



## **Barry Foster**

Barry Foster is a Pittsburgh Steelers legend. He set the Steelers single season rushing record 30 years ago in 1992 with 1,690 yards, a franchise record that stands to this day. Think of Franco Harris, Rocky Bleier, Jerome Bettis, Willie Parker, and Le'Veon Bell and then know that Foster had a better statistical season than all of them.

Barry was drafted by Pittsburgh from the Arkansas Razorbacks in the 5<sup>th</sup> round of the 1990 NFL draft. Like most rookies, he performed mostly on special teams. In 1991, he started to get some touches as a running back and pounded the rock for 488 yards and a strong 5.1 yards per carry average.

In his 3<sup>rd</sup> season, 1992, Chuck Noll retired as head coach and Barry flourished on the field under new head coach Bill Cowher. In addition to his record of 1,690 rushing yards, he racked up 12 games with 100+ rushing yards to break Franco Harris' team record and to tie Eric Dickerson's NFL record in a single season. He ended up just 23 yards short of Emmitt Smith for the NFL rushing title. Barry was



named First team All Pro and collected the first of his two Pro Bowl appearances, the second coming in 1993. He was also named the UPI Offensive Player of the Year.

The following year, Foster began to get hit with injuries and played in only 9 games but still accounted for 711 yards on the ground. 1994 was a similar year with respect to injuries when he rushed for 851 yards in 11 games. In one game that season against the Colts, Barry rushed for 179 yards and caught 3 passes for 13 yards for a total of 192 yards from scrimmage. This offensive output from him was more than the entire Colts team managed that game.

With injuries mounting and limiting Foster's time on the field, he was traded to the Carolina Panthers. Unfortunately he failed the physical and retired from the sport at age 26 after only 5 seasons. One has to wonder what could have been if he had been able to remain healthy for a lengthy career ... but that is the NFL.

Since his playing career ended, Foster has been a running backs coach and is currently a Vice-Principal at a high school.

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