



BLUE BANNER  
BIOGRAPHY

# Russell WILSON

*Cliff Mills*

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Clifford Mills has written many biographies about world leaders and sports superstars. He is a Carter-Woodson Award Honorable Mention from the National Council for Social Studies. Like Russell Wilson’s father, he played baseball for Dartmouth College, but he never could have been a wide receiver for the San Diego Chargers. Mills lives in Jacksonville, Florida with his wife Rosemary, his baseball trophies, and Super Bowl XLVIII memories.

PUBLISHER’S NOTE: The following story has been thoroughly researched and to the best of our knowledge represents a true story. While every possible effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the publisher will not assume liability for damages caused by inaccuracies in the data and makes no warranty on the accuracy of the information contained herein. This story has not been authorized or endorsed by Russell Wilson.

A blue banner with a white border and a slight shadow, featuring the title "Blue Banner Biography" in a black, cursive font. The banner is tied at both ends with blue ribbons.

<b>Chapter 1</b> <i>They Are the Champions</i> .....	5
<b>Chapter 2</b> <i>A Gifted and Talented Family</i> .....	9
<b>Chapter 3</b> <i>The Turning Point: Choosing Football</i> .....	13
<b>Chapter 4</b> <i>Flying High as a Seahawk</i> .....	19
<b>Chapter 5</b> <i>Turning on the Magic</i> .....	23
<b>Chronology</b> .....	28
<b>Career Statistics</b> .....	29
<b>Awards</b> .....	29
<b>Further Reading</b> .....	30
<b>Works Consulted</b> .....	30
<b>Index</b> .....	32



# CHAPTER 1

## *They Are the Champions*

**E**very year, the Super Bowl is America's biggest football game. It got even bigger when it was held at MetLife Stadium in Rutherford, New Jersey, on February 2, 2014. With over 111 million television viewers tuning in, Super Bowl XLVIII was watched by more people than any event in American history.

Fans started filing into the stadium in the early afternoon, some wearing Seahawk blues and greens, some wearing Bronco orange. The pre-game tension built, amplified by marching bands, performers from Broadway musicals, and fireworks. On the last note of the National Anthem, nine US Army helicopters flew over the stadium in a U-formation. The game began with a roar.

That game should have been an epic struggle. The National Football League's (NFL) best offense, the Denver Broncos, was playing the best defense, the Seattle Seahawks. The Broncos were led by future Hall-of-Fame quarterback Peyton Manning. Some argue that he is the best quarterback ever. A second-year player named Russell Wilson quarterbacked the Seahawks. Many experts, who said he

was too short to play professional football, had doubted him. Some said this Super Bowl would be Manning's chance to show again that he was truly the league's most valuable player (MVP).

Manning had a disastrous start. The snap from center on the first play flew over his head. It was a sign of things to come. Soon it was Wilson, not Manning, who was throwing perfect passes to several different receivers. Some passes were laser-straight. Some floated softly, landing in between defenders.

On one play in the first quarter, Wilson took the snap from center near mid-field. He looked down the field to see who was coming open. He then launched a long pass that hung in the air long enough for Seahawk wide receiver Doug Baldwin to run under it. It was just over the head of the Bronco defender. Fox Sports broadcaster Joe Buck shouted, "What a throw!"

Some professional football players can run very fast, some can throw a football very hard, and some can throw a football with great accuracy. Very few can do all three at the same time. Russell Wilson can and did. He was a magic man, dazzling the crowd and breaking the Broncos.

Wilson went on to throw two touchdowns in the biggest game of his life. He had no interceptions and no mistakes. William Rhoden of *The New York Times* wrote that Wilson was "the Seahawks dream-maker . . . He did everything an MVP should do." Seattle won Super Bowl XLVIII, 43 to 8.

After the game, Wilson held the Lombardi Trophy high over his head. A blizzard of green, blue, and white confetti surrounded him. He and his team were world champions.

He told reporters, "At the beginning of the season, I told our guys, 'Hey, why not us?' We wanted to win it all." His father had always encouraged him to go after his dreams.

A few days later, hundreds of thousands of people in Seattle lined its downtown streets to honor their heroes.



Children were let out of school. The fans had prided themselves on being the “12th man,” (Seahawks loud, sold out crowds became known as the 12th man) yelling so loudly at games that they set a world record for noise. Under a brilliant cold and blue winter sky, chants of WILSON, WIL-SON could be heard mixing with SEA-HAWKS, SEA-HAWKS. Wilson had captured their hearts.

In May 2014, most of the team visited the White House. President Barack Obama celebrated the Seattle defense, nicknamed the “Legion of Boom.” But then he talked about Russell Wilson, telling reporters, “He’s only the second African-American quarterback to ever win the Super Bowl . . . Part of the reason Russell inspired a lot of folks is he’s been proving the doubters wrong for a very long time. For years, folks said he’s too short to succeed as quarterback in the NFL.”

Russell Wilson, his team, and their fans had made history. Wilson’s own personal history began many miles from Seattle.

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