weeks of the preseason, and yes, even until roster cut-down day, much of the conversation that surrounded the Denver Broncos' quarterbacks has excluded one of them.

And that's the starter.

But as the Broncos, with a freshly minted 53-man roster, formally began their preparations on Monday for the Sept. 11 regular-season opener against the Los Angeles Chargers, all involved say there is no question Broncos quarterback Trevor Siemian is the guy behind center.

"It's Trevor's team," Broncos coach Vance Joseph said following Monday's practice. "He feels that way. We feel that way. He's ready to have a great year for us. It's his football team."

The Broncos players will show where they stand on the issue on Wednesday morning, when they elect team captains. It would be one of the biggest upsets of the season if Siemian, who was voted as one of the captains last season, is not selected again.

In a topsy-turvy preseason, Siemian has been the only constant on the depth chart since he was officially named the starter last month. Since then, Paxton Lynch suffered a right shoulder sprain that will keep him sidelined for at least four weeks, the Broncos cut training camp hero Kyle Slotter and Denver signed Brock Osweiler to a one-year deal.

Slotter was the people's choice of the preseason, as he led the AFC in passer rating -- 125.4 -- while completing 31 of 43 passes for 413 yards and three touchdowns. There were many among the Broncos' faithful who, because of Lynch's injury, had hoped the team would pick Slotter to be the backup quarterback to start the season.

However, with Slotter having just nine career starts at Northern Colorado, the Broncos saw him as a developmental prospect they wanted on their practice squad. The other 31 teams agreed, as Slotter passed through waivers on Saturday, before he took an offer, for \$20,000 a week, to be on the Minnesota Vikings' practice squad.

Then came Osweiler's signing, an improbable return, given his somewhat bumpy departure in free agency 18 months ago. Osweiler said Monday that not only was he ecstatic to be back with the Broncos, but that he fully understands his role this time around.

Asked if he believed he could be a starter once again in the NFL, Osweiler said:

"I do see myself as a starter in the National Football League. I feel like I proved that back in 2015. However, in saying that, this is Trevor Siemian's team, and right now, my job is to be the backup of this football team and do it to the best of my ability. Get the scout team running, get our defense ready to

go, and I'm going to embrace that role with everything I have because, like I said, I'm so happy to be back here and there's not greater place in the NFL."

For their part, Broncos players had quietly said throughout the team's quarterback competition between Siemian and Lynch in training camp that Siemian would emerge as the starter. And since Siemian was declared the winner, those same players have been vocal in their support.

On Monday, they welcomed Osweiler's arrival, as well.

"Nothing surprises us in the league," cornerback Aqib Talib said. "Sloter played good in the preseason, but you want to go into the season confident in your backup quarterback. We know Brock knows this system. We've seen him in this system before. We know, worst scenario, if something happens to Trev, we know we're confident in our backup quarterback now."

Siemian and Osweiler don't need an introduction, given Siemian was a rookie No. 3 quarterback behind Peyton Manning and Osweiler in the Super Bowl season of 2015. The Broncos felt good enough about Siemian at the time that he was the team's No. 2 quarterback in the seven games Manning didn't start that season because of a foot injury.

Osweiler was asked Monday if he could foresee Siemian's career arc at that point.

"You know what, I could," Osweiler said. "It goes back to the very first preseason game of 2015, when we played in Seattle. Most rookie quarterbacks step into the game their first time, whether it's the first quarter or the fourth quarter, it doesn't matter, and they have a little bit of jitters and you see a little bit of rookie quarterback play. Not in Trevor. Trevor stepped in from Week 1, that first drive that he went out there against the Seahawks, and played great. From that time, I knew that he could be special, and he's certainly proving that right now."

Trevor Siemian keeps winning Denver Broncos' quarterback job, and this is why

By Lindsay Jones
USA Today
September 1, 2017

The first time Trevor Siemian entered a competition to be the Denver Broncos' starting quarterback, he was the ultimate underdog — a seventh-round pick with just one kneel-down on his NFL resume.

But he emerged from 2016's three-man race victorious and played decently.

