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# Tebow Returns Before Kaepernick: Where the NFL Went Wrong

Matt Price, Staff Reporter

With NFL free-agency seeing players getting signed left and right, news broke about an unexpected player seeming to make a comeback with the Jacksonville Jaguars. New head coach Urban Meyer is reportedly welcoming back former quarterback Tim Tebow to try out for the Jaguars after not playing in the league since 2012.

The apparent privilege that Tebow received has caused controversy throughout the NFL. Tebow last played in the league in 2012, since then he has worked as a College Football analyst and minor league baseball player. The former University of Florida quarterback is apparently switching positions to become a tight end. He has only played one NFL snap as a tight end resulting in an incomplete pass where Tebow never turned his head when the ball was thrown his way.

The NFL world's reaction to Tebow's apparent comeback has been mostly negative. Mike Florio, host of NBC's ProFootballTalk sees Tebow coming back to bring in more revenue for the Jaguars.

"I feel like he is the pawn in the broader scheme to separate people from their money. The people know, whether it is the Mets or the Jaguars, that this guy is going to sell tickets, he is going to sell jerseys, but at the same time he does not deserve the spot. His abilities do not merit a job with the Jaguars...there is somebody else that should have had that job based off of merit. This proves that it is not all about merit, but about money," Florio said on his show.

The Jaguars recently took quarterback Trevor Lawrence from Clemson University with the first pick in the 2021 NFL draft. The need for money can be put behind the NFL's new rising star. Which leaves the question as to why Coach Meyer desires Tebow at a position he has barely played.

Connections is the simplest reason to explain why Tebow was able to insert himself in this situation. Coach Meyer and Tebow won the College Football National Championship in 2006 and another in 2008 with the University of Florida. Coach Meyer spoke of Tebow in an interview this past week with NFL analyst Cris Collinsworth.

"He was in the best shape of his life and asked to see if he could work out with some of the coaches and I was not even there... they came back to me and told me 'Wow' this guy is in the best shape of his life... he looks like he is 18, he is 33," Meyer said.



Andrew Mori

Tebow may be in great shape, but that does not make up for the fact that he has not played a snap in the league in nine years. Colin Kaepernick, who has not played since 2016, is a better player but will not experience the same privilege Tebow received to get back into the league. Instead, he has been “blackballed” by every NFL team for kneeling for the national anthem. Both Kaepernick and Tebow are 33-years-old. Although the more accomplished Kaepernick is still without a job.

Max Kellerman, co-host of ESPN’s First Take, is annoyed that Tebow was able to get an opportunity before Kaepernick. He sees the Tebow signing as an opportunity for the league to be held accountable for their treatment of the former 49ers Quarterback.

“He hasn’t gotten a tryout. The one time they [Kaepernick] are supposed to have a tryout, the NFL tried to smuggle language in a press release that would release them from certain legal possibilities and that was the whole point of the tryout! When he refused to sign it, then he did not get the official tryout. If you are a team, you can put your eyeballs on Kaepernick to see how he can still play and even though this Tebow thing is not related to it, good. Attach his name to everything so that the NFL does not just get to bury him,” Kellerman said.

Although Tebow has not technically been signed, he has received attention from NFL media and fans. The spotlight has turned to Tebow, who is not even on a team, when teams are still in need of Kaepernick’s services. The NFL will continue to shade players in favor of uniting old college pals for the sake of monetary gain. It is not the first, and certainly will not be the last.