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PFRA-ternizing

PLEEEEEEEEEEASE !!!!

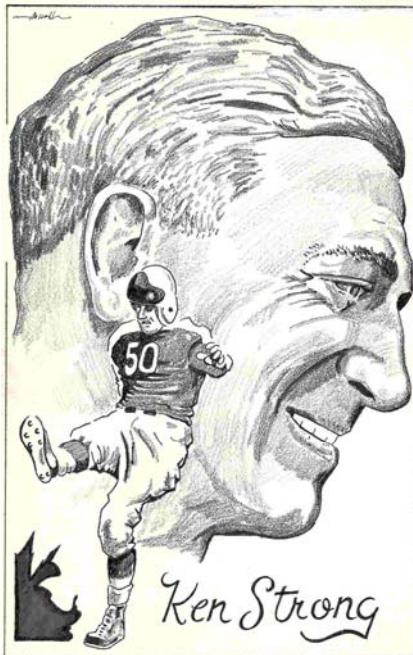
I just got a long letter from an old friend. Although he is (I assume) alive and well, I really didn't learn much more. He chose to type his letter in a font that must be called "itty-bitty elite." Not only that, it appears his typewriter tape should have been changed three novels and a history-of-the-hundred-year-war ago. You couldn't call it "gray" anymore; it was "dark-white."

I think he had something to say about football, but by the time I got to his third line, I thought my eyes were going to drop off.

Please, folks, when you write to me, remember I don't have Natty Bumppo's eyesight. I'm more the Magoo type. Use at least an 11 type (12 is better) and have some life left in your ribbon.

I love getting your letters with great ideas and suggestions, but I've got to be able to read 'em.

* * * * *



LET ME MAKE A **STRONG** SUGGESTION
THAT YOU RENEW YOUR PFRA
MEMBERSHIP RIGHT NOW SO YOU
DON'T MISS A SINGLE COFFIN
CORNER.

Gridiron Gladiators: Italian-Americans in College, Semipro & Pro Football

By Fausto Batella

Our price: \$18.95

Format:

Paperback

Size: 6 x 9 Pages: 236

ISBN: 0-595-47827-1

Published: Nov-2007

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In this book are gathered their stories and remembered their deeds, as a tribute to four generations of men who left a mark.

From 1920 to 1949, 473 Italian-Americans athletes played on college, semipro and pro football teams, men who get results:

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20 All-Conferences

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1 College Top National

Scorer of the Year

10 of them were born in Italy and emigrated to America.

PFRA Corporate Bylaws Revisions

By Ken Crippen

The last change to the PFRA corporate bylaws occurred in 2003. Since then, the organization has made several changes. The bylaws need to reflect those changes, which is why we are asking you to vote on the revisions. These revisions are to put the bylaws more in line with the way the organization currently operates. The major items of note include refined responsibilities for officers and the addition of new officers to replace the at-large directors.

I would like to thank John Hogrogian, Andy Piascik and Mark Ford for serving with me on the Bylaws Committee, tasked with making these changes.

Additions to the bylaws are in bold-italics. Items removed are in bold-italics with strikethrough font. At the end of the bylaws, you will see a form for voting on these changes. **Voting ends May 1, 2009.** Please submit your votes through email, USPS or by phone to:

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ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Professional Football Researchers Association, Inc., and shall hereinafter be referred to as the Association.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

The purposes and objectives of the Association are:

- 1) to foster the study of professional football as a significant social and athletic institution;
- 2) to establish an accurate historical account of professional football; and
- 3) to facilitate the dissemination of professional football research information through publications and presentations.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

- 1) Membership shall be open to those who have a sincere interest in the history of professional football or related subjects.

2) One may become a member of the Association by the payment of dues and the submission of a completed application form.

3) Members shall be accorded all privileges to which membership shall normally entitle them.

4) Any member who fails to abide by the objectives or any other provision of the By-Laws or Code of Behavior of the Association shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Association, up to and including expulsion from the Association. Disciplinary action may be imposed by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV – FINANCES

- 1) Dues shall be set by the Board of Directors.
- 2) All moneys received by the Association shall go directly into the Association's treasury and shall be used to defray expenses incurred by the Association.

ARTICLE V – AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

- ~~1) There shall be four (4) at-large directors of the Association, elected by majority vote of the members eligible to vote. The at-large directors shall serve four year terms.~~
- ~~2) The at-large directors shall serve as members of the Board of Directors of the Association.~~
- ~~3) In the event of the death, incapacitation, or resignation of an at-large director, the Board of Directors shall designate a successor to complete the unexpired term.~~

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

- 1) The officers of the Association shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer elected by majority vote of the members ~~eligible to vote who participate in an election~~, the officers shall serve one two year terms. (Amended 1987) ~~In addition to the four elected positions, there shall be three appointed officers: the executive director, assistant executive director and editor-in-chief of Coffin Corner.~~
- 2) The officers shall serve as members of the Board of Directors of the Association.

3) In the event of the death, incapacitation, or resignation of the president, the vice-president shall assume the office of president. In the event of a vacancy in any other office, the Board of Directors shall designate a successor to complete the unexpired term.

4) The president shall preside over meetings of the Board of Directors and any meetings of members, ~~appoint all committees and their chairmen with the advise and consent of the Board of Directors, receive reports from all committees~~, carry out directives of the membership and the Board of Directors, submit an annual budget to the Board of Directors, and ensure that the corporate and tax responsibilities of the Association are fulfilled.

5) The vice-president shall assume all duties of the president in the absence of the president. ***The vice-president shall also chair the membership committee.***

6) The secretary shall keep the minutes of the Association, ~~assume responsibility for correspondence directed to the Association, and maintain a register of members and their interests and expertise. The secretary shall also be the chair of the fundraising committee.~~

7) The treasurer shall assume responsibility for finances, prepare and maintain books suitable for audit, and, under the direction of the president, file any necessary tax returns, financial reports, and corporate reports.

8) ***The executive director is appointed by the president and shall be responsible for the daily activities of the association. The executive director shall appoint the assistant executive director.***

9) ***The assistant executive director serves at the discretion of the executive director. The assistant executive director shall oversee all committees.***

10) ***The editor-in-chief of Coffin Corner is appointed by the president and shall be responsible for all aspects of the publication of Coffin Corner.***

ARTICLE VI – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1) The Board of Directors shall consist of the ~~four at large directors and the four~~ seven officers. The Board shall determine the broad policies of the Association and issue directives to the president to implement those policies.

2) The Board of Directors shall conduct a meeting at ~~the request of any member of the Board of Directors least every other year. It shall also meet at any other times and places determined by the president.~~ Except when the president declares an

emergency, meetings shall be announced two months in advance through publication in the Coffin Corner, and they shall be open to all members of the Association. ***Meetings shall be conducted in person or by a method determined by the Board of Directors.***

~~Other meetings must be by first class mail to each member of the Board at least two weeks in advance.~~
(Amended 12/03)

3) The president shall preside over all meetings of the Board of Directors.

4) A quorum for a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be a majority of the members of the Board. Proxy voting is not allowed.

5) The Board of Directors ***may, in its discretion,*** shall schedule ~~any~~ a general meeting of members of the Association ***every two years. At least one member of the Board of Directors must be in attendance for the meeting to become official.***

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

1) The ***president assistant executive director, with the approval of the president,*** shall appoint all committees and their chairmen ~~with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors.~~

2) Each committee shall consist of a chairman and of any other members appointed.

3) ***The Nominating Committee shall submit to the president the names of nominees for offices and at-large directorships. Said committee shall receive nominations from any member and shall determine whether the nominated person is eligible for election and willing to serve. The membership committee shall be responsible for formulating and implementing initiatives to increase membership in the Association.***

4) ***The Publication Committee shall be responsible for all the Association's publications except the Coffin Corner. The fundraising committee shall be responsible for formulating and implementing initiatives to raise funds for the Association.***

5) ***The editorial staff of the Coffin Corner shall be considered a committee of the Association, with the editor-in-chief serving as chairman.***

6) ***The president shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors, any other committees that may be desirable and useful.***

7) ***Each committee chairman shall submit an annual report to the president and to the Board of Directors.***

ARTICLE IX VIII – TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

The Association is organized exclusively for charitable, literary, and educational purposes, as specified in section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and it shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income taxation under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, officer, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Association), and no member, trustee, director, officer, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets of the Association upon its dissolution.

No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall be carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided by section 501 (h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954), or participating in or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

In the event of dissolution, all the remaining assets and property of the Association shall after necessary expenses thereof be distributed to such organizations as shall qualify under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

ARTICLE XIX – AMENDMENTS

1) These by-laws may be amended by majority vote of the members of the Association who participate in an election on the proposed amendment. Any proposed amendment must be submitted to the membership in writing, either by personal mail or by publication in the Coffin Corner, at least one month prior to the date of the beginning of the annual meeting of members, with a voting period of at least one month. (Amended 12/03)

2) The Articles of Incorporation of the Association may be amended as provided by the law of the State of Connecticut.

ARTICLE XXI – CODE OF BEHAVIOR

The Board of Directors is empowered to adopt a Code of Behavior outlining rights and responsibilities of membership in the Association.

ARTICLE XII XI – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The proceedings of any meetings of the Association shall be governed and conducted according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE XIII XII – GENDER

For the purposes of these by-laws, use of words of a certain gender includes reference to both genders.

