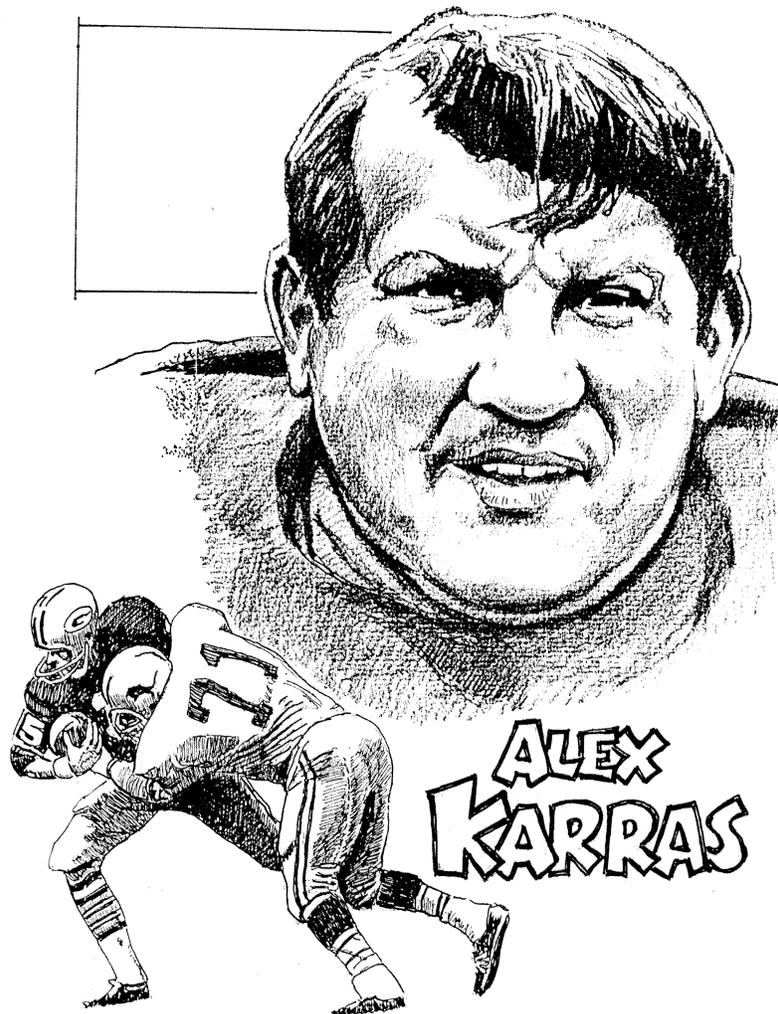


**Vol. 31, No. 5  
2009**

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# PFRA-ternizing

**From the candidates:**

**Jack Clary, President PFRA:**

It is my formal intention to run again as president of PFRA. In so stating, it also is my intention to push for a more active role by the elected officers that they also exercise more oversight and responsibility to expand the association's activities so the PFRA will become more pro-active in its role as custodian of the sport's history.

This in no way lessens the appreciation that must always be extended to Bob Carroll for his extraordinary work in publishing *Coffin Corner*. It simply is an attempt to broaden the scope that the PFRA, as an entity, can play in complementing and broadening the impact of this unique production.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Tod Maher:**

I am running for president of PFRA because I would like to improve membership services, reduce expenses and promote pro football history to the general public. We can mostly do this by utilizing our organization's website - [www.profootballresearchers.org](http://www.profootballresearchers.org).

I would like to explore as president the possibility that members could pay and renew their memberships online through services such as PayPal.

One cost-cutting measure I would like to explore is moving the Forum to the organization's main website. Why are we paying for two websites when only one is needed?

I would also like to see a section on the website where members could download the current issue of the Coffin Corner. The printing and mailing of the Coffin Corner is probably PFRA's largest expenditure. This would be a substantial saving to PFRA and its members.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Official PFRA Election Ballot can be found on the last page of this issue. All ballots are to be returned to Jeffrey Miller. Contact information is provided on the ballot. You have until November 1, 2009 to return your ballots. At that point, the

election is over and the officers will be named. Their term starts January 1, 2010.

**Executive Director:**

Bob Carroll has formally submitted his resignation as Executive Director of the PFRA, due to health reasons. Words cannot express the gratitude that the PFRA has for Bob and the incredible amount of work he has put into the organization since he co-founded it in 1979.

Ken Crippen has assumed the role of Acting Executive Director until a permanent Executive Director is named by the PFRA President.

**THE COFFIN CORNER**  
**Vol. 31, No. 5 (2009)**  
**184 OREGON LN**  
**N.Huntingdon Twp., PA 15642**  
**724 863-6345**  
**Bob2296@Comcast.net**  
**Website: [www.profootballresearchers.org](http://www.profootballresearchers.org)**

**PFRA MEMBERSHIP \$25 per year**  
**Send memberships to:**  
**H. Joseph Plack III**  
**836 Northwood Drive**  
**Deerfield, IL 60015-2233**

**Bob Carroll, Editor**  
**Melissa Thomas, Assistant**  
**Ken Crippen, Assistant Editor & Website Editor**

# PFRA Committees/PFRA Meeting

By Ken Crippen

Long-time PFRA member Norman Matthew Hegge, Jr. passed away last year. One of his last requests was that a donation be sent to the PFRA to help get information to "Norman-like" football people. As a result, we are going to form a committee to work on creating informational materials for classrooms. What we will need is a person willing to head up this task, as well as some teachers to serve as consultants for the committee. Please contact me if you are interested. As a non-profit organization that is dedicated to education, this is the perfect avenue for us and to support Norman's wishes.

## Membership Committee:

The membership committee will now handle the processing of all memberships and renewals. Please send all renewals or new memberships to Joe Plack at:

H. Joseph Plack III  
836 Northwood Drive  
Deerfield, IL 60015-2233

## Oral History Committee:

I was extremely pleased with the response from the PFRA membership to my request for assistance with this committee. Several people have stepped up to help perform interviews. Thank you!! However, we could always use more help. There are far more players than interviewers. Please contact me if you are interested in helping this committee. You can e-mail me at [Ken\\_Crippen@profootballresearchers.org](mailto:Ken_Crippen@profootballresearchers.org) or call me at (215) 421-6994.

## Hall of Very Good Committee:

The Hall of Vary Good committee has narrowed down its list of nominees and has provided biographies and a ballot for voting. Please get your ballot to Andy Piascik by November 1, 2009.

## AAFC Committee:

The AAFC committee continues to be one of the most active committees within the PFRA. Interviews are continually being conducted with surviving members of the Conference. Also, the PFRA website is continually being updated with reference materials.

## Television and Radio Commentators Committee:

Tim Bruglia has continually been sending information for publication on the PFRA website. Currently, the

1981-2008 seasons are online, with more to come in the near future.

## Website and Forum Committee:

This committee continues to add more content to the PFRA website. The Oral History, AAFC, and Television Commentators committees have regularly provided content and the site is being updated constantly. If you have not visited the PFRA website recently, check out all of the new content.

Website: <http://www.profootballresearchers.org>

Forum: <http://www.pfraforum.org>

We are also on Facebook!!

## PFRA MEETING

Date: Saturday, June 19, 2010

Location: Hampton Inn  
5256 Broadmoor Circle  
Canton, OH 44709  
(330) 491-4335

Time: 8AM-5PM

We have a group rate if we get enough people to reserve rooms by May 19, 2010. If there are any issues with your reservations, please contact Michele Spangler (Director of Sales) to get them resolved.

***Rooms are blocked off for us, so make sure you mention that you are there for the Professional Football Researchers Association Meeting.***

Please RSVP to Ken Crippen by April 1, 2010 to make sure we have the proper size room for the event.

Group Rates:

Queen (2 Queen Beds): \$99

King: \$109

Studio Suite: \$119

I have the queen rooms in the block, but I doubt there will be an issue if you decide to upgrade.

Ken Crippen

(215) 421-6994

[Ken\\_Crippen@profootballresearchers.org](mailto:Ken_Crippen@profootballresearchers.org)

# Hall of Very Good

By Andy Piascik, Bob Gill, Sean Lahman, and Ken Crippen

The PFRA's Hall of Very Good was started by Bob Carroll as a way to honor outstanding individuals from pro football history who are not members of the Hall of Fame and are not likely ever to be. The first class was elected in 2003 and elections have been held each year since. Here are biographies of the 20 finalists for 2009 as selected by the Hall of Very Good Committee from the 65 nominees submitted, along with a ballot.

Per the rules agreed upon by the Committee, all candidates who appear on 60% of ballots cast will be elected, up to a maximum of ten. If more than ten appear on 60% of the ballots, the top ten vote-getters will be elected. If fewer than seven appear on 60%, the top seven vote-getters will be elected.

You must vote for exactly ten candidates. Ballots with fewer or more than ten votes will not be counted. You may vote by mailing your ballot to Andy Piascik, 25 Cartright Street, Bridgeport CT 06604 or by e-mail to andypiascik@yahoo.com. Ballots must be received by November 1, 2009. You may also request a list of the 65 nominees from Andy.

## **Bruno Banducci (guard) Eagles, 49ers 1944-54**

Brundo Banducci helped the Eagles to the first winning records in their history as a two-way starter. He jumped to the AAFC and blocked the 49ers to 6 rushing titles in 9 years. The Eagles also won the rushing title in 1944, and four times a teammate led the league in rushing.

Banducci received numerous all-pro honors in seven different seasons and all-AAFC/NFL honors twice. The 49ers averaged 35 points and 406 yards per game in 1948-49. Although never a champion, his teams won two-thirds of their games and finished 2nd eight times.

## **Les Bingaman (guard) Lions 1948-54**

Recognized as one of the best interior linemen against the run, Les Bingaman was versatile enough to also play center on offense. He was strong and agile, despite his 300-pound size.

Drafted in the third round by the Detroit Lions in 1948, Bingaman was selected to two Pro Bowls and was instrumental in the league's best run defense in 1952. He made all-pro four times (once unanimously and consensus once) and second team once. He helped his team to three Championship Games, winning two.

## **Harold Carmichael (wide receiver) Eagles, Cowboys 1971-84**

Carmichael is probably best remembered for his height (at 6-foot-8, he was the tallest outstanding receiver in NFL history) and his 127-game streak with at least one reception, which was the record at the time of his retirement. More to the point, he caught 590 passes in his career for 8,985 yards and 79 touchdowns, figures that ranked fifth, seventh and seventh, respectively, when he hung up his cleats.

His best season was 1973, when he led the league with 67 receptions and 1,116 yards. A consensus all-pro that year and a unanimous all-NFC choice in 1978 and '79, he was also named to a few second teams in 1974, '77 and '80 and played in four Pro Bowls.

## **Blanton Collier, Browns assistant coach 1946-53, 1962, head coach 1963-70**

In the 9 years Blanton Collier was a Browns assistant, they played in 8 title games. He succeeded Paul Brown in 1963 after 4 playoff-less seasons and turned Jim Brown loose. Brown dominated with a record 1,863 yards and Cleveland finished 2nd at 10-4.