The second time he fought for the job, he was the front runner as the incumbent starter after going 8-6 last season. Still, a skeptical Denver fan base took to talk radio and social media to express firm support for Paxton Lynch, the team's 2016 first-round pick and a player Hall of Fame quarterback-turned-general manager John Elway handpicked and traded up to acquire.

Still, Siemian prevailed. He has supplanted a journeyman, Mark Sanchez, whom the Broncos signed because of his experience and twice defeated Lynch.

"I had a shot coming in and, for me, that's all I needed," Siemian said.

But how exactly did he twice manage to emerge atop the depth chart while playing for two coaching staffs and in two different systems?

Current and former coaches and teammates say it's a credit to Siemian's mental acuity — both in the classroom and on the field — underrated athleticism and a low-key leadership style that earns respect.

"He is a great connector. He connects with everybody," Mick McCall, Siemian's college offensive coordinator at Northwestern, told USA TODAY Sports. "It doesn't surprise me that people continue to follow him and try to do things for him."

Even after starting 14 games last year, Siemian faced obstacles. It began in January, when the coach who was his biggest cheerleader, Gary Kubiak, retired. Later that month, Siemian had surgery to repair a lingering injury in his left (non-throwing) shoulder.

New head coach Vance Joseph hired offensive coordinator Mike McCoy, who was expected to bring an offense with more spread elements, shotgun formations and downfield passes that could have favored Lynch, who is more mobile and has a stronger arm than Siemian.

But installation of the new offense might have worked in Siemian's favor because of his ability to process it. When offseason practices began in the spring, it was clear he had a better grasp on McCoy's playbook and carried that consistency into training camp practices in July and August.

"I think it's more of how to attack from a schematic standpoint. That's Trevor. That's Trevor putting us in the right spots ... and knowing exactly what Mike McCoy would check to in a matter of 13 to 15 seconds," receiver Emmanuel Sanders said.

"I'll tell you what, I think those two guys are going to continue to gain camaraderie and pick each other's brains apart to understand what Trevor likes and understand exactly what Mike is thinking. I think that's when this offense is going to take off to a whole different level."

While Lynch's athletic ceiling might be higher than Siemian's, Joseph said he's been impressed with Siemian's arm strength and has no concerns that he can make all of the throws in McCoy's scheme.

"I think Trevor gets no credit for his arm talent," Joseph said. "So I'm excited about Trevor, protecting him more than we did last year, running the football better and continue to play great defense. I think he fits the bill for us."

When Joseph called off the 2017 quarterback derby last week, he declared Siemian the permanent starter. Still, it is conceivable that regardless of how Siemian plays, Lynch — he sprained his shoulder after losing the competition, adding injury to insult — would get another shot to win the job in 2018.

That's what makes this season so important for Siemian, while playing for a team that still has a championship-caliber defense. If he plays well, he can force the Broncos into a difficult situation next offseason, when he would become eligible for a contract extension.

"I have a long way to go," Siemian said. "I know where I can get better. I also know some of the things I can do well.

"For me, even going back to when I came in the league, I try to do a good job of taking it one day and rep at a time. At the end of the season, I'll go back and figure out where I'm at and go from there."

Why Trevor Siemian won Broncos' starting QB job -- again

By Jeff Legwold

ESPN

August 23, 2017

Von Miller usually has a different view on quarterbacks.

The Denver Broncos linebacker is usually trying to wreck an offense's plan and make football life as miserable as possible for the guy behind center.

But as winter turned to spring earlier this year, before the starting quarterback competition between Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch had become conversation for all ages in the Rocky Mountain region, Miller may have actually dropped a hint as to why Siemian eventually emerged the winner of the job for the second consecutive training camp.

"Trev, he just stays the same no matter what," Miller said early this year. "Everything happens around him and Trev just does his thing. I think if I sacked Trev, he would just look at you like nothing happened."

Fast forward six months and Miller said Tuesday: "Trevor won the job."

And with that, Siemian's work at practice this week resembles what a game week would look like in the regular season. The Broncos will have at least a skeleton of a game plan against the Green Bay Packers as Siemian will work with the starters through the week on the practice field and play at least a half of Saturday night's preseason game.