PFRA Corporate Bylaws Revisions

I approve of the revisions as written

I disapprove of the revisions as written

Please provide your:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please return this form to:

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Warminster, PA 18974
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Ken_Crippen@profootballresearchers.org

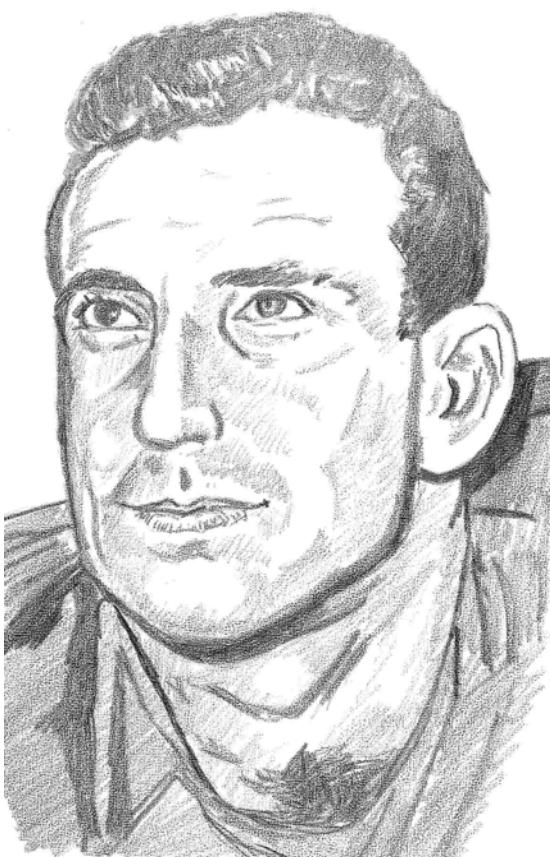
VOTING ENDS May 1, 2009



JIM GIBBONS:

A Lion Playing End

By: Jim Sargent



Statistics of the receiving corps of the Detroit Lions from 1958 to 1968 indicate that Jim Gibbons was one of the top closed (tight) ends in the National Football League during his era. In fact, as an effective blocker, a fine pass receiver, a solid team player, and a positive influence on and off the gridiron, the Chicago native was a true professional.

A big-play receiver, Gibbons enjoyed two 100+ yard days: on November 26, 1959, when he hauled in seven passes for 103 yards during a 24-17 Lion loss to the Green Bay Packers, and on December 13, 1964, when he grabbed four

aerials for 161 yards as Detroit beat the San Francisco Forty-Niners, 24-7.

But the former Iowa All-American came through with his greatest clutch reception on December 4, 1960, when the Lions beat the Baltimore Colts, 20-15, on the final play of the game. With the Lions trailing, 15-13, and 14 seconds showing on the clock, quarterback Earl Morrall improvised a pass play in the huddle, called the signals, and connected with Gibbons for a touchdown covering 65 yards as time expired.

Further, Gibbons was one of Detroit's leading receivers for seven straight seasons. For example, as a rookie in 1958, he ranked second behind Dave Middleton, making 25 receptions for 367 yards and two touchdowns. In 1959, the club's second straight losing season after winning the NFL Championship over the Cleveland Browns in 1957, Gibbons led the team with 31 catches for 431 yards and one score.

On the rise in 1960, Detroit finished second in the NFL's Western Division for the first of three straight times. Not only did Gibbons' great catch beat the Colts, but the sure-handed 6'3" 220-pound tight end again topped Lion receivers, this year with 51 receptions for 604 yards and two touchdowns. His excellent all-around performance won him a trip to the Pro Bowl.

In 1961, When Detroit again ranked second in the West behind Green Bay, Gibbons and second-year wide receiver Gail Cogdill led the Lions with 45 catches each. While Cogdill gained 956 yards and scored six times, Gibbons picked up 566 yards and crossed the goal line once. His outstanding season won him another trip to the Pro Bowl.

In 1962 the Lions, while fashioning an 11-3 record, handed the division-leading Packers their only loss of the season on Thanksgiving Day in Detroit, 26-14, but again Detroit finished second to Green Bay (13-1). Still, Gibbons made a solid contribution by hauling in 33 passes for 318 yards and two touchdowns. He ranked third behind Cogdill (53 catches, 993 yards, 7 TD) and flanker Pat Studstill (36 catches, 479 yards, 4 TD).

In 1963, when Detroit tied for fourth place with the Minnesota Vikings (both clubs posted 5-8-1 marks), Gibbons ranked third in receiving, this time behind flanker Terry Barr and Gail Cogdill. Totaling 32 receptions for 412 yards, Jim scored once.

In 1964, as Detroit improved to 7-5-2 in head coach George Wilson's last season, Gibbons, named one of four co-captains, finished third in receptions with 45 for 605 yards. But the skillful blocker and short yardage receiver scored a career-best eight touchdowns, as Detroit opened up the offense and threw the ball more than usual inside the 20-yard line. Jim's touchdown total was exceeded by only Terry Barr (57 catches, 1007 yards, 9 TD).

Rugged, good-looking, and popular with teammates and fans, Gibbons earned a third trip to the Pro Bowl. Further, his teammates voted him Detroit's Most Valuable Player. The former All-American remains justifiably proud of that honor.

Gail Cogdill recalled, "Jim Gibbons was one of the first players I met in Detroit along with Alex Karras. They both helped me to understand what to expect at training camp and how to handle it. Jim was a great clutch player and a fine person."

Starting in 1965, Gibbons' stats declined as he split playing time with tight end Ron Kramer, acquired from Green Bay. And in 1966, Gibbons underwent surgery on his left knee for an injury he first suffered in high school. He played for two more seasons, but he was no longer a main target for quarterbacks Milt Plum, Karl Sweetan, or Bill Munson.

Born on September 26, 1936, Gibbons grew up in Chicago, where he later played high school football. Speaking in an interview in the year 2000, Gibbons recalled, "I played for Lindblom High School in Chicago. I played for a team in my

junior and senior years that never won a game. It was not a real happy time.

"The only good thing that came out of high school football is my wife, Lila. She was a cheerleader. I met her my junior year, and we've been together ever since. We went to college together at the University of Iowa."

Despite Lindblom High's poor record, Gibbons won a scholarship to Iowa: "I could always play football. I was a little bigger than most of the guys. I was 6'3" and we played both ways in those days. It was the same at Iowa in the Big Ten. We had to go both ways.

"In high school I played offensive tackle and defensive end. I wanted to play receiver. But my coach went to Wisconsin as an offensive tackle, and he said, 'You're going to be an offensive tackle.' When I got the chance to go to Iowa, I told them I wanted to be a receiver, and they accepted that. I was All-American in my senior year. You had to play both ways, but when it came to picking All-Americans, they gave you the honors for which way you played best, offense or defense.

"We had some good times at Iowa and won a lot of games. Alex Karras was there. We were both freshmen together, and we went through four years of college together. Alex was drafted by the Lions, and I was drafted by the Cleveland Browns. I got traded to Detroit right before the first league game, so Alex and I were together at Detroit for eleven years."

Gibbons was one of the best collegiate ends in the nation in 1957. As a result, he was named first or second team on several All-American elevens. He also played in four postseason all-star contests, including the East-West Shrine Game, the Senior Bowl, the Hula Bowl, and the College All-Star Game. In 1970 Hawkeye fans voted Jim to Iowa's all-time gridiron team.

"We had great teams while we were at Iowa" Gibbon recollected in 2000. "Our freshman team could pretty much beat the varsity when we scrimmaged them. I think they started ten out of eleven sophomores during my sophomore year."

Gibbons' biggest reception as a collegian came against Ohio State on November 17, 1956, when he gathered in a 17-yard pass from quarterback

Kenny Ploen to send Iowa to the Rose Bowl. The week before Gibbons made a clutch reception on the Minnesota one-yard line that led to the game's only touchdown. Iowa won, 7-0, and eliminated Minnesota from race for the roses.

As a senior, Gibbons was the top receiver in the Big Ten. The Hawkeye captain caught 26 passes for 376 yards and three touchdowns. Overall, he ranked fifth in the nation with 36 receptions for 587 yards and four TDs. He set an Iowa record for most yardage in a single game with nine receptions for 164 yards against Minnesota.

Gibbons remembered, "In my junior year we won the Rose Bowl over Oregon State. I caught five or six passes and scored a touchdown in the Rose Bowl. Our quarterback was Kenny Ploen. Kenny went on to play for the Winnipeg Bombers in the Canadian Football League. He went up there with several guys from Iowa. They won the Grey Cup for three or four years in a row.

"Cleveland drafted me fifth in 1958. They thought I was going to Canada to play. I was traded to Detroit for a fifth draft choice for 1959. Jerry Reichow and Steve Junker were ends for Detroit. They both had knee operations, and Detroit needed an end. It was good chance for me to play in my rookie season.

"I made the final cut for the Browns, and Lila just came up to Cleveland. We were going to get an apartment. The day before the last practice day, they called in the receivers' coach and told him they had just made a trade. He wasn't happy about it, but it gave me a chance to play in my rookie year.

"So I started my first game in Detroit. I had just played in the College All-Star Game against Detroit. Bobby Layne was Detroit's quarterback in 1958. Jim Doran was the other end for the Lions. There were no 'tight ends' in the 1950s. That started with Ron Kramer in Green Bay, being a receiver and a blocker.

"Detroit won the NFL Championship in 1957 over Cleveland, so I figured the Lions would be a great team to play for. By the time I got there, a lot of people had retired. After two games Detroit traded Bobby Layne for Earl Morrall, and Tobin Rote was the starting quarterback. Earl didn't come on strong until a couple of years later.

"During training camp one year, Earl had a lawn mower accident and cut off part of his left big toe. They thought his career was over. Instead, when he came back, he began throwing perfect spirals. He turned from a so-so quarterback into an outstanding quarterback.

"We had some great coaches and some great players. George Wilson was Detroit's head coach. Don Shula was one assistant. Aldo Forte, 'Scooter' McLean, Don Doll, and Chuck Knox were assistants, and Sammy Baugh coached one year.

"Jim Ninowski came in for a two-year period from the Cleveland Browns, like the old 'Lend-Lease' program! I probably had my two best years when Ninowski was playing for Detroit. He could throw the ball. He was a smart quarterback.

"After two years, he went back to Cleveland in a trade for Milt Plum. Milt was also a good one. He had a good arm, he was smart, but he needed time to throw. He was a rookie on that Browns team that lost the championship to Detroit in 1957."

Asked about being one of Detroit's top receivers, Gibbons commented, "Until Terry Barr broke the record, I was the Lions' leading receiver. When Terry came into his own, around 1961, Detroit started throwing more passes than ever. We also had Gail Cogdill, who was a great receiver, and Pat Studstill, who became a fine receiver."

Gibbons appeared briefly in the 1968 movie *Paper Lion*, the film about the Lions based on George Plimpton's book. Gibbons said, "I was just in *Paper Lion* for a short part. At the time, I didn't think I was going to be an actor. So I scheduled a ski trip to Aspen, Colorado. This was around 1967. They were going to shoot the movie down in Florida.

"They said, 'Come on down. We'll pay you \$500 a week and we'll be there for a month. You'll have a good vacation.'