The Browns were NFL champs in 1964 and runners-up in 1965. Jim Brown's retirement didn't stop Collier and the Browns, as they posted four winning seasons and made it to 2 more NFL title games. Under Collier, they won 69% of their games and had no losing seasons.

## **Boyd Dowler (wide receiver) Packers, Redskins 1959-1969, 1971**

Boyd Dowler was a key contributor to the success of the Green Bay Packers in the 1960s. He helped the team to numerous NFL championships and was the leading receiver for the team in Super Bowl II. He is a member of the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame and was named to the NFL 1960s All-Decade team.

He received All-Conference honors twice, was in the top 10 in receptions three times and receiving yards once. He was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> all-time in catches and 12<sup>th</sup> in receiving yards when he retired.

## **Ox Emerson (guard/center/linebacker) Spartans, Lions, Dodgers 1931-38**

In the 1930s the Portsmouth/Detroit franchise had the NFL's best ground game and Ox Emerson was a main reason. Joining the team at the same time as Hall of Fame back Dutch Clark, he was named to at least one all-pro first team each year from 1932-37. He played a major role in the Lions' march to the 1935 title.

In 1934, he was a defensive standout as the Lions allowed just 4.5 PPG and recorded 7 straight shutouts. He spent his final season in Brooklyn, where he rejoined Patsy Clark, his coach during the glory years in Portsmouth and Detroit.

#### **Chuck Foreman (running back) Vikings, Patriots 1973-80**

Chuck Foreman broke into the NFL as the consensus rookie of the year in 1973, and was a major factor as the Vikings improved from 7-7 to 12-2 and reached the Super Bowl. A year later he was a unanimous all-NFC selection and was named NFC Player of the Year by The Sporting News. In 1975, probably his best year, he led the NFL in receptions, posted the first of three straight 1,000-yard rushing seasons, scored 22 touchdowns and was named to every major all-pro team. He followed that up with two more all-NFC seasons, plus a selection in 1976 by UPI as the NFC's offensive player of the year.

Chosen for the Pro Bowl after each of his first five seasons, Foreman faded quickly after that, which probably cost him a shot at the Hall of Fame. It also didn't help that he was stifled in three Super Bowl losses, but you might be surprised to learn that he did rush for 860 yards in playoff games. And thirty years after his heyday, he remains the best running back the Vikings ever had.

#### **Roman Gabriel (quarterback) Rams, Eagles 1962-77**

At 6'4" and 235 pounds, Gabriel was one of the first big quarterbacks of the modern passing era. His strong arm helped make the Rams the NFL's highest scoring team in 1967, and Gabriel led them to the playoffs twice in 3 years. He was named Most Valuable Player in 1969 and earned 3 straight Pro Bowl invitations.

Gabriel was traded to the Eagles in 1973 and made an immediate splash, leading the league with 23 touchdown passes and being named Comeback Player of the Year.

#### **Bob Gain (tackle/middle guard/end) Browns 1952, 54-64**

Bob Gain received all-pro mention at three positions. The Browns allowed the fewest points, passing yards and rushing yards in 1955 with him at MG. At tackle he often drew double teams and few teams ran inside successfully on Cleveland when he was in the middle.

Cleveland was among the NFL's leaders in defense in Gain's career. He played in 5 Pro Bowls and earned at least 2<sup>nd</sup> team all-pro honors 9 times. The Browns won 3 titles and finished first 5 times in his 12 seasons.

#### **Horace Gillom (punter/end) Browns 1947-56**

A mainstay on Cleveland's dynasty teams, Horace Gillom won two punting titles and finished twice four times. He also had a higher average than the league

leader in 1956 but didn't qualify. Only one punt of his ten-year career was returned for a touchdown.

Known for his hang time, Gillom dropped 3-5 yards deeper than most punters. His career average was 43.1 and he posted a net of 40.1 in 1953. He was also an effective two-way end in the first half of his career and caught 43 passes in 1948-49.

#### **Claude Humphrey (defensive end) Falcons, Eagles 1968-74, 76-81**

A unanimous all-NFC selection in 1971 and a consensus all-pro in 1972, '73 and '74, Claude Humphrey may have been the NFL's best defensive end of the early 1970s. His reputation among casual fans was probably hurt by the fact that he played on generally mediocre Atlanta teams, but he received first- or second-team all-pro mention in eight seasons altogether and was named to the Pro Bowl six times during his years with the Falcons.

After an injury-plagued 1978 season, Humphrey moved to the Eagles, who were just emerging as a contending team under coach Dick Vermeil. Though he was no longer the defensive force he'd been in his younger days, Humphrey played a useful role in Philadelphia and was rewarded with a trip to the Super Bowl after the 1980 season.

#### **Ken Kavanaugh (end) Bears 1940-41, 45-50**

Ken Kavanaugh's career 22.4 yards per catch is one of the best ever. He led the NFL in that category once and was never below 18.7. Thirty percent of his 162 catches were TD's, he led the NFL in TD grabs twice and was in the top 6 seven times. He also placed in the top 6 in yards four times.

Kavanaugh played on three champions and scored TD's in all three title games. Despite missing three prime seasons to World War 2, he received all-pro honors three times, most notably in 1947. He also was an assistant coach with the Giants for many years.

#### **Verne Lewellen (halfback) Packers, Yankees 1924-32**

Lewellen and his Green Bay teammate Lavern Dilweg might be the two best players from the early years who aren't in the Hall of Fame. A fine runner and receiver, Lewellen was the first to score 50 touchdowns in the NFL and was one of the main cogs in the Packers' three-time champs of 1929-31. He was a second-team all-pro selection in 1925 and a near-unanimous first-team all-pro from 1926-29.

What really made Lewellen stand out, though, was his punting. He was the best punter of the 1920s, when that was a much more important part of the game than it is now. His average (as compiled unofficially by David Neft) was usually around 41 yards per punt, which doesn't look very high by today's standards, but it was consistently about four yards above the league

norm – and since teams often punted ten or more times per game, that gave the Packers a significant edge game after game, year after year.

#### **Paul Lowe (halfback) Chargers, Chiefs 1960-69**

After being cut from the San Francisco 49ers in the 1959 preseason, Paul Lowe latched on to the upstart Los Angeles Chargers as a free agent in 1960. His first touch was a 105-yard touchdown, which was the beginning of an 855-yard (136 carries) season for Lowe. He holds a pro football record of six games in which he gained 100 or more yards in 14 or fewer carries. He also holds the AFL's all-time highest rushing average (4.89 yards/carry) and is second all-time in AFL history with 4,995 yards rushing.

As one of only 20 players who played all ten years of the AFL's existence, Lowe played in three AFL Championship Games, winning one. He was selected to the Pro Bowl once and was the UPI Player of the Year in 1965.

#### **Riley Matheson (guard/linebacker) Rams, Lions, 49ers 1939-48**

In a ten-year career starting in 1939, Riley Matheson earned at least one first-team all-pro selection six times, and was a consensus choice in 1944, '45 and '46. A two-way guard, he was the mainstay of the Cleveland Rams' line when they surprised everyone by winning the NFL championship in 1945. Matheson played most of his career with the Rams, before and after their move to Los Angeles.

In 1943, when the Cleveland franchise sat idle for a season, he moved to Detroit, earning second-team all-pro honors with the Lions; and in 1948, his finale in U.S. football, he was still good enough to be a second-team all-AAFC choice with the 49ers. After that one year in the AAFC, Matheson went north to Canada and padded his resume with two more all-star selections, being named to the all-WIFU team in 1949 and '50 as a member of the Calgary Stampeders.

#### **Ken Riley (cornerback) Bengals 1969-83**

Although Riley never led the league in interceptions, he finished second three times and retired with 65 – still the fifth highest total in history. Riley recorded three or more interceptions in twelve of his fifteen seasons and returned five for touchdowns.

Riley's quiet demeanor kept him from gaining more notoriety, and he was repeatedly passed over for Pro Bowl invitations in favor of players with fewer interceptions. He earned first-team All Pro honors in his final season, when he intercepted eight passes and returned two for touchdowns.

#### **Tom Sestak (defensive end) Bills 1962-68**

Tom Sestak was a 17th-round pick in the 1962 AFL Draft who went on to play seven seasons for Buffalo.

Over that span, he recorded 51 sacks and returned two interceptions for touchdowns. He played in three AFL Championship Games, with his team winning two.

Sestak was named to the All-AFL team four times and was selected to the Bills Silver Anniversary Team in 1984. He was named to the all-time AFL team and to the Buffalo Bills Wall of Fame in 1987.

#### **Jerry Smith (tight end) Redskins 1965-77**

Jerry Smith's career with the Washington Redskins has him fourth all-time in receptions (421) and sixth all-time in receiving yards (5,496) in team history. He made all-pro twice (consensus once), all-conference twice and all-AFL/NFL once. At the time of his retirement, he was first among tight ends in career touchdowns (60) and currently ranks third.

A key player in the Redskins 1972 Super Bowl team, he was named as one of the 70 greatest Redskins by a blue-ribbon panel formed to celebrate Washington's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

#### **Walt Sweeney (guard) Chargers, Redskins 1963-75**

Sweeney came to San Diego in 1963 and filled a key role on a team that reached the AFL championship game in each of his first three seasons, winning it all in 1963. The Chargers never reached the postseason again during his time with them, but that didn't keep Sweeney from piling up individual accolades. After being named to a couple of all-league second teams in 1965, he was named to at least one all-AFL or all-AFC team five years in a row, from 1967-71, and was a unanimous or near-unanimous all-AFL selection in 1967 and '68.

One of Sweeney's major attributes was his durability. In a 13-year career he missed exactly one game, in his final season with the Redskins, who he had joined as yet another aging veteran brought in by George Allen as part of his "Future Is Now" approach.

#### **Jerrel Wilson (punter) Chiefs, Patriots 1963-78**

Nicknamed Thunderfoot, Jerrel Wilson won two AFL and two NFL punting titles. He finished in the top 3 in his league eleven times in a 16-year career and his 43.0 career average is one of the best ever. He was named the punter on the all-time AFL team.

The AFL All-Star Game and most all-league teams didn't include punting specialists for the majority of Wilson's career, but he was prominent on those that did. After the 1970 merger, he was named to three Pro Bowls. He also averaged 46.5 per punt in two Super Bowls.

**OFFICIAL PFRA HALL OF VERY GOOD BALLOT**

You must vote for 10 candidates. Any ballot with fewer or more than 10 will be discarded.