But while Siemian's even-keel public demeanor -- emphasis on even -- draws the ire of some of the team's faithful who want a little more bombastic behavior from their quarterback, his teammates believe it is a big reason the Broncos went 8-6 in his starts last season despite a run game that ranked 28th in the league and pass protection opposing defensive coordinators looked forward to facing.

Those same teammates believe it is one of the reasons Siemian has won the job a second consecutive season with a new coaching staff and a new playbook in place.

"It's all about performance, not potential," coach Vance Joseph said earlier this week. "Trevor is ready to lead our football team. We've got two receivers that are All-Pro caliber, we've got a great backfield and fixed the offensive line. We need a guy who can operate at a high level all of the time."

Siemian arrived to the Broncos at a good time for a developmental quarterback in 2015. He was a seventh-round pick for a team that went on to win the Super Bowl and had Peyton Manning at quarterback.

Essentially, Siemian lived his rookie season as a full-time camper at the Manning Passing Academy. And beyond the football, Siemian said he took away one other big lesson -- one that helped him go from a surprise winner of the starting job in '16 to the incumbent who was told to start over to win it again.

“Honestly, I think you have to compete for your job every day and every week,” Siemian said. “When I was here and I watched Peyton, that guy wasn’t content -- Hall of Fame ... but every day and every week, I think you have to earn your job. Quarterback is no different.”

Now Siemian gets the hard part, which is to help an offense do its share to get a team that believes it has an elite defense back into the playoff conversation. Siemian was asked Tuesday what he needed to do to be considered a franchise quarterback in the public domain, and his response was straight from the Manning playbook.

After a pause, Siemian said: “Be around for a while, win a bunch of games, probably go to the playoffs, win the Super Bowl. That’s what all those guys have.”

Playoff football and chicken wings: The Trevor Siemian and Ha Ha Clinton-Dix story

By Aric DiLalla
DenverBroncos.com
February 2, 2017

Trevor just wanted some chicken wings.

The 2016 offseason was only a month old for Siemian, and he was back in Orlando, where he grew up. He was still months away from his first season as a starter, and he'd spent his rookie year learning behind Peyton Manning as the Broncos won Super Bowl 50. Siemian took just a single snap during the regular season, but Manning's retirement meant Siemian was the only quarterback on the roster.

Back in his hometown, he was hungry to take the next step — and also for wings. And so, Siemian strolled into Flyers Wings & Grill.

It was there that he ran into the Packers' Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, a fellow Orlandoan, who couldn't have traveled down a more different path.

Clinton-Dix was the No. 1 recruit in the state of Florida who played for Nick Saban at Alabama before he was drafted in the first round of the NFL Draft.

Siemian was a middle-of-the-pack, three-star quarterback who wound up at Northwestern and then in Denver after the Broncos took him with the 250th pick in the 2015 draft.

The two players — one poised for a Pro Bowl, the other for a starting job — posed for a picture in their old haunt.

The encounter marked the latest meeting for the two Orlando boys who made it to the NFL.

It certainly wasn't the first.

Olympia High School (Fla.) appeared poised to continue one of its best seasons in school history.

With 3:30 to go in the third quarter of the 2009 district finals, the Olympia Titans led the undefeated Dr. Phillips Panthers, 22-17. Olympia's senior quarterback, Trevor Siemian, had completed 15 of his 21 pass attempts for 163 yards and had run for two touchdowns.

The Panthers were on the ropes as Siemian, only the second 6,000-yard career passer in area history, found his rhythm. While at Olympia, Siemian dazzled with not only his arm but also his legs. His former head coach Bob Head tells a story about a play where Siemian took off out of the pocket and was 25 yards downfield when he decided to pump fake. The defender leapt into the air, and Siemian continued downfield.

When Siemian got to the sideline, his coach was beside himself.

"I say, 'Pump fake 20 yards down field?' Head recalled from his office in late January. "And Trevor goes, 'He jumped didn't he?'"

But in the playoff game against Dr. Phillips, a Siemian scramble met a more unfortunate fate. As he left the pocket late in the third quarter, those hopes were derailed. A Dr. Phillips defensive back came up to meet Siemian and delivered "a crushing sideline hit," according to the Orlando Sentinel.

Siemian had to leave the game, and Olympia's backup quarterback, David Nelson, couldn't rally the Titans when the Panthers took a late lead.

