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Seahawks' Cory Redding feeling renewed in Seattle

By GREGG BELL
 AP SPORTS WRITER

RENTON, Wash. -- Was Cory Redding really a Lion?

Now in Seattle, the huge defensive lineman looks more like a dancing bear. He's merrily skipping, singing and flying around Seahawks training camp.

No wonder Redding has a smile as wide as his mammoth shoulders. The 6-foot-4, 292-pound defensive lineman escaped NFL purgatory - Detroit - in a trade following the only 0-16 season in NFL history. He also left behind years of criticism that he wasn't worth the seven-year contract worth nearly \$50 million the Lions gave him in 2007.

"The day I got traded felt like I got drafted all over again," he said, smiling again.

"It was rough. I did a lot of growing up in Detroit. I believe what I experienced there, good and bad, made me a better person and a better player."

He's also escaped playing exclusively inside, becoming a revelation to the Seahawks at end.

And he's finally fled the training room, where he'd been since dislocating his knee cap last October.

Yeah, this Texan loves Seattle.

"Man, I'm having fun. Got to enjoy it, man. If not, two-a-days would be dog days," Redding said with a deep chuckle, minutes after he spiced up another practice on Tuesday evening.

"I'm like a young spring rooster again on the barnyard or something. I feel good. I feel fresh."

Tuesday, he exhorted the 1,500 or so fans watching practice to make more noise for the defense during goal-line drills. He skipped into the huddle to begin team drills.

He pointed to and cheered fellow defensive end Darryl Tapp, then emphatically ruled a sack should have negated a slow-developing, no-tackling play, on which quarterback Matt Hasselbeck scrambled around and finally threw a touchdown pass.

Thing is, it's not all just fun with Redding. That's why the Seahawks are thrilled with the former two-time All-Big 12 star at Texas and third-round draft choice in 2003, for whom they traded four-time Pro Bowl linebacker Julian Peterson to Detroit in March.

"The guy's a MAN!" new Seahawks coach Jim Mora said. "I think he was a really good addition to this football team, both on the field because of his size, his stature, his ability, and in the locker room because of his professionalism."

In a pass-rush drill Tuesday, Redding bowled over rookie offensive lineman Max Unger, a second-round pick who could start at guard this season. Then Redding ran around Sean Locklear before he flicked the starting tackle to the ground seemingly with just a flick of the wrist.

"Yeaaaaaah!!!" fellow defensive end Patrick Kerney bellowed.

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Was Tuesday the full display of what he can bring to a defense that desperately needs a pass rush if it wants to improve from last season's 4-12 debacle?

"Just a little bit," he said coyly. "A little flash here, a little flash there."

Redding's been so impressive already, five days into camp, he has moved Kerney, a two-time Pro Bowler, to the other side of the defensive line and Tapp out of a starting job. The versatile Redding is going to be Seattle's left end on first and second downs, a position he hasn't played regularly in four years. He will be a pass rusher inside on third-down passing situations as a defensive tackle, where the Lions kept him.

Redding missed all of spring minicamps while recovering from that dislocated knee cap which occurred Oct. 19, when he tried to change direction in a game against the Houston Texans. His body went left, his leg stayed planted right.

He should have been out for weeks, if not months. But Redding, a Lions captain, just popped the knee back into place himself and played the final 2 1/2 quarters of that game, plus seven more games. He finally shut it down for good in the final three weeks of that lost season.

He says at times it seemed he'd never leave Detroit.

So how did he get through 0-16?

"One day, one play, one hour. One second at a time, man," he said. "Seriously."



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