- |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ Bruno Banducci    | _____ Claude Humphrey |
| _____ Les Bingaman      | _____ Ken Kavanaugh   |
| _____ Harold Carmichael | _____ Verne Lewellen  |
| _____ Blanton Collier   | _____ Paul Lowe       |
| _____ Boyd Dowler       | _____ Riley Matheson  |
| _____ Ox Emerson        | _____ Ken Riley       |
| _____ Chuck Foreman     | _____ Tom Sestak      |
| _____ Roman Gabriel     | _____ Jerry Smith     |
| _____ Bob Gain          | _____ Walt Sweeney    |
| _____ Horace Gillom     | _____ Jerrel Wilson   |

Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return ballots to: E-Mail ballots to [andypiascik@yahoo.com](mailto:andypiascik@yahoo.com)  
 or  
 Mail your ballot to: Andy Piascik, 25 Cartright Street, Bridgeport CT 06604

**GAME CHANGERS:  
 50 Greatest Plays in Buffalo Bills Football History**

By Marv Levy and Jeff Miller

Jeffrey Miller has teamed up with Buffalo Bills Hall of Fame coach Marv Levy for his latest book, "Game Changers: The Greatest Plays in Buffalo Bills Football History" (Triumph). From "The Hit Heard 'round the World" and "Big Ben" through "Wide Right" and "The Music City Miracle," Miller and Levy relive the most unforgettable on-the-field moments in Bills history. The authors provide fascinating context for each of the plays, the back story, all the relevant circumstances, and the thoughts of many of those directly involved. Lushly illustrated with color and b&w photos that help you follow the play as it unfolds, "Game Changers" reanimates many of the most thrilling and heart-stopping moments in football.

*This title is expected to be released September 2009.*

**Gridiron Gauntlet:  
 The Story of the Men Who Integrated Pro Football, In Their Own Words** (Taylor Trade Pub)  
 by Andy Piascik

Before Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color line, four blacks signed to play pro football and the final integration of major league pro sports in the modern era began. In **Gridiron Gauntlet**, George Taliaferro, Joe Perry, Bob Mann and nine other players who began their careers in the years after World War II talk about their lives as trailblazers.

*"Vivid and fresh, this is a terrific addition to the secret history of sports." Robert Lipsyte, NY Times*

*"... a captivating reprise of lived history [and] an engaging, highly informative sojourn." Harry Edwards, Professor Emeritus, UC-Berkeley*

*"The stories they tell are humorous, disturbing, angry, sad, and uplifting. An involving and essential read for any football fan." Library Journal*

You may order **Gridiron Gauntlet**: directly from the author by sending a check or money order for \$32 (includes postage) payable to Andy Piascik at 25 Cartright Street, Bridgeport CT 06604

**NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE**  
**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT ON INVESTIGATION**

**April 17, 1963**

**General Conclusions**

There is no evidence that any NFL player has given less than his best in playing any game.

There is no evidence that any player has ever bet against his own team.

There is no evidence that any NFL player has sold information to gamblers.

There is clear evidence that some NFL players knowingly carried on undesirable associations which in some instances led to their betting on their own team to win and/or other National Football League games.

There is clear evidence that contrary to League policy many players have been too free in giving information concerning their team to friends and acquaintances.

There is evidence that not all member clubs of the League have been as diligent as League policy requires in taking precautions against undesirable associations by players and in following through on League directives concerning necessary safeguards.

The above conclusions are based on an extensive investigation conducted by the League in recent months, including 52 interviews relating to individuals connected with eight different clubs.

**Guilt By Association**

It is deeply regretted that many players in the League and their families suffered extensive mental anguish and harm to their reputations through inferences drawn from highly publicized accounts of rumors and/or partially developed facts. Examples include:

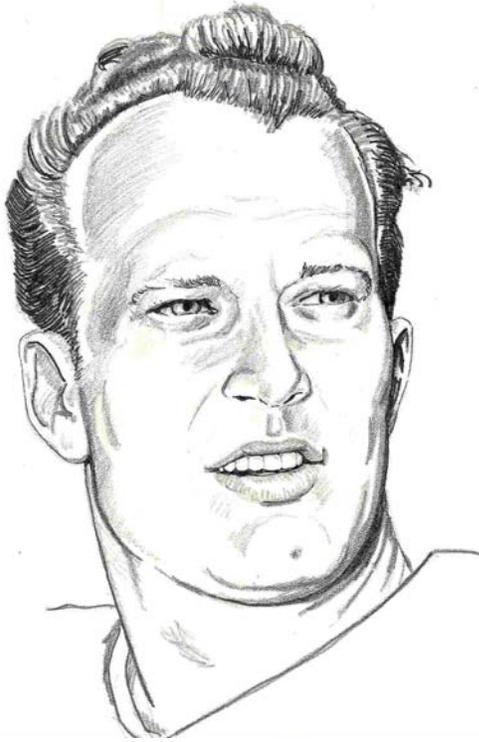
Bob St. Clair, San Francisco 49ers tackle, was interviewed by staff representatives of a Congressional committee concerning a business and publicity and inferences were published that he closely associated with gamblers and participated with gamblers in controlling scores of games. The league investigation disclosed that he had borrowed \$6,000 from the 49er management as an advance on his salary in 1956--seven years ago--and with other reputable citizens invested this and additional money of his own in an oil venture. St. Clair lost approximately \$7,000 on the investment. He and others later

learned that some of the individuals promoting the investment had undesirable backgrounds. St. Clair's sole error was in not more carefully exploring the business opportunity offered him. There is absolutely no evidence of wrongdoing on the part of St. Clair.

Rick Casares, Chicago Bears' fullback, has been rumored as having a close association with gambling elements, cooperating with them in controlling scores of games, and obtaining sizeable personal loans from them. The League investigation developed no evidence to support such charges. Publicity concerning the investigation of these rumors was widely disseminated and invalid conclusions reached as to his guilt.

Similar inferences were drawn concerning several Detroit Lion players on the basis of a police surveillance report about certain individuals termed "known hoodlums" by police. News stories of the report linked four Detroit players -- John Gordy, Alex Karras, Darris McCord and Wayne Walker -- with the individuals under surveillance. League investigation established that the identification of Walker and McCord as having traveled in company with these individuals last August was erroneous. Neither did so. Karras and Gordy did return from a Lion pre-season game in Cleveland on a bus chartered by those under police surveillance. Although Karras and Gordy exercised extremely poor judgment in their choice of traveling companions, the entire incident was magnified out of all proportion. In fact, only Karras had more than a casual relationship with the individuals mentioned in the police report.

Allegations of betting on League games during a period eight to ten years ago were made against Carroll Rosenbloom, president of the Baltimore Colts, by certain individuals having an acquaintance with him at that time. He has denied the charges in a sworn affidavit given the Commissioner and each of the individuals making such charges has since repudiated or withdrawn the allegations in affidavits or signed statements. Investigation of the matter was delayed by legal proceedings involving Mr. Rosenbloom and those originally making the accusations, and it is not yet possible to make a final determination. Completion of this investigation can be expected in the near future.



**Paul Hornung**

It has been found that players have for many years technically violated the Constitution and By- Laws of the League, which include provisions of their player contracts, by playing the \$1.00 football cards and by making token bets of little value with friends. These players have been reprimanded. While no further action is being taken in respect to these violations, such actions are not in the best interests of the League and future offenses of this nature will result in disciplinary action.

Constant warnings concerning associations have been given players. Almost all players have heeded these warnings.

It is obviously impossible for a player to be aware of the background and habits of all persons to whom he is introduced. However, continuation of such associations after learning of the person's undesirable background or habits is cause for deep concern. Such conduct gives the appearance of evil, whether or not it actually exists, and thereby affects the player's reputation, the reputation of his fellow players, and the integrity of his sport.

#### Disciplinary Action

Classic examples of what can develop by associating with individuals having strong personal betting habits were found and have resulted in disciplinary action by the Commissioner.

In 1956, Paul Hornung, Green Bay packers' halfback, participated in the East-West game at San Francisco prior to entering the National Football League. At that time, Hornung met and became friendly with a West Coast businessman. He dined with the man when on the West Coast and also had frequent telephone communication with him during 1951 and 1958, Hornung's first two seasons in the NFL.

The businessman bet on college and professional games and developed the habit of querying Hornung by telephone regarding his opinion of the outcome of various games. Investigation indicates that Hornung's friend is a personal bettor, not a bookmaker.

In late summer 1959, Hornung began placing bets on NFL and college games through his friend. They normally talked by telephone *twice* a week with Hornung counseling on various games, including those involving Green Bay and usually making bets of \$100 to \$200. In several instances his bets reached the sum of \$500.

The pattern continued through the seasons of 1960 and 1961. During the preseason of 1962, Hornung ceased placing bets. Except for one season when he won \$1,500, Hornung broke approximately even on his betting.

There is no evidence that Hornung ever bet against his team, sold information for betting purposes or performed less than his best in any game.

However, his pattern of betting and transmission of specific information concerning NFL games for betting purposes constitute serious breaches of his player contract and of the Constitution and By- Laws of the League, the provisions of which have been called repeatedly to the attention of all NFL players.

For these actions, Paul Hornung is suspended indefinitely from the National Football League •

Alex Karras, Detroit Lions' tackle, met the individuals described by Detroit Police as "known hoodlums" through a business associate. He continued associating with these individuals after learning of their backgrounds and habits. While no evidence of criminal wrongdoing was developed by this relationship, it contributed to the "guilt by association" image generated for himself and his teammates through the press accounts that linked the Lion players with these individuals.

Karras has made at least six significant bets on

National Football League games since 1958. These bets were placed for him by his business associate and also by a Florida resident to whom he was introduced by the same business associate. The investigation indicates that neither of these individuals is a bookmaker.

Karras' bets were for \$50 until 1962 when he placed a bet of \$100 on his own team when it played at Green Bay. He also bet \$100 on the Packers in the championship game played at New York.

There is no evidence that Karras ever bet against his own team, sold information for betting purposes, or performed less than his best in any football game.

However, his pattern of betting and off-field associations constitute serious breaches of his player contract and of the Constitution and By-Laws of the League, the provisions of which have been called repeatedly to the attention of all NFL players.

For these actions, Alex Karras is suspended indefinitely from the National Football League.

Karras invited some of his Detroit teammates to view the 1962 championship game on television at the home of his aforementioned Florida friend while the Detroit squad was in Miami last December. It was at this time that Karras placed the \$100 bet on the Packers. At the same time, certain of his teammates placed bets of \$50 each on Green Bay through Karras' friend. Those betting were John Gordy, Gary Lowe, Joe Schmidt, Wayne Walker and Sam Williams.

Investigation indicates this was basically a group action, an action of extremely rash judgment but one abnormal for each. The investigation disclosed no other instances of such betting on NFL games by anyone of the five. None ever bet against his own team, sold information for betting purposes or ever performed less than his best in a game.

This single violation of the Constitution and By-Laws should be placed in its proper perspective as an act that cannot be condoned because of the strict rules of the NFL, but one that should in no way adversely affect the reputation of those involved.

For betting in this manner on one NFL game, Gordy, Lowe, Schmidt, Walker and Williams are fined \$2,000 each, the maximum sum allowable under the Constitution.

During the course of the investigation involving

Detroit, several matters were developed relating to the club itself. Head Coach George Wilson was apprised by the Detroit Police Department last August of certain associations by members of the Detroit team. Realizing that the information in this report was erroneous in part, he consequently minimized the over-all importance of the information given him. Wilson did not report the contacts to the proper club authority for review and submission to the League office.