"No knock on Nelson, but I feel 110 percent certain we win with Trevor," Head said at the time. "He would have led us down to score."

As Head looks back on the hit more than seven years later, his opinion of the play hasn't much changed.

"As his junior year kept going, I saw him grow each and every week," Head said. "And then that summer, he really put forth a lot of training. He was just making throw after throw after throw, and his footwork just became so [much] more polished and he was just more prepared.

"He got hit on the shoulder going out of bounds ... He got hit, and from there on out, without Trevor [we were done] ... He made everything go."

At least one player on the field that night, however, wasn't disappointed to see Siemian leave the field. Clinton-Dix, one of the stars of the Dr. Phillips defense, saw Siemian tearing up his unit and knew the Panthers didn't have much of a chance with Siemian behind center.

When Siemian was knocked out of the game, Clinton-Dix and Dr. Phillips regained the upper hand.

The Panthers came away with a 23-22 win, and Siemian's Olympia team ended one of the best seasons in school history without any hardware.

The 2016 season proved to be a breakout year for both Siemian and Clinton-Dix.

In Siemian's first season as a starter, he led the Broncos in 14 contests as he threw for 3,401 yards, 18 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. He even earned a Pro Bowl nod as an alternate, but he had to turn it down due to a recent shoulder surgery.

Clinton-Dix, meanwhile, captured the first Pro Bowl selection of his career. His five interceptions during the season were good for the fifth-best mark in the league, and he didn't miss a single defensive snap all year. Clinton-Dix, who was on the field for all 1,236 snaps, was just one of four players in the league to accomplish that feat.

But before Clinton-Dix and the NFC took the field on Jan. 29, his mind flashed back to that November district title game almost a decade ago.

“[That play] actually saved the game for us,” Clinton-Dix said. “He was hot. He was on fire the entire game.

“I hate to say this, but, Trev, I was glad he knocked you out of the game, because had he not, we would’ve lost that game for sure.”

Siemian and Clinton-Dix seemingly didn’t talk much in the years after the district final.

When Siemian made the Broncos roster in August 2015, Clinton-Dix had to tweet to find out if anyone had Siemian’s phone number.

@haha_cd6

Anybody have trevor siemian number from Orlando, Fl tell him I said congrats.

7:48 PM - Sep 9, 2015

7 Replies 14 Retweets 41 likes

But the mutual respect is clear. In a region that’s chock full of NFL talent, Siemian and Clinton-Dix hold each other in high regard.

That was clear when they ran into each other at Flyers before their respective breakout seasons.

“It was an unbelievable scene to see him come through the wing spot,” Clinton-Dix said. “We had to get a picture. I was glad to see him.”

In that picture — one that is now laminated and in the Siemian family’s home — the Green Bay Packers safety stands next to the Denver Broncos quarterback.

On Clinton-Dix’s chest, the Dr. Phillips logo. On Siemian’s, an Olympia football graphic.

Old allegiances die hard.

Trevor Siemian: How Did This Guy Become Peyton Manning's Successor?

By Kalyn Kahler
MMQB
October 13, 2016

For Trevor Siemian, a quarterback with NFL dreams and a thin football résumé, the 2014 season was precisely what he'd been waiting for since he enrolled at Northwestern. After a redshirt season and then two years platooning with team leader and regular starter Kain Colter, Siemian was handed the starting job—and the chance to prove he belonged in the 2015 NFL draft.

But late in the season that dream was on life support. On his way to being ranked 13th among 14 Big Ten quarterbacks in passer rating in 2014, Siemian got benched in an embarrassing 48-7 loss at Iowa on Nov. 1. "Tough day at the office," Siemian recalled this week, looking back on that game. It would get tougher: A week later he tripped while dropping back for what could have been the winning two-point conversion in a 10-9 loss to Michigan. Two weeks after that he tore his ACL at Purdue. After he had surgery, he sat in the office of Wildcats coach Pat Fitzgerald to talk about his future. "What do you think, coach?" Siemian asked that day. "I think I'm probably done."