"I said, 'No, thanks, I'm going to Aspen.' I was an avid skier, so I went to Aspen.

"When they came back and shot the rest of the movie in Detroit, I did the night scenes. But there was a lot of 'dead time.' Guys sat around and played cards. They'd set up and shoot for ten

minutes, and we'd do nothing for three hours. But unless you're paid a whole bunch of money and you're real good at it, movies are a tough way to make a living. All that 'hurry up and wait' stuff means you're waiting forever for them to set up."

Regarding the quarterbacks for whom he played, Gibbons explained, "Every quarterback is a little different. When I first started playing for Detroit, Tobin Rote was there for the first part of the year. Bobby Layne played a couple of games. Then Detroit traded for Earl Morrall. Of all the quarterbacks, Bobby Layne got the ball nearer to the receiver. The ball looked wobbly, but Bobby always got the ball there where it was supposed to be. Tobin was a big strong athlete, and he could fire the ball. Earl did what he had to do to win the ball game. Milt Plum had a lot of potential, and we should have won more games with him at quarterback.

"Probably my best game came in 1960 when Earl threw me a ball in the closing seconds of the game. I will always be grateful to Earl for that play."

That Colts-Lions game was played at Baltimore's Memorial Stadium on December 4, 1960. Detroit made a comeback with eight minutes left when Morrall, in relief of Jim Ninowski, completed his first pass to "Hopalong" Cassady for a 60-yard touchdown. After the Lion defense stopped the Colts, Jim Martin kicked what seemed to be an insurance field goal with less than two minutes to play, giving Detroit a 13-8 lead.

Baltimore, with a record of 6-5, needed the win to hold on to first place in the Western Division over the Forty-Niners and the Packers. Johnny Unitas responded by engineering one of the great drives of his excellent career. After completions to Lenny Moore and Ray Berry moved the football to Detroit's 38-yard line, Unitas fired a line drive to Moore, who cut behind Detroit's "Night Train" Lane and made a remarkable catch in the end zone.

According to Howard Tuckner of the *New York Times*, "Moore dove six feet through the air. He tumbled first, then rolled a few feet more. When Moore got up, hugging the ball, the referee signaled a touchdown."

Baltimore led, 15-13. With many of the 57,808 screaming fans storming the field, the referees

could have called the game. Instead, the gridiron was cleared, the Colts kicked off, and the Lions returned the kick to the 35-yard line.

With no timeouts left, Morrall drew a finger diagram on the ground showing a pass play for Gibbons, the left end, and Cogdill, the rookie wide receiver. Jim was told to go 20 yards and cut to the middle, while Gail was to go 20 yards and flare to the right. Instead, Cogdill sprinted straight for the goal line and cut toward the mid-field, with the result that the middle linebacker, both defensive backs, and both safeties converged on him.

Morrall, seeing the play develop, lofted one to Gibbons over the cleared-out middle. The big end made a smooth catch, cut to the right sideline, and outran defensive back Andy Nelson—after Detroit halfback Ken Webb flattened defender Johnny Sample.

Detroit sportswriter George Puscas wrote, "When Jim Martin kicked the 20th point, the game and football's most incredible finish of the ages was done." The *Times'* Howard Tuckner called Moore's catch "fantastic" and Gibbons' reception "merely incredible."

Still, Gibbons made the greatest clutch catch of his career. Few players get to make a game-winning catch, let alone make a play capping a remarkable comeback against a team that just completed a great comeback!

Reflecting on other big games, Gibbons commented, "For a couple of years there we had a better team than Green Bay. We'd beat the Packers, but they'd beat everybody else. So Green Bay would go to the championship game, and we'd go to the Runner-up Bowl. It got so bad that we finally said, 'If we can't win it all, we'd rather not win anything. Don't come in second.'

"But every Thanksgiving Day game was good. We were always so pumped up for those Thanksgiving games. Green Bay was our arch-rival, so they were all good games. We knew we had to go in and beat Green Bay.

"I don't think any one game was more special than any other Thanksgiving Day game, because we were always ready to play. Right before the 1962 game, I remember Roger Brown saying, 'I'm going to make All-Pro today.' And he did. He

picked up five or six sacks [Brown actually made seven sacks] on Bart Starr. I think we sacked Starr eleven times that day. We gave the Packers their only loss of the season, 26-14. That must have been Roger's greatest game. Detroit was always the kind of team that was very aggressive on defense. They took a lot of pride in the defense. The offense was kind of there to keep 'em honest."

Gibbons talked about football as he knew it: "For those of us who played at that time, it was a *way of life*. We did it for the *love of the game*. We didn't play for the money, because the money wasn't there. When I began with Cleveland in 1958, I signed a contract for \$8500. I got a \$500 advance, not even a bonus. The contract went with me when I was traded to Detroit. Alex Karras was Detroit's number one draft choice, and I think he made \$9,000. Compared to today's NFL, that's unbelievable. By 1964, when I was voted Detroit's MVP, I was making around \$17,000 or \$18,000. That was a pretty good salary in those days.

"But in 1958, Alex and I were Rookies of the Year with Detroit, and I was the second leading receiver. I went to talk to George Wilson about the next year's contract and said, 'I need to get a good raise.'

"Wilson said, 'I'll give you \$500.'

"I said, '\$500? I was Rookie of the Year and a top receiver.'

"The coach said, 'Well, if you don't like it, I'll find someone else to play.'

"That was it. The NFL didn't have that many players at the time. There were twelve teams and about thirty-six players on a roster. A lot of people out there wanted your job."

After being one of Detroit's top three receivers from 1958 through 1964, Gibbons split playing time with big Ron Kramer in 1965. But in 1966, Gibbons made only one reception:

"I hurt my knee when I was in high school and again when I was in college. But it was never bad enough to do anything about it. So I always could play. But in 1966 it finally locked up, and I had to have cartilage removed after one ball game. I didn't play the rest of the season. Ron Kramer came in a trade from Green Bay in 1965. Detroit

was his hometown, and he always wanted to play there. He started for most of the season in 1966."

Gibbons came back and played all fourteen games in 1967, catching 10 passes, and again in 1968, his finale, when he made only two receptions: "In 1968 Detroit had a 'youth movement,' and Charlie Sanders was basically the starter. They had a whole bunch of young guys come to play. The handwriting was kind on the wall. Charley was a great athlete, and he played tight end for a lot of years. He was an outstanding receiver and a great guy. That was my eleventh year and Charlie's first, and you could see what was going down. So I retired after the 1968 season."

In Detroit's off-seasons, Gibbons worked for North American Van Lines: "Charlie Ane was a great lineman for Detroit in the 1950s. He was getting ready to retire, and I took Charlie's job with a company called Palmer Moving and Storage, which was purchased by North American. I worked for them for nine years."

But his passion was skiing: "In my first off-season I went up to Caberfae, Michigan, to go skiing before I had to go into the service. Those were the days when you had to spend some time in the military. On that ski trip at Caberfae, it was ten below zero, sheer ice, and the snow was hard as a rock. I loved it. In 1959, after playing ball, I went to Aspen, Colorado, to ski. I skied at Sun Valley, Idaho, and Jackson Hole, Wyoming. I just fell in love with skiing. I'd ski every winter. George Wilson used to say, 'Don't get hurt. If you do, I'll kill you!' George was such a great guy, like a father image for me. I said, 'Don't worry. I'll ski under control.' It got in my blood."

"After I retired from football in 1968, Millard Kelly, who was the team trainer at the time, was one of my best friends on the Lions. He said, 'I'm getting ready to leave for Aspen.' I said, 'Well, I'm planning to go to Aspen myself.' So we went together.

"Millard took his family and I took Lila and our four kids. We opened up a restaurant at Aspen. I basically wanted to be in Aspen, Colorado. I spent thirty years there. We ran the restaurant for about six years. The two happiest days of my life were when I bought the restaurant and sold it! I also got into real estate the first year at Aspen. After six years, I said, 'I'm spending too much time in the

restaurant and not enough time with my wife and kids.' So I got into real estate full time. We moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1998."

In 2000, Gibbons talked about his favorite highlights: "Looking back, in college it was just being able to play football with a lot of great guys. I know that's a truism, but it's really true for me. Sports have been my life.

"My junior year at Iowa I caught a TD pass against Ohio State that beat them and sent us to the Rose Bowl. That was great. Another highlight was making three Pro Bowls with the Lions. Making the Pro Bowl was quite an honor. Being chosen a Detroit co-captain in 1964 was a real honor.



"The most exciting highlight was catching the pass against Baltimore in 1960, after Lenny Moore made that diving catch in the end zone with 14 seconds left to go. That was the greatest catch I've ever seen. The clock was stopped, Baltimore kicked off, and a big fight broke out between their players and ours. We had about eight seconds to go. I came across the middle and caught that pass from Earl Morrall and took it 65 yards for a touchdown to win the game.

"Another highlight came in 1964 when I was voted the Lions MVP. That was a great honor."

Putting it all in perspective, Gibbons said, "Maybe the biggest highlight of all was playing for Detroit in the late 1950s and the 1960s. Football was a pure sport at that time. There were no steroids or drugs to worry about. We just played the game.

"Our kids grew up in Detroit. They used to come to training camp with me and share the experiences. Detroit was a good place to live. The people were great. It was just a good time. I'll never forget how good the fans in Detroit and the people all across Michigan treated all of us. The fans always backed us, win or lose."

Because of the consistently stellar play and the positive attitude of quiet heroes like Jim Gibbons on exciting teams like the Detroit Lions, professional football caught up with major league baseball as a fan favorite in the early 1960s. "It's hard to put into words," Gibbons reflect, "but playing the game was a *way of life* for those of us who played at that time. And being a Lion was pretty special. It meant a lot to us."