Information contained in the police report was not made known to the League office until early last January. Proper handling of the matter last summer would have resulted in prompt investigation and ruled out the unfortunate impressions that arose from publication of this information last January.

Contrary to the Constitution and a specific League bulletin of last September, unauthorized individuals were permitted to have sideline passes and sit on the Lions' bench during games.

For these two specific violations, the Commissioner fines the Detroit Lions Football Club the maximum allowable under the Constitution, \$2,000 on each count for a total of \$4,000.

#### Summary

These investigations have disclosed no evidence of criminal wrongdoing designed to influence the outcome of games. There is nothing in the record of these investigations to reflect on the intense pride in winning and the standards of personal excellence which characterize National Football league play. The League however realizes, however, public confidence in professional football cannot be preserved unless players and management alike adhere to the highest standards of conduct. Willful violations of player contracts and of the provisions of the League's Constitution and By-Laws relating to betting and associations cannot now or in the future be condoned. The League deeply regrets the necessity for the disciplinary actions referred to above, but believes them to be in the best interests of the game, the players, the teams and the fans.

# The Great Quarterback Migration

By John Maxymuk

During the Great Migration of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, millions of African Americans moved north in search of greater employment opportunities in the United States. In order to better their chance to succeed, black quarterbacks had to stage their own migration in the 1970s, moving further still to the Great White North where they were more likely to get a chance to prove themselves as field generals. Despite the foothold established in the NFL at the end of the 1960s by James Harris and, to a lesser extent, Marlin Briscoe, black quarterbacks could not get a fair shake throughout the 1970s and looked to Canada for an equal chance.

In 1970, just a year after Harris and four other black quarterbacks were drafted by the NFL, only UCLA's Bill Bolden and Ohio's Cleve Bryant were drafted, as a running back and defensive back respectively. Neither Bolden nor Bryant ever played in the NFL, and neither did Karl Douglass whom the Colts drafted in the third round in 1971. Douglass, from Texas A&I, was the seventh quarterback taken in the same year that Jim Plunkett, Archie Manning and Dan Pastorini went in the first round. Douglass was the quarterback selected between future stars Ken Anderson by the Bengals and Joe Theismann by the Dolphins, but found himself stuck behind Johnny Unitas and Earl Morrall. In Baltimore, he was relegated to the practice squad for two seasons.

1972 was a watershed year for the black quarterback, although it did not seem that way at the time. The top quarterbacks in the draft were the overrated and forgettable Jerry Tagge, John Reaves and Pat Sullivan. In addition to them, such luminaries as future coach Jim Fassel and Nebraska's backup quarterback Van Brownson were chosen before the singularly talented black quarterback Joe Gilliam of Tennessee State was taken by the Steelers in the 11<sup>th</sup> round. Gilliam still did better than Chuck Ealey of Toledo and Jimmy Jones of USC who were completely ignored while even Gary Wichard of C.W. Post was drafted by an NFL team. The snub of Ealey in particular was galling. He had gone 18-0 as a high school quarterback and then went 35-0 as a three-year starter at Toledo with three straight victories in the Tangerine Bowl and three straight top 20 rankings. That's quite an achievement for a Middle Atlantic Conference school. 35 consecutive victories is still the NCAA record for a quarterback. Miami's Ken Dorsey got to 34 before losing in this decade and was also lightly regarded by the NFL. However, at least Dorsey was drafted and got a chance to play. The 6'1" 190-pound Ealey was slighted despite completing 55% of his passes for over 5,000 yards and 45

touchdowns with just 29 interceptions. He was not seen by the NFL as deserving as much consideration at quarterback as draft picks Eric Guthrie of Boise State, Rusty Lauchaussee of Tulane, Mike Franks of Eastern New Mexico or Gordon Longmire of Utah.

Instead, Ealey signed with the Hamilton Tiger Cats of the Canadian Football League. The CFL had employed black quarterbacks Bernie Custis, John Henry Jackson, Pete Hall, Sandy Stephens, Dave Lewis and Carroll Williams during the 1950s and 1960s, but none had achieved long term success. Ealey changed that pattern. As a rookie, he took over the starting position, threw for 22 touchdowns and over 2,500 yards and led Hamilton to the championship. It would be the best season of his pro career, but Ealey still completed 55% of his passes and finished with 82 touchdowns and over 13,000 yards in Canada.

Unfortunately for Ealey at this time, his success in Canada could be easily discounted. The only three quarterbacks who first starred in the CFL before attempting to conquer the NFL were Sam Etcheverry in 1961, Joe Kapp in 1967 and Pete Liske in 1969. Each took their team to the Grey Cup in Canada, but none was that impressive as a passer in the NFL, maintaining the CFL's reputation as a football backwater. Hence Ealey's success in Canada would never gain him a shot in the NFL.

Both Karl Douglass and Jimmy Jones would join Ealey in Canada in 1973. Douglass would experience limited success and turn up years later in the USFL. Jones went on to have a fairly good career in Canada, completing 55% of his passes for over 12,000 yards. In the NFL draft that year, two black quarterbacks were selected in the later rounds, Grambling's Matthew Reed in the 10<sup>th</sup> round by Buffalo and Georgia Tech's Eddie McAshan in the 17<sup>th</sup> round by New England. Neither caught on in the NFL, but both surfaced a year later with the fledgling World Football League that hoped to challenge the NFL. They were joined in the WFL in 1974 by rookie black quarterbacks Dave Mays, Reggie Oliver and D.C. Nobles, none of whom were drafted by the NFL. Mays would go from the bankrupt WFL to a backup position with Cleveland in the NFL in 1976. Reed would move on to struggle in Canada. The only black quarterback drafted in 1974 was Cliff Brown, Notre Dame's backup, and he was taken as a running back in the 17<sup>th</sup> round by the Eagles. Brown did not make the team.

The second great black quarterback to seek football asylum in Canada was Condredge Holloway in 1975. Three black quarterbacks were drafted by the NFL that year, but none as quarterbacks. Fred Solomon was drafted in the second round by the Dolphins as a receiver, as was Dennis Franklin in the sixth round by the Lions. Condredge Holloway was taken as a defensive back in the 11<sup>th</sup> round by New England, but when the Ottawa Rough Riders offered him a chance to play

quarterback, he signed in Canada. As the first black quarterback at Tennessee, Holloway threw for over 3,000 yards and ran for 966 in leading the Volunteers to three bowl games. Two other black quarterbacks turned pro that year: John Jones signed as a free agent quarterback with the Jets, and Ricky Wesson went on to play defensive back for the Chiefs.

Holloway at first split the quarterbacking job with Tom Clements in Ottawa before moving on to Toronto where he won the league MVP in 1982 and led the Argonauts to a Grey Cup Championship in 1983. Over his 13-year CFL career, Holloway completed 56.8% of his passes, threw for 25,193 yards, 155 touchdowns and only 94 interceptions. Although he was once the fourth overall pick in the major league baseball draft as a shortstop, Condredge ended up in the CFL Hall of Fame for his outstanding football career. But all the NFL saw in 1975 was a possible defensive back.

Three black quarterbacks were drafted in 1976, but two were immediately slotted to different positions by the Cowboys. Ohio State's Cornelius Greene was chosen in the 11<sup>th</sup> round as a receiver, and Colorado's Dave Williams was selected as runner in the seventh round. By contrast, the Bucs picked Parnell Dickinson from little Mississippi Valley State as a quarterback in the seventh round. Arizona's Bruce Hill, a three-year starter, was not drafted at all although Steve Hamilton of Emporia State and Lynn Hieber of Indiana (PA) were. Hill did receive a tryout in Canada. The top picks in that weak year for passers were Richard Todd, Mike Kruczek and Jeb Blount. Similarly, in 1977 Vince Evans was drafted in the sixth round by the Bears, but Minnesota's Tony Dungy was signed as a free agent defensive back by Pittsburgh while the undistinguished Steve Pisarkiewicz and Glenn Carano were deemed of more value as top draft picks.

The third great black quarterback to go to Canada would smash the ongoing exclusion of qualified blacks by the NFL but it would take a nearly superhuman effort beginning in 1978. Warren Moon was oddly not drafted at all in the same year in which Doug Williams of Grambling was the only quarterback drafted in the first round. The only other black quarterback drafted was Kentucky's Derrick Ramsey, whom the Raiders selected as a tight end in the sixth round. Moon, who led Washington to a Rose Bowl victory in 1978, made it clear to NFL scouts that he was a quarterback or nothing. When he realized he was not seen by the NFL as a quarterback, he signed with the Edmonton Eskimos before the NFL draft. As a rookie, Moon edged past veteran signal caller Tom Wilkinson and led the Eskimos to the first of five straight Grey Cup Championships. In his sixth and final year in the CFL, Moon threw for 5,638 yards and 31 touchdowns and was named the league MVP. In his six seasons in Edmonton, he threw for 144 touchdowns, just 78 interceptions and over 21,000 yards. Combined with his

future NFL totals, Warren accumulated over 70,000 passing yards in a 23-year career.

While Moon was tearing up the CFL record book and winning annual Grey Cups, two events in the NFL helped make Warren's northern success more noteworthy. In 1978 and 1979, Joe Theismann at last began to get his chance to start in Washington and the former CFL star showed he could play in any league. Then in 1981, Rams quarterback Vince Ferragamo, in a contract dispute after a season in which he threw for 30 touchdowns and 3,119 yards, signed with Montreal of the CFL. The problem was that he then stunk up the province, throwing just seven touchdowns to 25 interceptions. These contrasting images put Moon's accomplishments in an even more positive light. However, during Moon's exile the NFL continued to ignore black quarterbacks in the draft. In 1979, Thomas Lott was chosen as a running back, while Mike Dunn and Danny Davis were not drafted. In 1980, Harold Bailey was chosen as a wide out and Roy DeWalt as a running back, while Jimmy Streater and Delrick Davis were ignored. Streater and DeWalt Came to Canada. In 1981, J.C. Watts was chosen as a defensive back and Nickie Hall was drafted in the 10<sup>th</sup> round; both came to Canada. In 1982, Van Heflin was chosen as a tight end. In 1983, Reggie Collier was picked in the sixth round, but Danny Barrett, Turner Gill, Homer Jordan and Bernard Quarles were all ignored. All four turned to Canada.

Finally, in 1984, Warren Moon signed with the Houston Oilers and began his NFL career six years overdue, a Hall of Fame career that would not have happened had it not been for the opportunity provided by the CFL. With the success achieved in the following years by Moon, Randall Cunningham and a restored Doug Williams, NFL coaches and officials were finally convinced that black quarterbacks could lead their teams to victory just as well as white quarterbacks. While it is clear that many of the rebuffed black quarterbacks would not have succeeded, the point is that they were not given the opportunity to succeed or fail. Only Canada would offer that chance during this period. It is also true that white "option" quarterbacks like Rex Kern and Jack Mildren were also routinely shifted to another position, but with them it was crystal clear that there was no ulterior motive guiding the position changes. The league's own racist practices muddied the waters even on legitimate changes.