The previous summer, Siemian had interned in commercial real estate, and a Chicago firm made it clear it had a job for him if he wanted it. He had a long talk post-surgery with roommate Hayden Baker, a backup center, about his prospects, and Baker says Siemian was "real close" to doing what a mediocre college quarterback with a bad knee and a great job opportunity would do: taking the job. "It's kind of surreal how close he came to hanging it up," Baker said last week.

That was less than two years ago. Tonight, Trevor Siemian starts his fifth game as Peyton Manning's successor for the Super Bowl-champion Denver Broncos, at San Diego. He's 4-0, with wins over Cam Newton, Andrew Luck, Andy Dalton and Jameis Winston so far. He's the NFL's ninth-rated quarterback through five weeks, ahead of five passers who've won Super Bowls. Trevor Siemian's passer rating: 99.6. Aaron Rodgers' rating: 87.7.

This might not be Kurt Warner going from stocking grocery shelves in Iowa to winning a Super Bowl. But it's the feel-good story of the year in the NFL, the story of a successful team with a GM unafraid to take risks and coaches who know what they're looking for in a quarterback, one whose skills translate to pro football. Namely, poise, intelligence, accuracy—and the understanding that a strong supporting cast can make a fundamentally sound quarterback look pretty good.

"You couldn't write the script," says Jacob Schmidt, a former teammate of Siemian's and now the director of player development for Northwestern football. "It is such a the stars aligned thing. You have what most would call a mediocre senior season, and then you blow out your ACL, and then you're going to go to the NFL? How?"

Not just that, but starting for the reigning Super Bowl champions. Schmidt asks the right question: How in the world did this happen?

* * *

I was on the sideline for most of the games Siemian played for the Wildcats. As an NU cheerleader, I had a pretty good view of almost every pass he threw as a Wildcat. And like most of the cheer squad, and most of my friends on campus, I never put “Trevor Siemian” and “NFL” in the same sentence.

Northwestern football players barely turn heads on campus; Evanston isn't Tuscaloosa or South Bend. But to those students and fans who did pay attention, it was Colter who was the big man on campus. Siemian was the guy who would come in sometimes on third-and-long. Northwestern ran a two-quarterback platoon system during Siemian's sophomore and junior seasons, Colter playing the dynamic dual-threat role and Siemian with the dropback-passer, relief-pitcher job.

Colter was an outspoken leader, the face of the Northwestern football players' movement to unionize. Siemian stayed in the background, quietly working to heal divisions between the pro- and anti-union camps. “He was the voice of reason,” says Baker, now in medical school in Chicago. “He told us, ‘Hey, we're here to win football games. This [union vote] is all peripheral.’ He helped us focus on the most important thing, preparing for the season.”

“That was an emotional time,” Fitzgerald said in an interview in his Northwestern office last week. “Trevor was the glue that kept everything together.”

But Siemian is no rah-rah type. Like the title of a Denver superfan's YouTube rap dedicated to the him, he's Calm, Cool, Collected. Siemian's personal style reflects his Florida roots and his laidback vibe—floral Tommy Bahama shirts, Maui Jim sunglasses, Birkenstocks and socks. He's a private guy. His quotes are as scripted as his game plans. His friends interviewed for this story asked his permission before agreeing to talk about him.

Baker and special-teamer/running back Tim Hanrahan, his roommates in Evanston, were both walk-ons. They lived first in a football house known as “The Palace” and later moved to another run-down off-campus house closer to Ryan Field. “What your grandmother's house would look like if it were abandoned for a decade,” says Hanrahan.

At Northwestern, Siemian was known to pull pranks on his pals. During the center-quarterback exchange before practice, he would often pretend he had to go to the bathroom and jet off to the porta-potties, leaving Baker stuck snapping to Northwestern's offensive coordinator. “I never snapped it right to him, so I would always get yelled at,” Baker says. That upbeat nature may help explain why Siemian was able to stick it out long enough to get his his chance.

In 2012, Siemian, a redshirt freshman, and Colter, a sophomore and the returning starter, were two of the team's best athletes. Fitzgerald tasked his coaching staff with finding a way to feature both of them in the offense. The platoon system worked well for that season. Colter, the dual-threat QB, had more rushing attempts than passes; Siemian threw for more than 1,300 yards and had twice as many touchdown passes as interceptions.