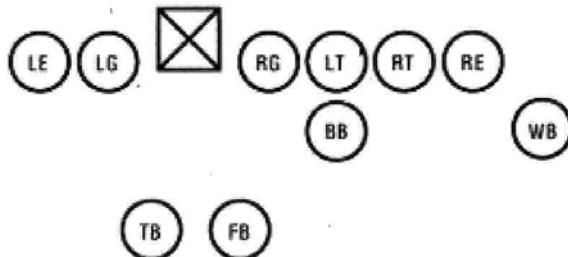
JIM GIBBONS OE-TE

Gibbons, James Edwin (Gib) 6-2, 220
College: Iowa HS: Lindblom [Chicago, IL]
B: 9 / 26 / 1936, Chicago, IL
Drafted: 1958 Round 5 Cle

| Year | Tm | Receiving | | | | |
|--------|---------|-----------|-----|------|------|----|
| | | G | Rec | Yds | Y/R | TD |
| 1958 | Detroit | 12 | 25 | 367 | 14.7 | 2 |
| 1959 | Detroit | 12 | 31 | 431 | 13.9 | 1 |
| 1960* | Detroit | 12 | 51 | 604 | 11.8 | 2 |
| 1961* | Detroit | 14 | 45 | 566 | 12.6 | 1 |
| 1962 | Detroit | 14 | 33 | 318 | 9.6 | 2 |
| 1963 | Detroit | 14 | 32 | 412 | 12.9 | 1 |
| 1964* | Detroit | 14 | 45 | 605 | 13.4 | 8 |
| 1965 | Detroit | 13 | 12 | 111 | 9.3 | 2 |
| 1966 | Detroit | 7 | 1 | 2 | 2.0 | 1 |
| 1967 | Detroit | 14 | 10 | 107 | 10.7 | 0 |
| 1968 | Detroit | 14 | 2 | 38 | 19.0 | 0 |
| Career | | 140 | 287 | 3561 | 12.4 | 20 |

A SHOT IS NOT A WING

By John T. Reed



As is often the case, football terminology is not precise. I put a football terms dictionary at my Web site to try to clear up some questions, but the problem is infinite as relatively illiterate coaches feel entitled to dream up their own words for positions like rover or monster or for plays like naked boot or sally or trey. Generally, to me, single wing refers to a number of formations which have several characteristics: a direct snap and an unbalanced line and a wing on the long side and, usually in the old days, a multi-cycle backfield.

Now I have to define those terms.

A direct snap is one that goes “directly” to a running back rather than getting to the running back “indirectly” by being snapped to a QB who has his hands under the center and who then transfers the ball to a running back. All snaps where the QB has his hands under the center are indirect snaps. So are shotgun snaps that go to the quarterback.

There is no quarterback in the single wing (although some call a single wing blocking back the quarterback—a completely different use of the word than its modern meaning).

Direct snaps are long snaps. A shotgun snap is not a long snap. In the shotgun snap, the center has his head up looking at the defense when he snaps the ball. In a long snap, which is most commonly used in field goal and punt plays, the long snapper is looking through his legs at his target and keeps looking through his legs during the snap and follow-through. There is a high school rule that defenders cannot hit a long snapper immediately after the snap.

The long snap zips and is very accurate. In the single wing offense and the field goal, it is a touch line drive.

Single-wing coaches have long snappers practice it alone by snapping the ball into an aluminum lawn chair with a towel draped over the back and seat. When done properly, the ball stops and stays in the chair. It does not knock the chair over.

In contrast, a shotgun snap is a blind, soft, high lob and almost always varies in timing and trajectory from a single center during the course of a game. Single-wing long snaps are extremely precise. Single-wing coach Ken Keuffel numbers his plays differently according to the target of the long snapper and the targets are things like the outside of the fullback’s inside knee, the outside of his outside knee on another snap, etc.

Such precision with regard to timing and target enables single-wing plays to be extremely precise as to their timing, deception, and speed. Shotgun snaps, on the other hand, often drive indirect-snap coaches nuts because of the varying amounts of time it takes quarterbacks to catch the ball and position the laces optimally for passing. For example, the three-step drop timing pass common in quarterback under center football is a precise timing pass that starts with the ball coming into the QB’s hands precisely on time and with the laces precisely where the QB wants them. No such thing is possible with the shotgun snap.

An unbalanced line is one with four close linemen on one side of the center or as he is called in the single wing, the long snapper (because he is not in the center). The other side has two close linemen. There may be a tight end on either or both sides. In the old days, there were always two tight ends. Nowadays, there may be a split end so the end man on either side of the line in the close portion may or may not be an eligible receiver. The main point is that the defense has to adjust to a line the likes of which they never see, that is a 4-2 unbalanced line. The common pro set typically has a tight end on one side and just a guard and tackle on the other, but that is not considered to be an unbalanced line regardless of the arithmetic of it. I also advocate a 5-1 unbalanced line but that requires a wing on the short side.

The unbalanced line screws up the defense more than you might think, especially if they do not adjust by treating the long guard as the center, which he is. If, as often happens, they treat the linemen who snaps the ball as the center, they will typically be outnumbered on the long side of the line.

A multi-cycle backfield is one in which there is more than one running back to whom the long snapper can snap the ball. About the only modern version of that is

scrimmage-kick formations, namely the field goal and punt formations. In those nowadays, you sometimes see the ball snapped to the place kicker or to the personal protector of the punter in a deliberate surprise fake field goal or fake punt play. In the single wing, that is standard stuff. Part of the deception of the single wing is the question of who is going to get the snap. Since the snap is low like a snap to a field goal holder, it is hard to see to whom it went.

I think there are three different single-wing formation families: the regular single wing, the direct snap double wing, and the short punt. The first is generally a three-cycle formation, that is, the long snapper can see three different backs when he looks through his legs. The double wing is a two-cycle formation because the other two backs are at wing. And the short punt is a four-cycle formation that looks like a compressed punt formation actually, thus the name.

The single wing is what I call an 11-man offense in my book *The Contrarian Edge for Football Offense*. That is, 11 men are attacking the defense. If you think about it, that's unusual these days. Most offenses since the 1940s have been 10-man offenses in that the quarterback handles the ball briefly then gives it to someone else and goes off duty. So much so that the defenses nowadays count on it. They simply do not account for the 11th offensive player. At the high school and college level, teams sometimes throw a pass back to the quarterback in goal line situations because the defenses in those situations are almost always in man pass coverage and no man is assigned to the quarterback.

Other 11-man offensive tactics are the triple option, indirect snap double wing, quarterback draw play, reverse where the QB effectively blocks. Against any 11-man offense including the single wing, the defensive coordinator and his player suddenly feel outnumbered. Having not had to account for the 11th offensive player for decades, they feel as thought the team that runs an 11-man offensive is somehow cheating.

Defenses also have trouble with the timing of the single wing. With normal offenses, the defenders' thought process is snap, read, go. And they do all that within the first second

Against the single-wing, that is a fatal habit. In the single wing, the point of attack is not revealed by the offense until two or three seconds into the play. You might think the defense would penetrate during that time. Probably not. Single wing teams generally have

zero line splits (distance between offensive linemen) just for that reason. If defenders react as fast as with non-single-wing teams, they will take themselves out of position and the offense will see that and attack the location of the guy who left too soon next play. So the defense has to learn the new habit of staying put until the play reveals its actual point of attack. Unfortunately for them, the offensive players already know what the real point of attack is and they are bearing down on their blocking targets from unexpected angles like freight trains while the defense is figuring out the point of attack.

Some old guys will say you just key on the blocking back. True, that'll work often. But that's why single-wing coaches run one or two "wrong-way" plays per half. During those plays, following the blocking back will take you away from the actual point of attack. Making a fool out of yourself on wrong-way plays generally convinces defenders NOT to key on the blocking back.

In short, those not familiar with the single wing might wonder what the big deal is. It is a different formation than you usually see, but not much. The snap is shotgun like, or so it seems. As I explained above, the single wing poses a half dozen or more new problems for the defense and turns their previously good habits into bad ones.

As the title of my most recent book implies, the value of recent uses of the single wing like Miami's "wildcat" formation and New England's copy of it stems not from the single wing per se but rather from its unusualness or contrarianess. 80 years ago, Miami would have gotten nowhere with the single wing. That's because everyone was geared up to stop it back then. Now they aren't. That's why it is so effective now.

* * * * *

Reed is the author of seven football coaching books. Three, are about the single-wing, namely *Single-Wing Offense for Youth Football*, *Coaching Youth Football*, and *Coaching Youth Flag Football*. His book *The Contrarian Edge for Football Offense* suggests numerous contrarian tactics both old and new ones. Prominent among the old ones are the various single-wing-type formations.

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ARTFUL EDDIE AND BLUE-SHIRT CHARLIE

By Tracy Thibreau

On Wednesday morning, November 8, 1939, charming, athletic Edward J. O'Hare spotted a suspicious car in the lot of Sportsmans Park racetrack on Chicago's southwest side. He had its number taken down and then re-oiled his gun. He wasn't used to carrying one but he knew what happened to stool pigeons in Chicago.

Things had changed since Al Capone went to prison in 1931. Although prohibition had been repealed, organized crime remained intact. The outfit's primary source of revenue now was gambling.

When he was a young lawyer in his native St. Louis, O'Hare's primary client was Owen P. Smith. Smith invented the mechanical rabbit that is used in dog racing. You can't hold a dog race without one. By 1923, the two men controlled the sport nationwide. But then Eddie ran afoul of the law.

Cincinnati attorney, pharmacist and bootlegger, George Remus, found a loophole in the Volstead Act that allowed him to purchase government liquor for medicinal purposes and sell it back to himself. A robbery of one of his bonded warehouses netted about \$200,000 in stolen merchandise. Remus filed charges against about two-dozen people. Remus' wife, whom he later murdered, and Eddie O'Hare were among those indicted.

O'Hare declined to reveal some information during the trial citing attorney-client privilege. The court didn't see it that way and sentenced him to a year and a day. After serving most of the time, he was granted an appeal and his conviction was overturned. Remus didn't testify at the retrial because O'Hare made restitution by giving him a share of his dog track interests.

In 1927 Owen Smith died. O'Hare bought his partner's share of the mechanical rabbit's patent from Smith's widow.

Dog racing was a rage in the twenties, and Al Capone operated racetracks in suburban Chicago. It was inevitable that he and O'Hare would cross paths. But O'Hare had nothing but contempt for gangsters. "I have never accepted so much as a bottle of beer from gangsters," he told one of his daughters. "In life you have to live with people, meet them where they are and put up with them."

O'Hare brought with him the expertise of running racetracks, both dog and horse. He operated the legal betting windows on the turf grounds. Capone had his own illegal bookmaking operations. The two men kept separate books. That arrangement was the price O'Hare had to pay to operate in Chicago.