Meanwhile in Canada, Marcus Allen's kid brother Damon joined the Edmonton Oilers in 1985 and began a CFL career that would span more than 20 seasons. Ironically, in 2006, Allen would overtake Warren Moon's professional football record of 70,553 passing yards, although Allen attained all of those yards in Canada. The wide-open Canadian game of 12 players on a side, three downs and a larger field remains a great outlet for talented black quarterbacks even today when most would agree that NFL quarterbacks are judged by their abilities on the field and not by their complexion. The CFL's openness toward black quarterbacks in the 1970s allowed the NFL to finally throw off its blinders and simply recognize signal callers for their skills.

## Joe DeLamielleure

By Roger Gordon

Originally published in *The Orange and Brown Report*

Joe DeLamielleure is all about football. Always has been, always will be.

“Doug Dieken told me I was a football addict,” recalls DeLamielleure, a teammate of Dieken’s on the Cleveland Browns from 1980-84. “I can’t tell you how much I loved football.”

An incident during the 1982 NFL Players’ Strike epitomizes just how much DeLamielleure was in love with the game. Dieken was the Browns’ player representative at the time. He was supposed to fly to New York City for an important meeting regarding the strike. For some reason, Dieken was unable to make the trip, so DeLamielleure went instead.

“I get there and I’m like, ‘Where are the meetings?’” DeLamielleure remembers. “They said, ‘We’re gonna go party.’ I said, ‘What do you mean you’re gonna party?’ They said, ‘We’ll talk about it on Monday.’ I turned around and came home. I didn’t even care about the issues, I just wanted to play. I’d always talk to myself: ‘We only have so many games in us. Why are we wasting a friggin’ Sunday arguing over something that the owners can dictate anyhow?’”

“When I was a boy, if somebody would ask me if I’d like to play in the NFL one day, I’d say, ‘I’d give my eye teeth, and I wouldn’t need any money.’ Why would I take money when I want to play so bad, I’d give anything to play? And I just felt that way my whole career.”

It was a stellar career as a right guard that lasted from 1973-85 with the Browns and Buffalo Bills, and resulted in not only six Pro Bowls but enshrinement to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2003. DeLamielleure and former Miami Dolphin Larry Little are the only right guards enshrined in the hall, and “Joe D” is the lone Detroit native inducted to the hall as a player.

Before exhibiting his awesome skills in the NFL, DeLamielleure had to master his craft at the college level. It came down to Miami (Fla.), Michigan, Notre Dame and Michigan State.

“My dad said Miami was too far,” he says. “He said, ‘I don’t want you going to Michigan because I can’t

pronounce that guy’s name [Schembechler]. Then he said, ‘I don’t want you going to Notre Dame because [Ara Parseghian] is a phony. He’s not even catholic, and he’s coaching at Notre Dame. You go to Michigan State because Duff’s [coach Duffy Daugherty] catholic.’”

“And that’s why I went to Michigan State.”

DeLamielleure made the All-Big Ten First Team in each of his three years as a Spartan from 1970-72. He was named to the All-American First Team his senior year, a season in which he filled in at tackle one week against Purdue and went up against Dave Butz. DeLamielleure won National Lineman of the Week honors for his performance against the future Washington Redskins star.

A first-round draft pick of the Bills in 1973, DeLamielleure was a tad awestruck upon arriving at training camp that summer. He soon got over it, though, and felt like he belonged – and could play at that level.

“I knew that I had really a great [line] coach in [Jim] Ringo,” he says. “He was probably one of the greatest line coaches in the history of the league. I just knew if I’d listen to him and didn’t get injured, I’d do well. I remember coming home to my wife Gerri and she goes, ‘What do you think? How do you think it’s going to be?’ I said, ‘I think I’m going to the Pro Bowl in my third year.’”

DeLamielleure was right on. He was voted to his first Pro Bowl in his third year, 1975, indeed – and the next five after that. He became a key cog of the legendary “Electric Company” offensive line that opened huge holes for one O.J. Simpson. Right off the bat, in “Joe D’s” rookie year, the “Electric Company” paved the way for a record-breaking performance from Simpson. In the Bills’ season-ending victory against the New York Jets in Shea Stadium, Simpson not only broke the great Jim Brown’s record for rushing yards in one season but attained what was thought to be the impossible – rushing for 2,000 yards in one season. Simpson wound up with 2,003.

DeLamielleure admits it was almost unfair the advantage the “Electric Company” had over opposing defenses.

“Jim Braxton, our fullback, was probably the best blocking fullback that I’ve ever seen to this day,” he says. “And then Paul Seymour, who was an All-American tackle at Michigan ... they moved him to tight end. So we really were running with three offensive tackles and a fullback that blocked better than any guard almost. We basically ran the old Green Bay sweep. It was built to run. [Quarterback] Joe [Ferguson] threw only 164 passes that year. So we were going to run the ball no matter what.”

The Bills amassed an astounding 3,088 rushing yards in ’73, the second most in the history of the league, and the record for a 14-game season. They barely missed a playoff berth. The next year, the rushing yards were down, but the passing yards were up, and DeLamielleure and the Bills earned the AFC’s wild card playoff berth. A first-round defeat to the eventual Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers left the team hungry to return to the postseason in 1975. It wasn’t to be, however. Simpson gained nearly 1,900 rushing yards – and the team itself almost 3,000 – as the Bills exploded for an NFL-high 420 points, but an 8-6 record left them in third place in the AFC East.

DeLamielleure and the rest of the “Electric Company” had quite an afternoon on Thanksgiving Day 1976 in “Joe D’s” hometown against the Lions. They paved the way for Simpson to total 273 yards on the ground, breaking his own record by 23 yards, set three years earlier. Not only was it DeLamielleure’s finest performance ever, according to what Ringo told “Joe D” after the game, it was also, the coach said, “the best game I’ve ever seen a right guard play.”

Despite that record-breaking Thanksgiving in the Silverdome, the Bills began to slide. Injuries were a big factor, according to DeLamielleure. And the firing of head coach (and ex-Brown) Lou Saban in 1976 and hiring of Chuck Knox two years later (with a short stint by Ringo in between) was the beginning of the end of DeLamielleure’s days in Buffalo. DeLamielleure simply did not take to the style of the former Los Angeles Rams head coach. “Joe D’s” personality conflict with Knox resulted in his holdout from the Bills’ 1980 training camp and subsequent trade to the Browns six days before the season opener in New England. DeLamielleure was somewhat familiar – and impressed, too – with the Browns upon his arrival there.

“I thought they had a pretty good [offensive] line,” he recalls, “and I knew that [Tom] DeLeone was center because I knew him from [when DeLeone played for] Ohio State. And I always thought [Brian] Sipe was really good, and they had great running backs – Pruitt and Pruitt, and they had great receivers – Logan, Ozzie Newsome, Rucker. They had a great offense.”

DeLamielleure replaced Robert E. Jackson as the starting right guard three games into the 1980 season. It was a season unlike any the new Brown had ever experienced.

“We won so many games at the end,” he says. “After about the fourth or fifth game, I told Brian, ‘Brian, you’re going to be the MVP of the league [which he was].’”

DeLamielleure helped the Browns to an 11-5 record and the AFC Central Division championship, their first playoff berth in eight years. He and fellow Pro Bowlers Dieken and DeLeone protected Sipe so well that he was sacked just 23 times, second-fewest in the NFL that year.

The arctic-like conditions for the “Red Right 88” playoff defeat to Oakland were extreme even for a big, tough football giant like the 6-3, 254-pound DeLamielleure.

“That was the worst game I ever played in,” he says. “And to this day, I just can’t believe we didn’t win that game. We were so much better than them I thought.” DeLamielleure remembers actually hearing the ball whiz by him on the ill-fated pass from Sipe that resulted in an interception by strong safety Mike Davis.

“I’ve got a fat head,” “Joe D” said. “I wish it would’ve hit it.”

The Browns were pretty much average at best for the remainder of DeLamielleure’s days with the team, which came to an end when he was released during the 1985 preseason. DeLamielleure signed with Buffalo and played one more year with the Bills before calling it quits.

“Mean” Joe Greene and Merlin Olsen were two of the toughest players DeLamielleure opposed. “Joe D” finds it amusing that two other players who gave him fits were Cincinnati’s Mike Reid and Baltimore’s Mike Barnes.

“Reid is a concert pianist and Barnes is an artist,” DeLamielleure laughs. “So I always tell people that a

concert pianist and an artist are two of the toughest opponents I ever played against.”

DeLamielleure has fond memories of Browns fans.

“They *are* the NFL,” he says. “In fact, the day it was announced they were moving to Baltimore, I was speaking at a Kiwanis Club here [in Charlotte], and the lady said, ‘Now Cleveland won’t have a team.’ And I said, ‘That won’t last long because Cleveland and Buffalo, Green Bay and Pittsburgh will always have football. Always.’ And it didn’t take long for them to get a team.”

DeLamielleure settled in Charlotte, N.C., where he has resided since 1982 with Gerri, to whom he has been married for 35 years. The couple has six children – including two adopted Korean boys – ranging in ages from 22-34, and four grandchildren.

DeLamielleure has kept busy since his playing days. He worked on the business end for a waste hauling company and also joined the world of coaching. As head coach, he led Providence Day High School to a pair of North Carolina state championships. As an assistant, he coached under Sam Rutigliano, his former boss with the Browns, at Liberty University (Virginia), where the Flames defeated Daunte Culpepper and Central Florida one year, and also at Duke University. “Joe D” also co-hosted a Bills television highlights show for two years.

These days, the 56-year-old DeLamielleure, forever a workout fanatic, co-owns with son Todd – a late cut by the Indianapolis Colts at one time – an exercise flexibility band company called Joe D Bands. Joe also is a celebrity host for Seneca Niagara Casino & Hotel in which he makes appearances at Bills home games and charitable events such as golf outings and running races. DeLamielleure also co-hosts two radio shows – a Bills tailgate program and a post-game shout-out – in which he travels to Buffalo for home games.

On top of all of that, DeLamielleure has been hired by the new All American Football League on the promotions end. The AAFL, which will begin its spring-summer season in 2008, will field teams consisting of players who have both completed their

college football eligibility and earned a four-year degree.

“It’s for kids who were overlooked by the NFL or who haven’t been watched by the NFL,” says DeLamielleure.

DeLamielleure feels like the luckiest man alive.

“I lived my dream,” he says. “I played on two teams with great offenses. I’m telling you, I played with maybe some of the best backs of that era – the two Pruitts and O.J. and Braxton. Those four guys alone ... oh, man ... they were tremendous. And, in my opinion, I played for the two best owners in football of my era. Maybe the people in Cleveland will disagree, with Art Moving the team, but I’m talking about how he treated the players.”

Furthermore, DeLamielleure never went under the knife – not one single surgery.

“Every day, I thank God, and I mean that,” he says. “I hit the bed, and I thank God because I’ve got to work the rest of my life because our pensions suck.”