And it was Siemian who was frequently asked to deliver in difficult game situations. At Syracuse in the opener, the Wildcats needed a touchdown to win with three minutes left in the game. Siemian relieved Colter and led a 10-play, 75-yard drive for the winning score. In the Gator Bowl that year, Siemian resuscitated an offense that had a five-drive stretch of interception, punt, punt, punt, interception, and scrambled in for the decisive touchdown in a 34-20 victory over Mississippi State. That victory snapped

the longest postseason losing streak in college football, and the Wildcats finished 17th in the AP rankings.

“We had two really dynamic guys who were different,” says Fitzgerald of the platoon system. “We took two guys and molded them into one.”

The following year, though, was a step back. While the platoon system with Colter still showed some effectiveness, Siemian was hampered all year by an ankle injury. With starting running back Venric Mark sidelined with his own ankle and hamstring injuries, Northwestern lost seven straight after a 4-0 start and failed to make a bowl for the first time in six years.

It takes a patient player to wait for his shot through two seasons of coming off the bench. “In a backwards sort of way, it probably helped Trevor because he ended up having to be a really great teammate and sacrifice his wants for the greater good of the team,” Fitzgerald says. Asked whether Siemian’s NFL success means he should have gotten the call earlier, Fitzgerald says that’s “a really good question, a fair question.” But at Northwestern, Siemian wouldn’t have had the offensive line to keep him upright, and the scheme wasn’t suited for a dropback passer.

It’s a tribute to Siemian that he’d hung around long enough to finally win the starting job outright as a senior. But when the offense was finally his own to claim, he lacked consistent playmakers at receiver and a steady offensive line. “It’s easy and lazy to look at his college career and not understand what he went through,” says former Wildcats running back Mike Trumpy, a close friend of Siemian.

Adds Schmidt: “We knew from day one Trevor had the skills. He’s always had a big arm and been a cerebral guy. We were never able to protect him long enough and put some weapons around him that would allow him to succeed.”

Finally, on a slippery field in West Lafayette, Ind., in the 11th game of his senior year, Siemian’s knee twisted awkwardly on a quarterback sneak, and his college career was over. Thanks to his perseverance, he finished fourth all-time in passing yards for Northwestern, but his senior-season numbers—228 of 392 (58.2 percent) for 2,214 yards, with seven touchdowns and 11 interceptions—are hardly the stuff to make NFL teams come running.

* * *

Siemian did, however, have one moment of glory that 2015 season, a November upset of Notre Dame at South Bend a week before the knee injury, and that game was critical to his getting noticed.

As the Broncos prepped for the 2015 draft, new coach Gary Kubiak was handed a scouting list of 21 quarterbacks. Fifteen were prime prospects, led by Jameis Winston and Marcus Mariota. The Denver scouting department headlined the group of the bottom six “OTHERS.” Kubiak watched multiple games of the top 15, and one game for each of rest. Luckily for Siemian, the Notre Dame game—in which he was 30 of 48 and led four second-half scoring drives in a 43-40 win—caught Kubiak’s eye. He watched another game, liked what he saw of Siemian’s arm, and told quarterback coach Greg Knapp: “Do some homework on this kid.”

At the time, Peyton Manning was entering quite possibly his final season, and backup Brock Osweiler was heading into the last year of his rookie contract. GM John Elway would draft a quarterback,

probably late. The three decision-makers—Elway, Kubiak and Knapp—all watched the Notre Dame tape. “When you find a quarterback who maybe is not from one of the power, top colleges, you want to see him play against those teams,” Knapp said this week. “He really performed well against a defense that had really talented players.”

Siemian, for his part, made a sensible decision that spring. He didn’t think he had a great chance to either be drafted or get into an NFL camp. But why not try? The real-estate job would be there if the NFL passed him by. “I got to a point,” Siemian says, “where I told myself, I’ll be damned if a couple years from now I’m like, why didn’t I give this a shot? I love playing ball, I love the locker room, I love being in the huddle, and I just thought, those are things I can’t give up on right now.”