Johnny Patton was the Mayor of Burnham, Illinois, where the Hawthorne and Sportsman Park racetracks were located. He was also Capone's front man and secretary-treasurer of those operations. O'Hare was the President. Charles Bidwill, future NFL Hall of Famer, was a major stockholder.

In 1930, the Hawthorne racetrack was converted from a dog track to horse track. Dog racing was outlawed in Illinois because of corruption. This cut into Eddie's royalty on his patent and he knew that until he got this hoodlum element out of racing, things would never change.

The Federal Government, failing to convict Capone for violations of the Volstead Act, decided to go after Big Al for income tax evasion instead. They had already convicted his brother Ralph, and a few of his associates of this crime but they needed more evidence to nail Mr. Capone himself.

So the Feds prepared a case against Eddie O'Hare. They offered him a deal. Turn Capone and we'll allow you to pay your back taxes. O'Hare had no desire to return to prison so he cooperated.

O'Hare gave the agents names and addresses of previously unknown syndicate operations. During Capone's trial, O'Hare provided a list of bribed jurors to the judge that resulted in the entire jury being dismissed and replaced with another one from a different courtroom. It was this second jury that sent Capone to prison.

It didn't take long for the syndicate to find out who the inside man was. But Eddie was an "earner." He was making too much money for the outfit to just kill him. Also, killing O'Hare might delay Capone's release from prison.

In 1937, Capone was told about O'Hare's covert activities. Scarface was reported to have railed in his Alcatraz prison cell on how he would "have" O'Hare when he was released. This news

reached the ears of O'Hare and Eddie became nervous.

Just before Capone's release in November of 1939, Eddie started taking precautions. He began to abandon his automobiles and take the "el" instead. He also started packing a gun, which he did only when carrying large amounts of cash.

On the afternoon of November 8, he left his office at Sportsmans Park, got in his Lincoln coupe and headed toward the loop. A sedan, carrying men dressed in black coats and hats, began to pull up alongside. O'Hare hit the gas but the sedan overtook him. Two shotgun blasts tore into his head and neck. The Lincoln careened over some streetcar tracks and crashed into a lamppost. He was dead at the age of 46. The shooters stopped at the next intersection, waited for the signal to change, made a left and nonchalantly drove away.

The police found the gun, \$53 in cash and few notes in O'Hare's pockets. One note referred to a real estate deal he was involved in with a local judge. It proved to be scandalous because that same judge had made headlines a year earlier for his shady record of dismissing over 600 gambling cases per month.

Another note found in Eddie's pocket was to inform him to call an FBI agent who was seeking information on a gangster. This note implied that O'Hare was still cooperating with law enforcement.

The Chicago police said it had all of the marks of a Capone gang killing.

O'Hare's body was accompanied back to St. Louis by his friend Charlie Bidwill, businessman, sportsman and owner of the Chicago Cardinals football club.

The *Chicago Tribune* reported the story:

"O'Hare, the front man for the Capone syndicate, had been actively acquiring a foothold in professional sports outside of racing. He was listed as a director of the Chicago Cardinals, one of the city's two professional football teams. This is shown by the club's annual return, filed with the Secretary of State at Springfield. He backed a company that manufactures collapsible seat backs used at outdoor sporting events."

The *Tribune* overstated O'Hare's role in the outfit by calling him a "front man." In the months and years to come, and after learning of his role in nabbing Al Capone, the *Tribune* treated him with more respect.

A spokesman for the Illinois Racing Commission stated, "I have never heard any

protest from horse racing followers on the way in which the sport was being conducted at Sportsmans Park."

The revelation that O'Hare owned stock in the Cardinals shocked NFL President Carl Storck. He said that league records did not indicate that O'Hare was a franchise director and launched an investigation.

"The law requires that he own one share to be a director," explained Cardinals owner Bidwill. "He never invested a penny in the club and was not interested in its operation." Bidwill went on to say that O'Hare had acquired his stock from a previous owner who had since retired from pro football. As for O'Hares signature appearing at the bottom of the teams' broadcasting contract with a local radio station, Bidwill said that he was in a hurry when the contract was up for consideration. He wanted to approve it and said: "sign it." O'Hare, an attorney, was present at the time, took it literally and affixed his own signature.

Blue-shirt Charlie Bidwill, whose nickname was derived from his penchant for wearing blue shirts, not simpatico with the working class, was an attorney too. During WWI, Bidwill was stationed at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. In 1918, the Great Lakes football team won the Rose Bowl. It was while in the Navy that Charlie became close friends with George Halas, Paddy Driscoll and Jimmy Conzelman.

Soon after WWI, Bidwill gave up practicing law and became a businessman. Among the many enterprises he owned was the Bentley-Murray printing company. That company printed racing forms, pari-mutual tickets, programs and various items for O'Hare and other national sporting venues. He was also President of the Chicago Stadium Operating Company, a facility used for indoor professional sports.

George Halas needed \$38,000 to buy out Dutch Sternaman. He asked for and received loans from the bank, former players, former players mothers and his own mother. He also borrowed money from his old Navy buddy, Charlie Bidwell. Halas became sole owner of the Chicago Bears. Bidwill was appointed an officer of the franchise, but his term only lasted until 1933.

In 1933, for reasons still unclear, Bidwill purchased the Chicago Cardinals football team. The seller was Dr. David Jones. Just how much Charlie paid is unclear too, depending on the source. It was most likely \$50,000.

At a party on Bidwill's yacht, Charlie's wife, Violet, is reputed to have been the one to suggest

the sale to Doc Jones. George Halas was among the guests on board that evening too. Charlie was supposed to have given Jones \$2000 cash, on the spot, to seal the bargain.

Ray Bennigsen was Charlie's friend, confidant and business manager. "I can only think he did it on a whim or just to operate as a hobby," said Bennigsen. "He may have done it as a favor to Doc Jones. They were involved in politics together and I know for a fact that he (Dr. Jones) was in a tight financial bind."

Ironically, Bidwill did not have to divest his stock in the Bears. At this time, NFL regulations allowed what would be considered a conflict of interest today. Bidwill would also own stock in the NFL's Detroit franchise simultaneously. The league also allowed gamblers and bookies, like Pittsburgh's Art Rooney and New York's Tim Mara, to own franchises.

Although gambling was a crime, it wouldn't go away. The best law enforcement could do was to tolerate it.

In the beginning, pro football games didn't have point spreads. The games were given straight up odds such as 6 to 5. But the point spread made it more interesting.

Bidwell's Bentley-Murray printing company also printed football "parlay cards." These cards were about ten inches long and printed on thick stock. The card listed all of upcoming week's football games, college and pro, in numerical order. Next to an individual game's match-up, was printed the point spread for that particular game. If a gambler accepted the spread, they would circle the number of that game on the detachable stub at the bottom of the card. The stub was then turned over to the bookie as a record of the wager. These betting cards were, arguably, the reason for pro football's rise in popularity. Television would be another, but many years later.

One reason O'Hare may have bought into the team was as a novel investment for his beloved son Edward Jr.

Edward "Butch" O'Hare was football fan. He picked up the nickname while attending Annapolis and was in flight school when his father was killed. The old man encouraged his son to become an Admiral in the Navy.

Some histories of the gangland era suggest that Eddie's motive for becoming an informant was to get his son into the Naval Academy. But further investigation revealed that Eddie had a few congressmen lined up to sponsor his boy and that

his motives were altruistic in ridding the City of its gangland elements.

Butch became a fighter pilot and won the Congressional Medal of Honor in WWII. He saved the U.S.S. Lexington, one of our country's few remaining aircraft carriers after being attacked at Pearl Harbor.

After a long afternoon's battle, the crew fought off enemy aircraft trying to bomb or crash into her flight deck. With only two planes remaining capable of addressing the next threat, eight more enemy bombers began to approach the task force. Butch and Duff Difhilo took off to intercept the enemy. Dufhilo's guns were jammed. Butch signaled to Dufhilo to return to the ship but Duff followed to draw enemy fire away from Butch.

Butch damaged two enemy planes on his first pass. He shot down two more on his second and in the midst of cruiser anti-aircraft fire, he shot down two more on the third. The flattop's crew stood by and watched. The task force valiantly fought off the remaining threat.

When Butch returned to the ship, a nervous machine gunner fired a burst at him. "Son if you don't stop shooting at me when I've got my wheels down," explained O'Hare to the embarrassed sailor, "I'm going to have to report you to the gunnery officer." It was punishment enough.

The Lady Lex was eventually sunk in the Battle of the Coral Sea, an important moment because it halted what had seemed an unstoppable drive across the Pacific by the Japanese.

Butch was lost at sea during a nighttime training incident involving friendly fire.

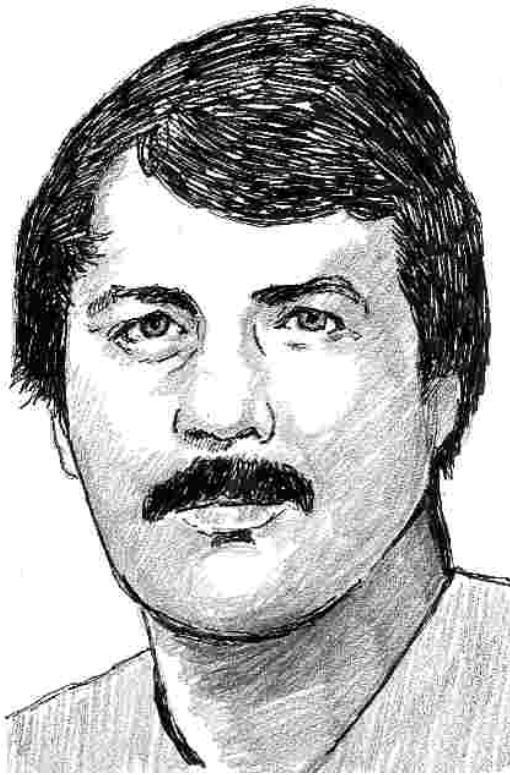
Editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, Col. Robert R. McCormick, was the first to propose the renaming of Chicago's airport from Orchard Place to O'Hare Field. Although the honor was officially awarded because of Butch's accomplishments, it has been confirmed that his father's contribution to Chicago's history played a large part in McCormick's advocacy of the plan.

It was a young man's world in the roaring twenties. In 1931, at the peak of his power, Capone was only 32 years old. Bidwell was 36 and O'Hare was 38. The accumulation of wealth was their objective. Chicago was their playing field.