The NFL Pension Plan. A topic that rubs DeLamielleure and many other players of his day and before the wrong way.

“We went on strike in ’74,” he says. “We never got free agency. Then in ’82, we went for a piece of the pie. We never got a piece of the pie. We don’t even get a crumb today. The guys who played when we played and before us, we built that league. I mean, *they* built it – Leroy Kelly, Gene Hickerson and [John] Wooten and Bill Glass and all those guys. They’re the guys who built this league – the players of the ’50s and ’60s and early-’70s. And the guys who are playing now are reaping the benefits.”

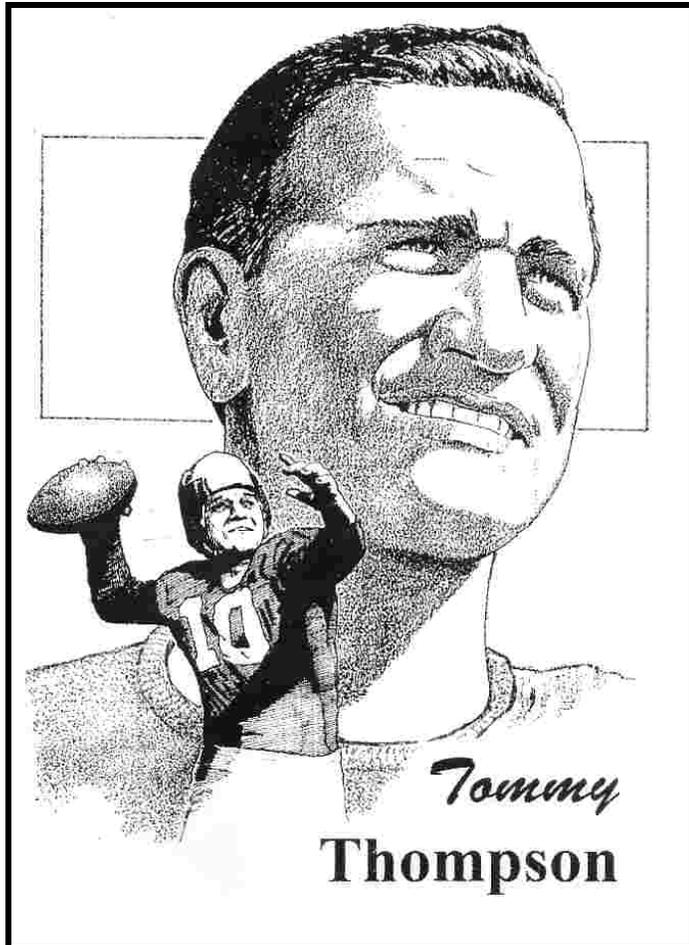
DeLamielleure never really cared about the money.

“I mean, I wanted to get paid what a top guard got paid,” he says, “but I never got an agent, I never squabbled about a contract in my life. I was just glad to be playing.”

Typical “Joe D.” “Old School” to the zillionth degree.

# TACITURN TOMMY THOMPSON

By Tracy Thibeau



Could Peyton Manning beat Tiger Woods in a game of golf?  
How about Joe Montana vs. Jack Nicklaus?

In the Forties, the world's best golfer was Byron Nelson. While training in Hibbing, Minnesota, the Philadelphia Eagles witnessed their quarterback, Tommy Thompson, beat Nelson.

Thompson wasn't actually playing against Nelson but rather with Nelson as his partner. The two were playing against a couple of local golf pros. But at the end of the day, Thompson's score was lower than Nelson's.

Tommy was born in Hutchinson, Kansas in 1916. His father worked for the railroad and moved the family to Texas. When he was a young boy, a playmate's errantly thrown rock cost him the central vision in his left eye.

As a teenager, he caddied at the Cleburne golf club. Ben Hogan, only four years older than Tommy, was the club pro. Thompson eventually became a scratch golfer himself.

An outstanding athlete, Tommy attended Paschal High School in Fort Worth. In track, he threw the discus, shotput and javelin. He was captain of the basketball team and co-captain of the football team. It was there that he acquired a set of shoulder pads that he wore for the rest of football career.

After Tommy graduated high school in 1936, he enrolled at the University of Alabama. He stayed there for only a month. The following year he attended the University of Tulsa where he played two seasons of football ('37-'38).

The following spring Thompson signed a contract to play for the Chicago Cardinals at \$135 a game. Although he wasn't drafted, he was later declared ineligible because his class didn't graduate until 1940. Thompson couldn't possibly have hurt the team. The Cardinals, under the direction of Ernie Nevers, finished 1-10-0.

Instead, Tommy played his 1939 football campaign with the St. Louis Gunners of the independent AFL. He played both ways. He did some place kicking and also returned kicks. He was also a backup quarterback who saw a lot of action. He completed eight touchdown passes. The AFL league leader that season had completed only ten. The Gunners finished fifth (5-6) in an eight-team circuit.

In 1939, the Chicago Bears scheduled a December exhibition game with the Gunners. But after the Bears defeated the Packers in November, they were still in the NFL hunt, so Halas cancelled his date in St. Louis.

The Gunners had been counting on this visit by the Bears to help meet expenses. With four games still remaining in their season, the Gunners' owner, Gus Jaudes, called it quits. General Manager Bud Yates held a meeting with the players. All but seven, mostly injured, players agreed to finish the season on the road while playing for a percentage of the gate. Tommy was one of those who remained.

Before the '39 AFL season even began, the Gunners reportedly offered TCU quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner, Davey O'Brien, \$18,000, for one season. It would have been the highest paying contract since Red Grange's in

1925. The Gunners were anticipating an 18-game schedule and thought they could pay O'Brien \$1000 a game. But cheap publicity could have provoked this outrageous offer too.

Instead, O'Brien prudently signed with the Eagles for \$15,000. He played two seasons for them. His favorite receiver was John Don Looney, father of the legendary Joe Don Looney. Don Looney led the league in receptions and yards in 1940.

Meanwhile, Thompson had signed with the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1940 for \$150 a game. Just like in St. Louis, he played both ways in every game, quarterbacked, returned kicks and did some placekicking.

Davey O'Brien's record after two seasons in Philadelphia was 2-19-1 so he retired after the 1940 campaign to become an FBI agent. Don Looney was traded to Pittsburgh for Thompson and Tommy became O'Brien's replacement for \$175 per game.

The Eagles' new head coach, Greasy Neale, began experimenting with the "T" formation. Neale knew that Thompson's passing ability was the key and said: "Tommy was my guinea pig. We made a lot of mistakes learning the 'T' and every mistake seemed to boomerang on Tommy. When our blockers missed assignments protecting the passer, Tommy was tackled for the loss. And the fans blamed him. But he learned quickly and was close to being the best quarterback in the league in two years."

In 1942, Thompson was signed to his first salary at \$3,500 a year. That season he was selected for the Pro Bowl.

Then the war interrupted his career. He joined the Army, and because of his vision problems, was supposed to have limited duty. Still, his infantry unit landed at Normandy during the second wave and Tommy earned himself a Purple Heart there.

After the war, he returned to Philly only to find that Eagles fans had a new favorite. During his absence, Roy Zimmerman had taken his place. Tommy had to earn his job back. The Philadelphia "boobirds" can be pretty unforgiving. But Coach Neale kept putting Thompson back in there despite his many miscues.

Neale said, "If Tommy hadn't come through the fans would have run me right out of Philadelphia."

On October 27, 1946 the Eagles were in Washington. The Redskins had mounted a 24-0 lead by halftime. Thompson was playing without injured fullback Steve Van Buren to

protect him. Still he managed to drive the Eagles to two touchdowns in the third quarter. With less than 5 minutes to play, Thompson connected for two more and beat the Redskins 28-24. It was the NFL's biggest come from behind victory up until then. He led the league in completion percentage (55.3) in 1946.

Coach Alfred Earl "Greasy" Neale's career as a coach in the NFL lasted from 1941 thru 1950 entirely with the Eagles. His record was 63-43-5 (.594) and with the exception of the war years, all with Thompson pulling the trigger.

In his younger days, Neale had played eight seasons of major league baseball and was a member of the Cincinnati Reds in the scandal-ridden, "Black Sox" World Series of 1919. During the off-season, Greasy coached college football. He took Washington and Jefferson to a 0-0 tie in the Rose Bowl of 1922. He also coached at Virginia, West Virginia and Yale.

By 1947, the Eagles reached their stride and would win their division for the next three seasons. Like many of the great pro skippers, Neale possessed a photographic memory. Thompson called him "the smartest football man I ever met....We didn't need films. Greasy had it all in his head"

Greasy drank, cussed and gambled with his players but on game day he was all business. Neale also gave the players cash incentives too such as \$10 for a sack and \$25 for an interception.

At practice sessions, Thompson would suggest to Neale "Good afternoon for a quick nine holes," and persuade Greasy to let the team go golfing, providing of course, that they did everything right at the morning session.

Neale recalled, "I didn't mind making a contribution to the Thompson welfare fund on the golf course."

Teammate Jim Parmer said that Tommy and his wife Dodie, herself an excellent golfer, would triple their stakes in the off-season playing down in Florida. Tommy was an excellent card player too.

Football writer Murray Olderman called Tommy a "Taciturn Texan." Webster's dictionary defines taciturn as "disinclined to talk." Tommy didn't have to talk. He just did it.

Allie Sherman was the backup quarterback for the Eagles from 1943 thru 1947. Sherman called Thompson "the most nonchalant guy I've ever seen. He never got ruffled at all. I spent all that time with him and I never really got to know him."

"In the huddle," said Vic Lindskog, "he'd cuss your ass out if you didn't listen to him or do what he said."

"He could piss ice water...or certainly give you that impression...whether he felt that way or not," recalled Jim Parmer. "I've been in the bunk above him on sleeper trains...I'd hear him wrestling around smoking cigarettes. He slept very little the night before a ball game."

Thompson would ask Chuck Bednarik, "Who are we playing this week?" Bednarik would give him the answer and then Tommy, never dwelling on what that answer was, would say "Ahh, we'll beat the bums."

"A great quarterback should have that cockiness," said Bednarik. "It's part of what makes them great."

Teammate Steve Van Buren said: "This team will hold up as long as Tommy does. It can win without me or key linemen. But it can't win without Tommy."

In 1948, Tommy signed a three-year contract worth \$36,000. That season he threw 25 touchdown passes and posted one of the marvelous seasons any quarterback has ever produced.

The fact that Thompson was handicapped by limited peripheral vision was no secret to defenses and it made his blindside highly vulnerable too.

At Shibe Park, on October 10, 1948, Tommy threw a 32-yard touchdown pass to halfback Ernie Steele. Ernie, in the last year of his career, caught only two passes that entire season. It wasn't the play that was called for either so Coach Neale asked Tommy about it.

"You were supposed to hit Ferrante," said Neale, "What happened?"