A month before the draft, Knapp traveled to Evanston to work out Siemian. Still rehabbing the knee, the quarterback was barely able to throw assertively, but Knapp liked his demeanor—confident, not cocky—and his arm strength, which he thought was good enough to compete in the NFL “You find guys who maybe aren’t the prototype height, weight or arm strength guys,” Knapp says, “but what they really do well is make good decisions, throw on time and are accurate. And that wins a lot of games in the NFL.”

Six picks from the end of the 2015 draft, with the 250th overall choice, Denver selected Siemian, the seventh and final quarterback taken that year.

* * *

The Broncos told no one, but it was clear they liked what they saw in Siemian. In a preseason game at Seattle, the rookie led a fourth-quarter scoring drive. The next week at Houston he did it again, this time a two-minute drill for a game-winning touchdown. “It gave us the sense that this kid has got something to him,” Knapp says. “He didn’t have a whole lot of reps, he was in a brand new offense that he had to learn a lot of in the classroom, and he still performed at a high level.”

The strong preseason performance persuaded Denver to give Siemian a roster spot rather than stash him on the practice squad, where he could get plucked by any team willing to put him on its active roster. So Siemian sat and learned. What seeped in from his exposure to Peyton Manning? Says Siemian: “He really found his success in the six days leading up to the game. He always had an answer for everything, and that was from his preparation on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.”

This year, with Manning retired and Osweiler gone in free agency to Houston, Denver acquired Mark Sanchez from Philadelphia and drafted Paxton Lynch in the first round. Siemian’s hopes to play seemed as far away in the spring of 2016 as the spring of 2015. But Kubiak said he was going to play the best guy. He did. And the record speaks for itself.

* * *

In 2014, after his junior year, Siemian watched the NFL draft with buddies at his house on Prairie Avenue in Evanston. He was never a league-or-die kind of guy, but with his final college season looming, he paid special attention to how the draft played out. Siemian was disappointed when the Patriots picked Eastern Illinois quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo, hoping New England might have waited another year to take a QB. Siemian coveted the opportunity to come up behind Tom Brady, under the tutelage of Bill Belichick, in an organization with a history of developing quarterbacks. “He was like, ‘Ahh I think I could have done well in that offense,’” says Baker.

A year later Siemian landed in an even better situation—with Manning, Kubiak and Elway. For Trevor Siemian, would-be real-estate associate, the NFL dream came down to this: right place, right time, right team.

Why Trevor Siemian Might Be the Most Interesting Quarterback Story of the Year

By Jason Diamond
Rolling Stone
October 8, 2016

Welcome to the start of a very strange year for football. When we last left off, Peyton Manning retired, Calvin Johnson also walked away, Tom Brady was set to sit out the first few games because Roger Goodell had to have his revenge on that pretty boy one way or another, and Colin Kaepernick became the big story of the preseason.

Up to date? Good. There's actually football to be played, and that all starts tonight with the Super Bowl 50 rematch between the Carolina Panthers and defending champion Denver Broncos. You remember the Broncos, right? Von Miller and that suffocating defense that shut Cam Newton and his offense down? Yeah, that defense. They also had an offense, one that was supposedly powered by Manning for a few last games before he walked off into the sunset so he could sing to more chicken parm sandwiches, leaving the Broncos to look for a new guy who could run the offense. Some thought it could have been Mark Sanchez, but then it wasn't, prompting Steven A. Smith to laugh a whole lot after that didn't work out.

Nope. The Broncos, a team with John Elway, arguably one of the greatest quarterbacks ever, running the show in the front office, went with Trevor Siemian. You know Trevor Siemian, right? He was the seventh round pick in 2015 whose only regular season NFL experience at this point is a kneel down in a December game against the Steelers, will be quarterback for the defending champions. Yeah, that guy.

And you should root for him to succeed.

In a year filled with weird quarterback stories, from RG3 possibly running the most interesting offense in Cleveland (Cleveland!), to Brady's impact by being on the bench for four games and then when he returns, Cam Newton bouncing back from the Super Bowl loss and what the hell Eli is going to do now that he's the last Manning standing, Siemian is in an insanely unique position. He's basically a 12-year-old whose dad just gave him the keys to the Ferrari and said, "I have faith in you to drive this thing." It's a totally absurd situation, and maybe Siemian can handle the super fast and expensive car, but maybe it's going to be a really rough ride that might end up in a fiery crash. Who the hell knows?