Jack Gregory

By Roger Gordon

Originally published in *The Orange and Brown Report*



Jack Gregory

Jack Gregory's rookie year with the Cleveland Browns was 1967. He played his senior year in college in Cleveland, too. Not at John Carroll or Case Western, but rather at Delta State University – in Cleveland, Mississippi. Gregory, a defensive end and tight end in college, transferred to Delta State from the University of Chattanooga. He was a ninth-round draft choice of the Browns in 1966 but with one year of college eligibility remaining. Gregory thought enough of the NFL to turn down thousands of dollars offered him by the AFL's Buffalo Bills to sign with the Browns in 1967.

"The NFL was better," Gregory says. "The AFL was nothing in my opinion."

Unfortunately for Gregory, the NFL did not think much of him five years later in 1971 when he became the first NFL player to play out his option.

"The media put a lot of pressure on me because I was being rebellious," recalls Gregory, a Browns defensive end from 1967-71 and in 1979 sandwiched around seven unhappy seasons with the New York Giants. "I went through hell that year playing out my option, being the only NFL player bucking the establishment."

Although the Browns positioned the 6-6, 251-pound Mississippi native at defensive end on the right side for the most part, it was with a different twist than what Gregory was accustomed to in college.

"I played a 5-4 defense in college where it was a stand-up defense," Gregory explains. "A 5-4 lineman plays like a linebacker. (The Browns) put me in a left-handed stance (in the 4-3 alignment) that I never played in the down position. I'm right-handed, and I didn't adapt well. It was a great adjustment."

Gregory was tested right off the bat in the 1967 Pro Football Hall of Fame Game against the Philadelphia Eagles.

"My first opposition was Bob Brown," he remembers, "so you can understand that it was a tough deal. Paul Wiggin's advice was, 'Stay low.'"

Gregory and the Browns lost to the Eagles, 28-13, and dropped five of six overall that preseason. However, the team finished 9-5 in the games that counted – the regular season – and won the Century Division championship. Gregory played a big part of that and the enormous success that followed. He was a member of Browns teams that came within a whisker of playing in Super Bowls III and IV the next two years, the latter of which Gregory played in his lone Pro Bowl. The Browns barely missed the playoffs in 1970 and then won the AFC Central Division title in 1971, Gregory's last year with the team before being traded to the Giants amid the "option" turmoil.

Gregory says those Cleveland teams were a confident bunch.

"We knew we had Dallas' number," he says, referring to the Browns' two wins in three years over the Cowboys in the Eastern Conference Championship game. "We knew we were good. We were not intimidated by anybody."

Gregory attributes the downfall of the Browns in the 1970s to two things – age and the trading away of several quality players, especially the great Paul Warfield.

"But, to be honest," he says, "we didn't utilize (Warfield) like the Miami Dolphins did."

Other than an outstanding season in his first year in New York in which his 21 ½ sacks helped the Giants to an 8-6 record, and a heartwarming reunion with ex-teammates when he returned to Cleveland to play the Browns in 1973, Gregory's seven years in the Big Apple were a big disappointment. Not only did the team win just 23 games in his last six years there, it was a franchise in disarray.

"It was a fiasco," he says. "We played at Yankee Stadium, the Yale Bowl, Shea Stadium, Giants Stadium. That's a hell of deal. There were five original players when I got there in 1972 that were there when I left, so that's a hell of a turnover. We had three head coaches in seven years."

Gregory was on the sidelines in the Meadowlands when the signature moment that depicts the utter chaos that was the New York Giants franchise during the '70s occurred – the "Miracle of the Meadowlands." With the Giants leading the Philadelphia Eagles, 17-12, late in the game and victory all but assured, for some inexplicable reason, rather than sitting on the ball, quarterback Joe Pisarcik tried to hand the ball off to Larry Csonka.

"Joe stumbled and hit Larry in the leg," Gregory recalls, "and the ball bounced up in the air, and (Eagle) Herman Edwards picked it up and went 65 yards for a touchdown."

The Giants lost, 19-17, resulting in the axe for a handful of assistant coaches the next day.

Gregory, who missed only four games throughout his entire career, was traded back to the Browns

in 1979 for his last season. It was some season, too, as he got to be a part of the first edition of the Kardiac Kids that fell just short of the team's first playoff berth since the year after Gregory was traded to the Giants seven years before.

Since retiring from the game, Gregory, 63, returned to his roots in Mississippi where he has toiled in farming, sales and employment by his home state. He resides in Okolona with his wife of 15 years, Susan. He has a 34-year-old son from a previous marriage, two step children and two step grandchildren.

As for hobbies, "I've got an old pontoon boat," he says. "I go up on the Tennessee River and do that a little bit, that's about all."

Gregory, whose father, Jack, Sr., actually was a guard for the Cleveland Rams in 1941, has returned to Cleveland periodically over the years, most recently as a side trip from his presence at former teammate Gene Hickerson's enshrinement to the Pro Football Hall of Fame last summer down the road in Canton. He is astounded by the difference in downtown Cleveland from 40 years ago when he played for the Browns.

"When I was there, you couldn't walk downtown," he laughs. "I was there when the river caught on fire. I was out on the lake riding in a boat when the sewage system went down – raw sewage! Downtown now is unbelievable."

Gregory watches every Browns game on his DirecTV. He feels the pain Cleveland fans are going through with the dreadful performance of the team since its return to the NFL nearly a decade ago.

His advice to the fans?

"Just keep the faith," he said.

Something Browns are quite accustomed to.

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| JACK GREGORY | DE | |
| Gregory, Earl Jackson Jr. | 6-5, 250 | Son of Jack Gregory |
| Tenn.-Chattanooga; Delta State | | HS: Okolona [MS] |
| B: 10/3/1944, Tupelo, MS | | |

Drafted: 1966 Round 9 Cle

| | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1967 Cle 14 | 1968 Cle 14 | 1969 Cle 14 | 1970 Cle 14 |
| 1971 Cle 14 | 1972 NYG 14 | 1973 NYG 13 | 1974 NYG 14 |
| 1975 NYG 14 | 1976 NYG 11 | 1977 NYG 14 | 1978 NYG 16 |
| 1979 Cle 16 | | | |

