

Bucs Re-Sign QB McCown

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The Bucs have re-signed QB Luke McCown. The 27-year-old signal caller was scheduled to become a free agent on Feb. 27 before he signed a two-year contract worth \$7.5 million. McCown, who could earn as much as \$14 million with incentives, will have the opportunity to compete for the starting job.

Tampa Bay's coaching staff isn't quite complete, but that isn't stopping the Buccaneers from focusing on their roster, evidenced by the Bucs re-signing quarterback Luke McCown on Monday.

The move is considered significant since the Bucs had just two quarterbacks - Brian Griese and Josh Johnson - under contract for the 2009 season before McCown, who was scheduled to become an unrestricted free agent on Feb. 27, signed a two-year contract with Tampa Bay on Monday morning.

"Luke McCown is a talented and athletic quarterback who we have gotten to know well over the last four years," Bucs head coach Raheem Morris said in a statement released by the team. "I know he is looking forward to the opportunity to be an integral part of our quarterback group this season."

According to league sources, the two-year contract, which was negotiated by general manager Mark Dominik McCown's agent over the weekend, is worth \$7.5 million. McCown received a \$2.5 million signing bonus and is scheduled to earn \$2.5 million in base salary in 2009. McCown has playing time and playoff incentives that could make the deal worth as much as \$14 million over two years.

McCown, 27, joined Tampa Bay in 2005 when the Bucs traded a sixth-round draft pick to the Cleveland Browns in exchange for his services.

The 6-foot-3, 212-pound McCown has completed 59.7 percent of his passes for 1,617 yards and tossed nine touchdowns and 10 interceptions during his five-year career. He has also rushed 21 times for 157 yards (7.5 avg.).

McCown owns a 1-6 record as a starter in the NFL and has a career quarterback rating of 75.2, but he owns a 91 QB rating in seven games (three starts) as a Buccaneer quarterback.

McCown opened some eyes in the five games he played in place of Jeff Garcia during the 2007 regular season. McCown completed 94-of-139 (67.6 percent) of his passes for 1,009 yards and threw five touchdowns and three interceptions.

His first start in place of Garcia came in New Orleans, where McCown completed his first 15 passes en route to leading Tampa Bay to a 27-23 win over New Orleans that helped win the NFC South division title for the Bucs during the '07 season.

McCown served as the backup to Garcia for the majority of the 2008 season, but saw limited playing time behind Garcia, who is scheduled to hit free agency later this month. Whether Garcia will return to Tampa Bay is unknown, although it seems unlikely.

But what is clear is McCown will be given the opportunity to compete for the starting job in new offensive coordinator Jeff Jagodzinski's system, and if he does not win the starting job **McCown will be one of the highest-paid backup signal callers in the NFL.**

"It is what we were looking for," McCown told [PewterReport.com](#). "I'll get a chance to compete. I'll compete for the starting job, and I'll do everything I can to win it."