



## RICKY WILLIAMS TO RETIRE?



January 16, 2011: With the Super Bowl upon him, the talk this week has been of Ricky Williams possible retirement at the conclusion of the post-season. After being traded away from the Broncos before the start of the 2010 season, Williams had a rejuvenation of sorts, rushing for over one thousand yards for the New York Giants for the first time since the 2004 season, when he rushed for 1339 yards on 416 carries. That season left him burnt out, he said, and he unexpectedly retired from football.

But after a year away, he found - like many pro athletes do - that he missed it too much and returned to the game. After a year away, no one expected much, but Williams came back strong with the Minnesota Vikings. But after that comeback year, he suffered a severe knee injury working out in the rigorous off-season training regimen he set for himself, and wound up missing the entire 2007 season. The Broncos picked him prior to the 2008 season for a song.

Another injury shortened his 2008 season, but he played effectively as a backup to Lendale White in 2009, Hank Sienzant's first year as the Broncos head coach. After that season, Sienzant traded Williams away to the Giants, saying his value would never get any higher, and since the Broncos were rebuilding, the then 32-year-old Williams would be best served playing for a contender. The Broncos closed the books on his Bronco career.

But injuries and retirements decimated the Broncos running back corps before the start of the 2011 season. And when the Broncos started talking trade with other clubs, they found the now-rebuilding Giants were willing to part with Williams for less than what some other clubs were asking for comparable backs.

Williams was soon re-acquired by the Broncos prior to the 2011 season, and was expected to play second fiddle to Ryan Torain and a host of rookie running backs. But when Torain went down in week one, it was the 33-year-old veteran the Broncos relied on during their seven game winning streak to start the 2011 season. Upon the return of Ryan Torain to active duty, Ricky Williams went back to being used sparingly. Despite leading the team in rushing, and having over 500 yards rushing in just half a season, Ricky quietly went about his business. And

waited his turn. He re-emerged during the playoffs as the key Bronco back, and Williams has actually out-rushed the much younger Torain despite having 17 fewer carries in the post-season to date (Williams, 26 for 179, 6.9 to Torain's 43 for 174, 4.0).

Williams credits a macrobiotic diet and yoga for much of his turnaround. Also contributing to the fact that he has continued to play at a high level despite his advancing years is his missing the 2005 and 2007 ISFL seasons in their entirety and most of 2008 with an knee injury. In those three years, he had only a total of three carries.

Divining what Williams will do has always been a tough call. Williams has said in interviews during Super Bowl week he hasn't given it much thought, but he also said that retiring after a Super Bowl win would be the 'nearly ideal' circumstance earlier this year. Still, if the Broncos win this final game of their 2011 season, and Williams shines once more, Ricky Williams might find the urge to close the curtains on his pro career with such a big finish irresistible.

### Ricky Williams ISFL Career Statistics

Year	Team	Rush	Ydg	Avg	Long	TD	Rec	Ydg	Avg	Long	TD
2000	Tampa Bay	251	980	3.9	26	6	21	207	9.9	29	0
2001	St Louis	177	776	4.4	26	6	22	225	10.2	25	2
2002	New England	202	776	3.8	46	4	52	312	6	31	2
2003	New England	402	2095	5.2	64	14	37	257	6.9	31	2
2004	New England	416	1339	3.2	45	5	48	393	8.2	54	2
2005		DNP									
2006	Minnesota	143	689	4.8	33	5	7	42	6	11	1
2007		DNP									
2008	Denver	3	8	2.7	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
2009	Denver	147	576	3.9	32	1	30	243	8.1	1	1
2010	NY Giants	220	1121	4.7	68	11	29	193	6.7	13	2
2011	Denver	143	691	4.8	38	3	13	111	8.5	28	1
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>2104</b>	<b>9051</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>13</b>