"He was covered," Tommy told him, "A couple of Giants were coming at me so I decided to get rid of the ball quick. I guess I didn't throw it quite hard enough to get it out of bounds."

Neale then asked him, "You mean you didn't even see Steele?"

Tommy shot back, "You can't expect an old one-eyed guy like me to keep track of every pass-catcher you put in a ball game." The Eagles beat the Giants that day 45-0.

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, against the Bears, Tommy had his shoulder separated in the first half. With the score tied 7-7 in fourth quarter, aided by a shot of Novocain, Tommy came back in the game. He guided the Eagles into field goal range, then

held the ball and spun it for kicker Cliff Patton. The Eagles won 12-7 after Walter Barnes nailed Sid Luckman for a safety.

That season, the Eagle's equipment manager sent Tommy's antiquated shoulder pads to a leather factory. They were returned with a notice attached: "*Rejected. This article is too far gone to justify the expense of reconditioning it.*" Tommy continued to wear them through his final, 1950 season. "These pads are the best in the world," he said. "They get better every year."

The Eagles slipped from 11-1 in 1949 to 6-6 in 1950. The merger with the AAFC had saturated the NFL with plenty of good, young talent. Pay cuts were commonplace. Neale got fired. Tommy was placed on the Eagle's reserve list in 1951 so he took a job coaching at the University of Arkansas.

During the Fifties, Thompson also coached in the Canadian Football League and then became backfield coach for the Chicago Cardinals. But Tommy never made it back to St. Louis. Severe arthritis forced him to retire just before the Cardinals moved south.

Thompson's greatest contribution to football was yet come. When Tommy quit football in 1960, he told others he was "goin' fishin" at his home in northern Arkansas. But the beating that Tommy took playing football had affected him much worse than he let on. He eventually became totally disabled from arthritis and by 1970 he was confined to a wheelchair.

About 100 miles northwest of Philadelphia is a town called Shenandoah. From there, young Jerry Wolman would hitchhike into the city so he could watch Thompson and the Eagles play. As an adult, Wolman became a wealthy construction magnate and in 1963, at the tender age of 36, he bought the football team. Jerry had a passion for the game that few owners could match. When he heard about Thompson's health and financial difficulties, Wolman, under no obligation to do so, began sending Tommy money.

When former teammate Alex Wojciechowicz heard about Wolman's gracious charitable assistance, Alex felt that it was the NFL's responsibility to provide for their unfortunate veterans so he organized the NFL Alumni Association.

Tommy Thompson had inadvertently inspired the creation of this benevolent organization that still exists today. Their website posts the following information:

**Mission Statement:** The NFL Alumni is a charitable organization composed primarily of former professional football players guided in their volunteer efforts by the motto

CARING FOR KIDS. The NFL Alumni's secondary objective is to *help its own* by offering support to former pros experiencing financial or medical hardship.

Thompson has the distinction of having appeared in three NFL championship games and winning two of them. How many quarterbacks can you say that about? He accomplished this during the most miserable weather conditions that any one quarterback has ever had to endure. The first one he lost in Chicago on a frozen football field without sneakers. The second he won during a Philadelphia blizzard so fierce you couldn't see the yard lines. He ran for 50 yards himself that day. The third he won, without fumbling, in a sloppy, Los Angeles mudbath. These games are testimony to Thompson's confidence, leadership and flexibility.

Tommy made it back to Philly for a team reunion in 1988 but brain cancer finally sacked Thompson the following year at the age of 72.

Teammate Al Wistert recalled: "I think the real key to those titles was Tommy Thompson. He wasn't just a leader or a passer, although he was outstanding as both, he was much more. He had those indefinable qualities that make a player a winner. And he could transfer those to the rest of the team. Without Tommy, we still would have been a team of stars. But I don't know if we would have been a great team -- a championship team."

Said Jim Parmer: "Tommy was the leader of our football team. Nobody else. That Tommy Thompson was."

**TOMMY THOMPSON:** - Thomas Pryor Thompson

Quarterback

Born: 15 August 1916, Hutchinson, KS Died: 21 April 1989, Calico Rock, AR

Height: 6'1" Weight: 195

College: Tulsa

**PASSING**

	G	ATT	COM	PCT	YARD	AvgG	TD	TD%	IN	IN%	RATE
-----	--	---	---	----	----	----	--	---	--	---	----
1940 Pit N	11	28	9	32.1	145	5.18	1	3.5	3	10.7	17.7
1941 Phi N	11	162	86	53.1	974	6.01	8	4.9	14	8.6	51.8
1942 Phi N	11	203	95	46.8	1410	6.95	8	3.9	16	7.9	50.3
1943 MS											
1944 MS											
1945 Phi N	8	28	15	53.6	146	5.21	0	0.0	2	7.1	38.7
1946 Phi N	10	103	57	*55.3	745	7.23	6	5.8	9	8.7	61.3
1947 Phi N	12	201	106	52.7	1680	8.36	16	8.0	15	7.5	76.3
1948 Phi N	12	246	141	57.3	1965	7.99	*25	10.2	11	4.5	98.4
1949 Phi N	12	214	116	54.2	1727	8.07	16	7.5	11	5.1	84.4
1950 Phi N	12	239	107	44.8	1608	6.73	11	4.6	22	9.2	44.4
-----	--	---	---	----	----	----	--	---	--	---	----
9 years	99	1424	732	51.4	10400	7.30	91	6.4	103	7.2	66.5

**RUSHING**

	G	ATT	YARD	AVG	TD	Additional Statistics:
-----	--	---	----	---	--	Caught four passes for 55 yards in 1940 and two for 10 yards and a touchdown in 1941; intercepted three passes for 24 yards in 1941, four for 28 yards in 1942 and two for 33 yards in 1945; returned five punts for 27 yards in 1941 and seven for 60 yards in 1942; returned five kickoffs for 76 yards in 1942; punted once for 43.0 average in 1941.
1940 Pit N	11	40	39	1.0	0	
1941 Phi N	11	54	28	0.5	0	
1942 Phi N	11	92	9	0.1	1	
1943 MS						
1944 MS						
1945 Phi N	8	8	-13	-1.6	0	
1946 Phi N	10	34	-116	-3.4	0	
1947 Phi N	12	23	52	2.4	2	
1948 Phi N	12	12	46	3.8	1	
1949 Phi N	12	15	17	1.1	2	
1950 Phi N	12	15	34	2.3	0	
-----	--	---	----	---	--	
9 years	99	293	96	0.3	6	

# The Most Impressive Team I've Ever Seen

By Raymond Lee



This is not another story about comparing and rating football teams. This is a story of the most awesome team of my lifetime, 1969 Kansas City Chiefs. You might say to yourself, what, the 1969 Chiefs, is he out of his mind or is he kidding? No I'm not kidding and I don't think I'm out of my mind even though some people may disagree about that point.

I was a young child when the Chiefs were in midst of winning their first Super Bowl and I suppose I was very impressionable. Every Sunday I enjoyed watching Curt Gowdy and Al DeRogatis announcing the American Football League games. It seemed that very often the Chiefs were playing in one of the games of the week. In their red uniforms the Chiefs seemed so massive, especially which they surrounded Len Dawson in the huddle. They all seem like giants, Paul Bunyans all playing football. Heck, they looked like a bunch of giant redwood trees. Perhaps my memory is failing me but I recall (I think it was in the first Bengal-Chiefs game that year) Curt Gowdy saying that the Chiefs were the greatest group of athletes he had ever seen. I thought he meant that the Chiefs had the most athletic ability of any team he had ever seen at the time and I still believe he meant that.

Aside from that, the Chiefs were truly an impressive team. Despite the fact they were only 11-3 and finished in second place that year, they were clearly the best team in the league, even with Len Dawson, the starting quarterback out for a good portion of the season. They scored 359 points and gave up 177 points for the best point differential in the American Football League and led the league in virtually every defensive category. They lost two games to the Raiders but the first was a very close game which they totally dominated and they lost the last game because, according Hank Stram's book *They're Playing My Game*, and I quote "The Raiders had a tremendous pass rush, and I worried about their getting to Lenny and that weak knee. It would have to be a war of attrition. I decided to go at them on the ground and keep the passing to an absolute minimum because, win or lose, we would have to play them once more, and that next game would be for all the marbles."

Now that seems like a bold statement considering that the Chiefs had to play the defending World Champion New York Jets and Joe Namath in the first round of the postseason but the Chiefs were so superior to the Jets that it was not an unreasonable statement to make.

Let's look at some of the personnel on the team. The QB was Len Dawson, one of most accurate passers of the era who led the AFL four times in passing. For many years he was the number one rated passer in Pro Football history. Among the offensive linemen blocking for him were Ed Budde and Jim Tyrer, voted as two of the five offensive linemen on the all time AFL team.

George Allen, the superb coach of the Rams and Redskins gave an excellent description of Jim Tyrer in his book *Pro Football's 100 Greatest Players*, "Jim Tyrer was out of the mold of Jim Parker, actually a little taller and heavier, massive man, yet quick on his feet and with his hands. He had a thick upper body but slender legs. He was so large and so strong he literally intimidated opponents. As a pass blocker it was almost impossible to get around him. As a run blocker you couldn't go through him and it was difficult to get around him. But I think he was at his best as one of the great pass blockers."

The other offensive line starters were Mo Moorman at guard, Dave Hill at tackle and E. J. Holub at center. It was an excellent and strong offensive line.

The starting running backs were Mike Garrett at HB and Robert Holmes at FB. Top flight backs with quickness, especially Garrett, who was a former Heisman Trophy winner.

The starting tight end was Fred Arbanas, also the all time AFL tight end. In 1969 he probably was past his prime but still a good player. Arbanas was in his seventh year in the AFL.

The starting wide receivers were Otis Taylor and Frank Pitts. Taylor was a receiver with stunning speed, power, height and quickness. In my opinion (if that means anything) Taylor was a receiver who was born too early. In today's game with the emphasis on passing, Taylor would be a monster. I am shocked that when they talk about the great receivers of yesteryear that Otis Taylor is never mentioned among the greats at his position. Taylor played for eleven years, had 410 receptions for 7,306 yards (17.8 yard per reception) and 57 touchdowns. This was on a team that concentrated on the running game. If Taylor played for the Raiders or Chargers, it's very possible he would have been rated up with Lance Alworth as the best receiver in football. You wonder what could have been if Otis Taylor was in his prime and played with the Bill Walsh 49ers of the mid 1980's to early 1990's.

Even so, Taylor was rated by many at the top or near the top of the receiver standings at that time. For a bit of a comparison, Lynn Swann, who some have ranked as of the one of the greatest receivers of all time and a Hall of Famer had 336 receptions for 5,462 yards (16.3 yards per reception) and 51 touchdowns in nine years of playing. Taylor tops Swann in every category. Paul Zimmerman, the excellent football writer included Taylor as one of the six receivers he thought belonged in the Hall of Fame. The others were Lynn Swann, James Lofton, Mac Speedie, Harold Carmichael, and Art Powell. Incidentally Swann and Lofton made the Hall of Fame after the article was written.