PUNT RETURNS FOR TOUCHDOWNS

Part Four: 1980-1989

Compiled by Gary Selby

| No. | Date | Scoring Team | W / L | Scoring Player | Opponent | Yardage |
|-----|--------------|--------------|-------|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| 306 | 10 / 26 / 80 | 49ers | L | Freddie Solomon | Bucs | 53 |
| 307 | 11 / 02 / 80 | Patriots | W | Roland James | Jets | 75 |
| 308 | 11 / 23 / 80 | Chiefs | W | J. T. Smith | Cardinals | 75 |
| 309 | 11 / 23 / 80 | Seahawks | L | Will Lewis | Broncos | 75 |
| 310 | 12 / 07 / 80 | Cardinals | W | Roy Green | Lions | 57 |
| 311 | 12 / 07 / 80 | 49ers | W | Freddie Solomon | Saints | 57 |
| 312 | 12 / 21 / 80 | Chiefs | W | J. T. Smith | Colts | 53 |
| 313 | 09 / 13 / 81 | Dolphins | W | Tommy Vigorito | Steelers | 87 |
| 314 | 09 / 20 / 81 | Bears | W | Jeff Fisher | Bucs | 88 |
| 315 | 09 / 20 / 81 | Cardinals | W | Stump Mitchell | Redskins | 50 |
| 316 | 09 / 28 / 81 | Rams | W | LeRoy Irvin | Bears | 55 |
| 317 | 10 / 04 / 81 | Redskins | L | Mike Nelms | 49ers | 58 |
| 318 | 10 / 11 / 81 | Rams | W | LeRoy Irvin | Falcons | 75 |
| 319 | 10 / 11 / 81 | Rams | W | LeRoy Irvin | Falcons | 84 |
| 320 | 10 / 25 / 81 | Redskins | W | Mike Nelms | Patriots | 75 |
| 321 | 11 / 08 / 81 | Packers | W | Mark Lee | Giants | 94 |
| 322 | 12 / 07 / 81 | Raiders | W | Ted Watts | Steelers | 53 |
| 323 | 12 / 12 / 81 | Lions | W | Robbie Martin | Vikings | 45 |
| 324 | 09 / 12 / 82 | Dolphins | W | Tommy Vigorito | Jets | 59 |
| 325 | 09 / 19 / 82 | Broncos | W | Rick Upchurch | 49ers | 67 |
| 326 | 11 / 28 / 82 | Rams | W | LeRoy Irvin | Chiefs | 63 |
| 327 | 12 / 19 / 82 | Broncos | L | Rick Upchurch | Chiefs | 78 |
| 328 | 01 / 02 / 83 | 49ers | L | Dana McLemore | Rams | 93 |
| 329 | 09 / 25 / 83 | Broncos | L | Zack Thomas | Raiders | 70 |
| 330 | 10 / 02 / 83 | Raiders | L | Greg Pruitt | Redskins | 97 |
| 331 | 10 / 02 / 83 | Packers | W | Phillip Epps | Bucs | 90 |
| 332 | 10 / 16 / 83 | Seahawks | W | Paul Johns | Raiders | 75 |
| 333 | 10 / 23 / 83 | Falcons | W | Billy Johnson | Jets | 71 |
| 334 | 11 / 20 / 83 | Dolphins | W | Mark Clayton | Colts | 60 |
| 335 | 11 / 20 / 83 | Cowboys | W | Gary Allen | Chiefs | 68 |
| 336 | 11 / 21 / 83 | Jets | W | Kirk Springs | Saints | 76 |
| 337 | 11 / 24 / 83 | Lions | W | Robbie Martin | Steelers | 81 |
| 338 | 12 / 04 / 83 | Bears | L | Dennis McKinnon | Packers | 59 |
| 339 | 12 / 18 / 83 | Rams | W | Henry Ellard | Saints | 72 |
| 340 | 12 / 19 / 83 | 49ers | W | Dana McLemore | Cowboys | 56 |
| 341 | 09 / 16 / 84 | Seahawks | L | Paul Johns | Patriots | 47 |
| 342 | 09 / 30 / 84 | Rams | W | Henry Ellard | Giants | 83 |
| 343 | 10 / 08 / 84 | 49ers | W | Dana McLemore | Giants | 79 |
| 344 | 10 / 14 / 84 | Bills | L | Don Wilson | Seahawks | 65 |
| 345 | 10 / 22 / 84 | Rams | W | Henry Ellard | Falcons | 69 |
| 346 | 11 / 19 / 84 | Steelers | L | Louis Lipps | Saints | 76 |
| 347 | 11 / 25 / 84 | Chargers | L | Lionel James | Steelers | 59 |
| 348 | 12 / 10 / 84 | Raiders | W | Cleo Montgomery | Lions | 69 |
| 349 | 09 / 15 / 85 | Rams | W | Henry Ellard | Eagles | 80 |
| 350 | 09 / 22 / 85 | Patriots | W | Irving Fryar | Bills | 85 |
| 351 | 10 / 20 / 85 | Lions | W | Pete Mandley | 49ers | 63 |
| 352 | 10 / 27 / 85 | Steelers | L | Louis Lipps | Bengals | 62 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|-----------|---|-------------------|-----------|----|
| 353 | 11 / 10 / 85 | Patriots | W | Irving Fryar | Colts | 77 |
| 354 | 11 / 10 / 85 | Steelers | W | Louis Lipps | Chiefs | 71 |
| 355 | 11 / 17 / 85 | Colts | L | Robbie Martin | Dolphins | 70 |
| 356 | 12 / 22 / 85 | Browns | L | Brian Brennan | Jets | 37 |
| 357 | 09 / 14 / 86 | Dolphins | W | James Pruitt | Colts | 71 |
| 358 | 09 / 28 / 86 | Browns | W | Gerald McNeil | Lions | 84 |
| 359 | 10 / 12 / 86 | Broncos | W | Mike Hardin | Chargers | 41 |
| 360 | 11 / 02 / 86 | Patriots | W | Irving Fryar | Falcons | 59 |
| 361 | 11 / 02 / 86 | Bills | L | Ron Pitts | Bucs | 49 |
| 362 | 11 / 16 / 86 | Broncos | W | Gerald Willhite | Chiefs | 70 |
| 363 | 11 / 23 / 86 | 49ers | W | Don Griffin | Falcons | 76 |
| 364 | 11 / 23 / 86 | Seahawks | W | Bobby Joe Edmonds | Eagles | 75 |
| 365 | 11 / 27 / 86 | Packers | W | Walter Stanley | Lions | 83 |
| 366 | 11 / 30 / 86 | Raiders | L | Fulton Walker | Eagles | 70 |
| 367 | 11 / 30 / 86 | Eagles | W | Gregg Garrity | Raiders | 76 |
| 368 | 12 / 21 / 86 | Lions | L | Pete Mandley | Falcons | 84 |
| 369 | 12 / 21 / 86 | Cardinals | W | Vai Sikahema | Bucs | 71 |
| 370 | 12 / 21 / 86 | Cardinals | W | Vai Sikahema | Bucs | 60 |
| 371 | 09 / 14 / 87 | Bears | W | Dennis McKinnon | Giants | 94 |
| 372 | 09 / 20 / 87 | Chargers | W | Lionel James | Cardinals | 81 |
| 373 | 10 / 04 / 87 | Jets | L | Michael Harper | Cowboys | 78 |
| 374 | 10 / 12 / 87 | Raiders | L | Rick Calhoun | Broncos | 55 |
| 375 | 10 / 18 / 87 | Chiefs | L | Jitter Fields | Broncos | 85 |
| 376 | 10 / 25 / 87 | Bears | W | Dennis McKinnon | Bucs | 65 |
| 377 | 11 / 09 / 87 | Jets | W | JoJo Townsell | Seahawks | 91 |
| 378 | 11 / 22 / 87 | Vikings | W | Leo Lewis | Falcons | 78 |
| 379 | 12 / 13 / 87 | Cardinals | W | Vai Sikahema | Giants | 76 |
| 380 | 12 / 14 / 87 | 49ers | W | Dana McLemore | Bears | 83 |
| 381 | 12 / 27 / 87 | Broncos | W | K. C. Clark | Chargers | 71 |
| 382 | 09 / 19 / 88 | Colts | L | Clarence Verdin | Browns | 73 |
| 383 | 10 / 02 / 88 | 49ers | W | John Taylor | Lions | 77 |
| 384 | 11 / 20 / 88 | Saints | W | Mel Gray | Broncos | 66 |
| 385 | 11 / 21 / 88 | 49ers | W | John Taylor | Redskins | 95 |
| 386 | 12 / 10 / 88 | Jets | W | JoJo Townsell | Colts | 59 |
| 387 | 12 / 18 / 88 | Packers | W | Ron Pitts | Cardinals | 63 |
| 388 | 09 / 10 / 89 | Saints | W | Derrick Shepard | Cowboys | 56 |
| 389 | 09 / 10 / 89 | Falcons | L | Deion Sanders | Rams | 68 |
| 390 | 10 / 01 / 89 | Colts | W | Clarence Verdin | Jets | 49 |
| 391 | 12 / 17 / 89 | Dolphins | L | Scott Schwedes | Colts | 70 |
| 392 | 12 / 24 / 89 | Giants | W | Dave Meggett | Raiders | 76 |



LeRoy Irvin



Louis Lipp



Deion Sanders



Freddie Solomon

ONLY A YEAR AGO**2007 ALL-PROS**

| <u>OFFENSE</u> | <u>AII-NFL</u> | | | | <u>Conf</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| | <u>Pos</u> | <u>AP</u> | <u>FA</u> | <u>SN</u> | <u>FW</u> |
| Terrell Owens, Dal | WR | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Randy Moss, NE | WR | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Reggie Wayne, Ind | WR | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Braylon Edwards, Cle | WR | 2t | - | 1 | - |
| Larry Fitzgerald, Ari | WR | - | - | - | 1 |
| Wes Welker, NE | WR | 2t | - | - | - |
| Jason Witten, Dal | TE | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Antonio Gates, SD | TE | - | - | - | 1 |
| Tony Gonzalez, KC | TE | 2 | - | - | - |
| Walter Jones, Sea | T | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Matt Light, NE | T | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Jason Peters, Buf | T | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Flozell Adams, Dal | T | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Steve Hutchinson, Min | G | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Logan Mankins, NE | G | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Alan Faneca, Pit | G | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Shawn Andrews, Phi | G | - | - | - | 1 |
| Leonard Davis, Dal | G | 2 | - | - | - |
| Jeff Saturday, Ind | C | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Gurode, Andre, Dal | C | - | - | 1 | - |
| Matt Birk, Min | C | - | - | - | 1 |
| Dan Koppen, NE | C | 2 | - | - | - |
| Tom Brady, NE | Q | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Brett Favre, GB | Q | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Ladainian Tomlinson, SD | RB | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Brian Westbrook, Phi | RB | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Adrian Peterson, Min | RB | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Willie Parker, Pit | RB | - | - | -- | 1 |
| Fred Taylor, Jac | RB | 2 | - | - | - |
| Lorenzo Neal, SD | FB | 1 | x | - | x |
| Tony Richardson, Min | FB | 2 | x | - | x |

PFW /PFWA AWARDS 2007

MVP – Tom Brady
 Offensive Player – Tom Brady
 Defensive Player – Bob Sanders
 Comeback Player – Randy Moss
 Coach of Year – Bill Belichick
 Rookie of the Year – Adrian Peterson
 Defensive Rookie – Patrick Willis, SF
 Golden Toe – Bob Bironas
 Comeback – Randy Moss
 Most Improved – Derek Anderson
 Executive – Scott Paoli, NE
 Asst Coach – Jason Garrett, Dal

| <u>DEFENSE</u> | <u>AII-NFL</u> | | | | <u>Conf</u> |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| <u>DEFENSE</u> | <u>Pos</u> | <u>AP</u> | <u>FA</u> | <u>SN</u> | <u>FW</u> |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|----|---|---|---|
| Jared Allen, KC | DE | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Patrick Kerney, Sea | DE | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Mario Williams, Hou | DE | 2 | - | 1 | - |
| Aaron Kampman, GB | DE | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Kyle VandenBosch, NYJDE | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Kevin Williams, Min | DT | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Albert Haynesworth, Ten | DT | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Pat Williams, Min | DT | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Vince Wilfork, NE | DT | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| DeMarcus Ware, Dal | OLB | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Mike Vrabel, NE | OLB | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| James Harrison, Pit | OLB | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Julian Peterson, Sea | OLB | - | - | - | 1 |
| Shawne Merriman, SD | OLB | 2 | - | - | - |
| Patrick Willis, SF | iLB | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| DeMeco Ryans, Hou | ILB | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Lofa Tatupu, Sea | ILB | 1 | - | - | - |
| Nick Barnett, GB | ILB | 2 | - | - | - |
| Asante Samuel, NE | CB | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Antonio Cromartie, SD | CB | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Marcus Trufant, Sea | CB | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Al Harris, GB | CB | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Champ Baily, Den | CB | 2 | - | - | - |
| Ed Reed, Bal | S | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Bob Sanders, Ind | S | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Darren Sharper, Min | S | 2 | - | - | 1 |
| Jermaine Phillips, TB | S | - | - | - | 1 |
| Troy Polamalu, Pit | S | 2t | - | - | - |
| Sean Taylor, Was | S | 2t | - | - | - |

