

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 730 Are You Ready to go From Understudy to Lead Role?

You've been hired to be a part of a work team. Not to lead the team. Not to be on the front lines of action. Not even close. You're in the background. Not an afterthought. Nobody's really thinking of you much at all. Then, the team leader is unable to report for work. All of a sudden, everything changes. I'm Jerry Roberts, and let's dig into a situation that is happening right at this very moment, next, on The Extra Point.

You've been a bit player, not the lead performer, for a long time. Every successful major Broadway stage play has a lead actor, and what they call an "understudy." This is the actor that learns all the lines and practices, on the slight chance that the star becomes sick and the understudy has to take over.

The understudy has to be ready, just in case. In some highly successful productions, the play has a continuous run of years, and the understudy may never get on stage in the lead role. Still, they are paid to be ready.

One such understudy is a man whose name his employer wasn't sure how to pronounce, even after having him around for a considerable period of time.

The first name is John, and the media pronounced his last name Wohl-furd. The employer said it was Wall-furd. This week, he corrected both, pronouncing it Wool-furd.

It's spelled W-o-l-f-o-r-d, and regardless of how you pronounce it, you can call John the starting quarterback for the Los Angeles Rams, who are taking the field right now, against the Arizona Cardinals.

Regular starter Jared Goff hurt his throwing hand in a loss to the Seattle Seahawks last week, had it operated on, and could make it back next week if the team makes the playoffs. Today, it's Wolford's show.

Wolford is the Rams' practice team quarterback, and tries to replicate the playing style of the quarterback the Rams' defense will face each week. He's good at it, but has never played in a regular season NFL game.

That said, he was the leader of a team in the Alliance of American Football, a professional league which went out of business before the end of its first season. The Rams then signed him, released him, then signed him again for the practice squad.

Wolford is anywhere from 5-11 1/2 to 6-1. Nobody seems to be sure, though he's surely short for an NFL quarterback. Jared Goff, by comparison, is 6-4, about average for that position. Wolford is fast and elusive, Goff is not. We'll see if that makes a difference.

Now, a question for you. What if your boss came to you this morning, and said your unit leader was not available and you are the choice to pick up the ball and lead the team. Are you ready? Are you really ready to fill those shoes and take advantage of the opportunity?

Jared Goff hasn't missed a game due to illness or injury in his career, until now. Yet, John Wolford has made himself ready to be the quarterback of the Rams, every week since they signed him to a contract, and today his number is called to deliver a win for the team.

By the way, Wolford won't have the team's number one receiver, number one running back, plus two of the leading key players on defense. Just a little more pressure on Wolford to score points.

What if your boss becomes unavailable? What if they accept an offer with another company or move off-island?

(Con't.)

Will you be the one to take over? Have you positioned yourself to be the one? Have you made it clear to your employer that you want to be the one, and that you're ready to handle the role?

This is not sitting back and secretly hoping for the opportunity someday, and that you'll be the one chosen. This is going to the right people in your organization, and making it clear that you support your boss and will continue to do so. That said, if the position ever opens up — or one like it does — you're ready to move up.

Coach Sean McVay of the Rams may not have known how to pronounce the name correctly, but he knew Wolford was ready to step up and take on the job. Your employer also benefits to know that there are people on the payroll who are prepared to handle critical roles, so that the company's performance doesn't skip a beat.

I hope you're ready. I hope Wolford is ready. We'll know in a couple of hours.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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