Then again, it might end up working. He might know just enough that he can run the offense (emphasis on run since he's probably going to do a ton of that), and the defense can do the rest. Siemian can end up making this work. Will he be an All-Pro anytime soon? I'm guessing that's not going to happen, but the few of us that actually watched him at Northwestern after he replaced fan favorite Mike Kafka (a fan favorite for those of us who really liked making Kafkaesque jokes whenever something went wrong - and something usually went wrong) know that Siemian is a smart and gutsy player who can make things happen. He's the guy that led the Wildcats to end the second longest Northwestern sports drought behind the basketball's team inability to be relevant for the first time since your grandpa returned from the Second World War, helping them capture a Bowl victory at the 2013 Gator Bowl, the first for the school in 63-years. Coincidentally that was nowhere near the longest sports drought in the Chicagoland area, but that's a whole other story.

But that's college, and now he's in the NFL. Tonight Siemian gets the keys to the Ferrari, and things will get real interesting probably pretty quickly. The smart money is on the Panthers to go out there with a head full of bad memories and bodies filled to the brim with adrenaline, and just thinking about a guy like Newton in that condition makes you think that Carolina is going to put everything they've got into putting as many points on the scoreboard as possible. Yet Trevor Siemian, a guy who a year ago you'd say has no business being a starter in a game like tonight's opener, is really the most interesting question mark of the entire evening and, if things go well for him, maybe the entire season.

Pillote: The incredible journey of Trevor Siemian

By Bobby Pillote

DailyNorthwestern.com

August 24, 2016

Trevor Siemian did what all too many of us fret about — peak in his junior year of college.

And yet here we are, three years later, on the cusp of the former Northwestern player earning one of the most coveted distinctions in American sports: starting NFL quarterback. It's like when that guy on your freshman hall who went out five nights a week somehow ends up with a White House internship.

So how did we get here?

Siemian always had potential. The three-star recruit out of football-rich Florida rated as the 26th-best pro-style passer in his class, and frequently flashed potential his sophomore and junior seasons as he switched off snaps with the more run-oriented Kain Colter. Siemian capped the Wildcats' disastrous 2013 campaign with a blistering 414 yards passing and 4 touchdowns in a win over rival Illinois, leaving little doubt that he would be The Guy as a full-time starter his senior year.

Then came the ankle injury. And the benching. And the fall-down. To put a sour cherry on top of another losing season, Siemian tore his ACL in what was supposed to be his penultimate college game — seemingly ending any hope of making the jump to the NFL.

But instead of pointing fingers, I choose to remember Trevor fondly. Remember that he was instrumental in delivering the best NU win in recent memory: a stunning 43-40 overtime upset of Notre Dame during the otherwise forgettable 2014 season. There was also the Illinois game, as well as a solid 12-for-20 outing in the 2013 Gator Bowl to help deliver the Cats their first postseason win since 1949. And that Michigan game, as disastrous as it was, at least raised NU's profile by being perhaps the worst college football game ever played.

Against that backdrop and against all odds, Siemian found himself drafted with the 250th pick by none other than the Denver Broncos, a franchise home to two of the greatest quarterbacks in NFL history: then-starter Peyton Manning and former player and current general manager John Elway. The pair of former signal callers has four Super Bowl championships combined. Siemian has a Jostens ring from the Gator Bowl.

As a rookie, Siemian managed to win a spot on the roster and even took a real-life NFL snap, dutifully kneeling down — he's quite good at that — when both Manning and then-backup Brock Osweiler were hurt.

And now, somehow, he's emerged as the leader to start for the Broncos over two former first round draft picks, each with a far superior college resume to Siemian. If "Touchdown Trevor" ends up taking Denver's opening week snap, he'd be the first NU alum to start the opening game for an NFL team since Otto Graham in 1955.

Saying "NFL starting quarterback Trevor Siemian" still feels unnatural, but it's definitely something longtime NU fans should bask in while they can.

In fact, Siemian should be an inspiration to us all: You, too, can stumble your way through college and still make it to the job of your dreams. Just like Siemian, maybe the girl in your economics lecture who browses BuzzFeed for an hour and 20 minutes straight is on to something.