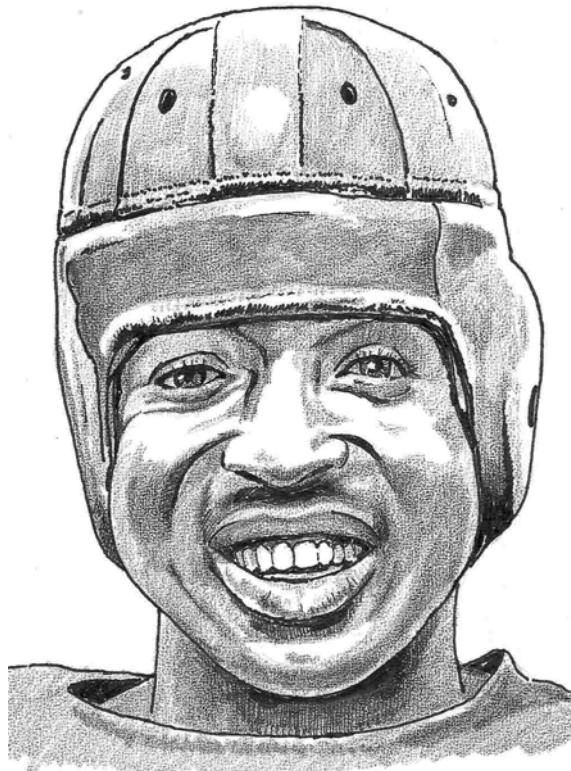
| <u>SPECIALISTS</u> | <u>Pos</u> | <u>AP</u> | <u>FA</u> | <u>SN</u> | <u>FW</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Andy Lee, SF | P | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Shane Lechler | P | 2 | - | 1 | 1 |
| Bob Bironas, Ten | PK | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Phil Dawson, Cle | PK | 2 | - | - | - |
| Nick Folk, Dal | PK | - | - | - | 1 |
| Devin Hester, ChiB | KR | 1 | 1p | 1p | 1pk |
| Josh Cribbs, Cle | KR | 2 | 1k | 1k | 1k |
| Roscoe Parrish, Buf | KR | -- | - | - | 1p |
| Kassim Osgood, SD | ST | x | 1 | x | 1 |
| Brendan Ayanbadejo, ChiB | ST | x | - | x | 1 |

AP 2007 Awards

MVP: Tom Brady
 Offensive Player: Tom Brady
 Defensive Player: Bob Sanders
 Comeback Player: Greg Ellis
 Coach of Year: Bill Belichick
 Offensive Rookie: Adrian Peterson
 Defensive Rookie: Patrick Willis

The Midnight Express Derailed

By John Maxymuk



Joe Lillard

How is it that an athlete who competed at the very highest level in professional football, baseball and basketball over a 20-year period in the first half of the 20th century is now completely forgotten? Ever conspicuous, he even played as an extra in such 1930s jungle films as "Tarzan's Escape" and "White Hunter" as well as having a speaking part in the 1947 Louis Jordan vehicle, "Reet, Petite and Gone." The racially insensitive newspapers of his day called him the "Midnight Express" when they weren't referring to him as "Shufflin' Joe" or the "ebony" this or the "dusky" that. Triple-threat tailback Joe Lillard continually overcame whatever obstacles were thrown in his way to be one of the most significant African American athletes of the 20th Century only to die in obscurity in the same year that Doug Williams became the first black passer to be taken in the first round of the NFL draft and to start at quarterback in a league game.

Lillard was born in Mason City, Iowa on June 15, 1905 and lettered in football, basketball, track and baseball at Mason City High. Before he graduated in 1930, Joe had already been playing center on Abe Saperstein's Savoy Big Five, the precursor to the Harlem Globetrotters for three years. Peripatetic football coach Doc Spears recruited Lillard as a single wing tailback for the University of Minnesota, then moved on to the University of Oregon. Joe followed Spears and enrolled at Oregon in the fall of 1930, leading the freshman team to a 4-1 record. In 1931, the Lillard-powered varsity Ducks got off to a 4-0 start, 2-0 in the Pacific Coast Conference, and the powerful Southern California Trojans were next on the schedule. However, the Trojans protested to the conference that Lillard had played with the Gilkerson Union Giants professional baseball team the previous summer. Although playing semi-pro baseball in the summer was a common practice by Coast Conference football players, including those at USC, Lillard's transgression was singled out. Spears considered Lillard 50% of his offense and would later call him the finest athlete he ever saw. Conference Commissioner Jonathan Butler ruled Joe ineligible just the day before the game, and the Ducks lost 53-0. Lillard's college career was over, and he was soon playing for the Richey Colored All Stars and the Los Angeles Black Hawks, the latter a barnstorming professional football team also known as the Chicago All Stars that featured such former NFL stars as Fritz Pollard and Duke Slater.

The following summer, Lillard was playing outfield, catcher and pitcher openly in the Negro Leagues and would continue to do so for the next several seasons. During the 1933 and 1934 seasons, Joe went 10-5 on the mound and hit over .300 for the champion Chicago American Giants. It was said that he had a fine fastball, but struggled with his control on the mound so he was switched to the outfield to take advantage of his powerful bat. In the winters, he returned to the Savoy Big Five basketball team. Football is where he gained his greatest recognition, though. On the strength of his barnstorming exploits, Lillard was

given a tryout by the sorry Chicago Cardinals in October 1932 and made the team. With former Cardinal tackle Slater now retired, Lillard was the only black player on the team or in the league that year.

Joe didn't play much in his first game against Portsmouth on October 2, but made a splash quite literally the following game against the Bears on October 9. On a muddy field, the two teams battled to a dull 0-0 tie that was enlivened only by Lillard's booming punts and elusive punt returns in which he outshone the famed Red Grange. Against the Boston Braves on the 16th, Lillard sparked a 70-yard first quarter drive with two big runs and a completed pass that led to the only touchdown of the day in Chicago's 9-0 win. He also accumulated 125 yards on punt returns. Bill Grimes in the *Boston Evening American* wrote that:

He is not only speedy and shifty, but he has a most deceptive change of pace, and how he can stick to his interference. He is especially proficient as a passer and his throws are made with a short wrist snap, which prevents any indication of the direction of the passes. Also, he can hit a line and still more important, he is a hard, sure blocker. On the defense, Lillard is a standout. In the first place, he has a real football head, which permits him to diagnose plays quickly. He protects his zone cleverly against aerial attacks, is a deadly tackler and can catch punts, when in the safety position, with the ease and grace of a big league outfielder.

In the following week's win over Brooklyn, Lillard played only two minutes while Dodgers' star Bennie Friedman did not play at all. Lillard may have been injured, as was reported after the November 6 loss to Green Bay, or he may have begun to fall out of favor with coach Jack Chevigny. In either case, Lillard began to see less playing time and then was suspended from the team before the Thanksgiving showdown against the cross town Bears. Chevigny indicated that Lillard had missed blocking assignments and been fined \$50 for missing a team meeting in New York, while Rocky Wolfe, the Cardinals PR flack, reported that Joe had an "I am the team attitude" not conducive to a team sport. There was probably some truth to those opinions. Indeed,

Chicago Defender columnist Al Monroe cautioned Lillard to be more accommodating to his teammates, "He must learn to play upon the vanity of the race that outnumbers him 21-1 in every game he plays or suffer the consequences." It is clear that race played a large role in Lillard's problems with Chevigny. Subsequently, the Cardinals lost their last five games of 1932 to finish 2-6-2 and Chevigny was fired.

New coach Paul Schissler met with Lillard in May 1933 and reinstated him on the team. 1933 had a rough beginning, however. Lillard got into fights in each of the first three games of the season. In the opener against Pittsburgh, Lillard was ejected for brawling with former Cardinal teammate Tony Holm in the second half of the Cardinals' loss. Joe got into another fight the next week in a one-point loss to Portsmouth in which Joe missed an extra point kick. In week three, the Cardinals beat Cincinnati 3-0 on Lillard's 17-yard drop kick field goal at the end of the first half, but Joe was ejected in the fourth quarter when Les Caywood sucker-punched him and the proud Lillard responded with his fists. As Ray Kemp once told Bob Barnett in the *Coffin Corner*, "Joe was an angry young man and the players on the other team knew what would set him off." After the season, Coach Schissler told the *Brooklyn Eagle*:

I felt sorry for Lillard. He was a fine fellow, not as rugged as most in the pro game, but very clever. But he was a marked man, and I don't mean that just the Southern boys took it out on him either; after a while whole teams, Northern and Southern alike, would give Joe the works, and I'd have to take him out. Somebody started it, it seemed, and everybody would join in. But that wasn't the worst. It got so my Cardinals were a marked team because we had Lillard with us, and how the rest of the league took it out on us! We had to let him go for our own sake, and for his, too!

Lillard's greatest moment of triumph in the NFL came in the October 12th 12-9 loss to the eventual league champion Bears. Lillard accounted for all his team's points with a 51-yard punt return and a 30-yard field goal that put the Cards up 9-0 at halftime. The Bears came back to win, but Lillard accumulated 110 yards in punt returns, and the photograph of his long strides pulling away from Red Grange during the punt return is the most

indelible image that remains of Joe. The dreadful Cardinals finished a league worst 1-9-1, but Lillard was a one-man team, leading them in passing, running and scoring. Although Hall of Famer Fritz Pollard is listed as a quarterback, Lillard as single wing tailback was arguably closer to what we would now recognize as the first black quarterback. Joe completed passes of 40, 44, and 48 yards in 1933, and the versatility of his skills established him as the only star on the team.

Lillard formed his own traveling basketball team that winter, the Chicago Hottentots, and then returned to baseball again in the summer, but when fall rolled around, there was no call from the Cardinals this time. Due to a "gentleman's agreement," the color line had been drawn in the NFL and would not be lifted till after the War. Lillard rolled right on, however, joining the Westwood Cubs of the Pacific Coast League in 1934. The following season, he was back with Fritz Pollard on the Brown Bombers, a new all-black semi-pro team that Pollard founded and was based in Harlem. Lillard was the biggest star on that team as well, and the Bombers generally did well playing against other minor league teams. They did not make out as well at the box office, though, and folded in 1938. Lillard then played for Clifton, Union City, Brooklyn and New York in the American Association over the next four years. In fact, Joe was honored by being voted captain of the Union City Rams in 1939, quite a tribute for a black man on an integrated team at that time. During this time, Lillard also took over as sports columnist for Fritz Pollard's weekly black tabloid, *The Independent*.

Joe served in the Army during the War and finished his baseball career with the Birmingham Black Barons and Indianapolis Clowns in 1944 and the Brooklyn Brown Dodgers in 1946. Over the next few years, he worked as a camp counselor in leftist summer camps in the Poconos and also worked in police recreation leagues. In the mid-fifties he began working at Vim's Department Store in Harlem and spent the last 22 years of his life there. In 1978, he suffered a stroke and died later that year.

Lillard remained active all his life and did not seem to let the frequent slights shown him by the Pacific Coast Conference, the NFL and organized baseball turn him bitter. In 1939, he presciently told the *New York Amsterdam News*, "Pro

Football is a money proposition. All that stuff about this fellow coming from down South and that one not liking colored people is all bunk. They'll block for you and play with a Zulu if it means money, and you make more money if your team is a winner."

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