In the NFL films highlights of the Super Bowl in 1970 that the Chiefs won over the Vikings 23 to 7, Taylor showed his immense athletic ability when he faked the Viking defensive back into the ground and ran down the sidelines for a 46-yard touchdown that clinched the game.

The defensive line of the Chiefs seemed bigger than the Great Wall of China and I think like the Great Wall, they would have been visible to the naked eye from outer space. While the Vikings and Rams defensive lines at the time got all the publicity (and they deserved it) the Chief defensive line may very well have been just as good, perhaps better. Buck Buchanan was listed at 6'7" and his arms seemed longer than most people in total height. Buck would be a six time all pro. He was very durable, and had a great

combination of speed and strength. Buck was rated the number nine defensive linemen of all time by Rick Korch's excellent book *The Truly Great*, which is a book which the author interviewed hundreds of football experts—players, former players, coaches, assistant coaches, historians and sportswriters.

The other linemen was Jerry Mays, an all star that year at defensive end and the one of the two all time AFL defensive ends. Curley Culp was also an all star that year and rated the best Nose Tackle of all time by *The Truly Great*. The other end was Aaron Brown, a very talented player who never quite lived up to which people expected of him but is remembered for his tormenting the Oakland Raiders' quarterbacks in their playoff game that year.

The linebacking corps was among the very best of all time with Willie Lanier as middle linebacker, Bobby Bell and Jim Lynch as the outside linebackers. It was considered by many to be the best linebacking group in football. Lanier was rated number six in Korch's book for inside linebackers and Bell was ranked number three in the same book for outside linebackers. A very athletic and quick linebacking group, probably the best in the game at that time.

The defensive backs were also a very good group with Jim Marsalis and Emmitt Thomas as the cornerbacks and Johnny Robinson and Jim Kearney as the safeties. Jim Marsalis made the AFL all star team that year and Robinson was on the all time AFL team.

The kicking game was perhaps the strongest in history, relative to the times. The kicker was Jan Stenerud, a Hall of Famer who is perhaps the greatest field goal kicker of all time. Stenerud gave the Chiefs the ability to score perhaps ten yards further than just about any team. He was a weapon that no other team could match.

The discovery of Jan Stenerud is unbelievable. I think it's somewhat similar to the story Lana Turner being discovered in the drug store, although even Chiefs fans will admit Lana Turner was more pleasing to the eye.

Jan Stenerud came to the United States on a ski-jumping scholarship at Montana State. (And don't we all want our children to get ski-jumping scholarships) Apparently Stenerud just happened to walk by a football practice as the ball bounced off the field. He kicked it back to the scrimmagers at the other end of the field who were stunned at the distance he kicked it. Hank Stram and Tommy Boyle (the Chiefs Director of Personnel), hearing about this, checked out the skier turned kicker.

Here's is Stram's account from *They're Playing My Game* describing Stenerud's kicks - "Gees," I said, following its long

flight. "Anything that goes that high and that far ought to a stewardess on it."

The ball sailed, straight and true, right through the opposition's uprights—75 yards away and seven rows up into the bleachers beyond.

The punter was Jerrel Wilson who average 44.4 yards per punt that year and was named the all time AFL punter. The Chiefs clearly had the best kicking game in football by a good margin.

Nine of the 1969 Chiefs were named to the all star team that year and nine of them were included in *The Truly Great* out of the 200 top football players of all time. To me that's amazing. One team out of the hundreds of different football teams in history having nine players out of top 200 players in history named in a poll of experts. To put it in perspective, the Steelers Dynasty of the mid to late 1970's, a group some feel is the most talented collective of football talent in history only had 8 out of the 200 in this book.

### The Postseason

The first game of the postseason was the defending Super Bowl Champion and the Eastern Division Champion New York Jets. The 10-4 Jets, while not nearly as strong as the previous year were a major threat with an explosive offense that had Joe Namath at quarterback, excellent receivers in Don Maynard and George Saucer, a decent running attack plus an excellent run defense. The Jets' pass defense was very vulnerable that year however.

The game was played in cold weather and the howling winds of Shea Stadium in Flushing, New York.

On the first drive, Namath completed his first few passes as he marched the Jets on a drive that resulted in a field goal by Jim Turner. The Jets led 3-0.

The Chiefs came back to take the lead 6-3. The turning point of the game was when Namath took the Jets to the Chiefs' one yard line. Some accounts called it the one foot line. The Jets at this point seemed assured of scoring the go ahead touchdown to lead 10 to 6 and having an opportunity to defend their World Championship.

As you may have guessed, the mammoth Chiefs defense stopped the Jets on three attempts from the one and the Jets had to settle for a field to tie the game at six. After watching this sequence of plays you almost got the impression the Jets couldn't have scored a touchdown if they tried 100 rushing plays from the one.

On the very first play following the kickoff after the Jets tied the game, Dawson hit Otis Taylor for 61 yards to get to the Jets 19 yard line. Then Dawson hit Richardson for 19 yards for the go ahead touchdown and the Chiefs led by 13 to 6. With the seemingly impenetrable Chiefs defense and the horrid weather conditions, it probably may well have been a fifty point lead. Final score Chiefs 13 to 6 over the Jets and on to the last AFL championship game.

The AFL Championship game was played at the Oakland Alameda Coliseum which at the time was the Temple of Doom for virtually all football teams. The Raiders looked better than ever as they annihilated the Houston Oilers 56-7 in the first round of the postseason.

So it was good versus evil, with the Hank Stram led, clean cut Kansas City Chiefs against Silver and Black Renegade Oakland Raiders. This was THE football sports rivalry at the time and would be for years afterward. The Raiders had an array of tremendous players and characters with such names as Daryl Lamonica (the Mad Bomber), Fred Biletnikoff, Warren Wells, George Blanda, Ben Davidson, Ike Lassiter, Art Shell and Gene Upshaw. In watching these two teams play you felt the Hundred Year War was a tea party compared to this. It was pretty obvious that these two teams did not like each other.

Also there was the feeling by a number of football experts, general sentiment of NFL superiority aside that these were the two most talented teams in football and perhaps very well the two best teams in the game.

The Raiders took the early lead 7-0 and led for most of the first half until the Chiefs tied it at 7 just before the end of the half on a run by Wendell Hayes. The Raiders threatened a number of times in the second half but the rush from the Chief front four and great defense stopped the Raiders from scoring.

The key play of the game was when the Chiefs were backed up on their own two yard line and Dawson scrambled around and found Otis Taylor, who made an incredible catch at the 37 yard line. The Chiefs went on to score a touchdown and led 14-7.

Lamonica was injured in the game and threw three interceptions. The Chief mounted a fierce rush and Aaron Brown seemed to be a permanent fixture in Oakland's backfield. The Chiefs added a field goal. Final score Chiefs 17, Raiders 7. On to the Super Bowl.

**The Scandal, NFL films and the Hank Stram Super Bowl Show**

Apparently before the AFL Championship a story was about to come out that Len Dawson was involved in a potential betting scandal. According to Len Dawson, he was introduced to a Donald Dawson, a supposed gambler and bookmaker, by the former quarterback Bobby Layne. Donald Dawson was apparently just an acquaintance, according to Len Dawson. The league tried to stop it but it was announced by NBC news five days before the game.

The second thing that happened was one day before the game, Ed Sabol of NFL films called Hank Stram and asked if he could be wired before the game! There were several reasons Sabol wanted to wire Stram. One was Stram was more animated than the opposing coach Bud Grant, another was that Stram did not curse and third was that Sabol felt the Chiefs would win.

The Super Bowl was played on January 11, 1970 at Tulane Stadium in New Orleans. The Vikings, due to the general feeling of NFL superiority, were 13 point favorites in the game. The Chiefs on their first possession reached the Viking 41-yard line whereupon Jan Stenerud kicked a Super Bowl record 48-yard field goal and the Chiefs took the early lead 3 to 0. According to Len Dawson, the Vikings were shocked that the Chiefs even attempted a field goal.

The Chiefs controlled play and kicked two more field goals and led 9-0. One of the plays that drove the Vikings crazy were the reverse plays using Frank Pitts that gained excellent yardage for the Chiefs at key moments of the game.

On the kickoff following the Chiefs last field goal, the Viking returner Charlie West fumbled and the Chiefs recovered the ball. Eventually the Chiefs moved to the Viking five yard line where Stram called for the 65 Toss Power Trap play (Stram must have said 65 Toss Power Trap a billion times on the NFL films highlights and that's only a slight exaggeration), which allowed Mike Garrett to move into the end zone. The Chiefs led 16-0 at the half and totally dominated play.

Incidentally, I seem to recall the Vikings saying the usual clichés about the game. Stuff like "We have to out hit them to win" or words to that effect. My first thought when I heard that was how can you out hit the Chiefs? If Superman tried to out hit the Chiefs he would get hurt was my thinking. How can the Vikings possibly out hit them?

The Vikings, with Joe Kapp did score a touchdown to bring the score to 16 to 7 early in the second half. However on the next possession Otis Taylor caught a short pass (as Stram said throughout the game about the short passes, "It's like stealing.") from Dawson and turned it into a 46-yard touchdown that essentially ended any drama left in the game.

Len Dawson was vindicated of the scandal as he won the MVP award, completing 12 of 17 passes for 142 yards with 1 touchdown and 1 interception.

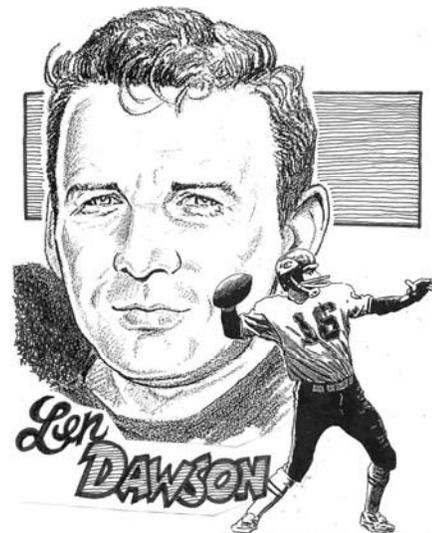
The Chiefs so dominated the game that there was no doubt which team was the better team, at least on that day. It proved the AFL could play with the top NFL teams and disproved the idea the Jets Super Bowl win the previous year may have been a fluke.

The NFL highlight film of that Super Bowl is perhaps the best Super Bowl film ever. It's my personal favorite. It had comedy, drama and a happy ending, except to Viking fans. Hank Stram deserved an Oscar for his performance. I think Stram did win for the category, *Best line delivered in a football highlight film*, which was "65 Toss Power Trap."

Nowadays they would have made a reality show out of it.

Now do I think the 1969 Chiefs are the greatest professional football team of all time? Far from it but if you asked me if I thought the 1969 Chiefs were the most talented and most physically impressive team I've seen, I may possibly answer yes. I believe if the 1969 Chiefs had the same players and they were born years later, with the training techniques and foods we have today that they would be bigger and stronger and just as talented relative to today's players. I guess that would make Buck Buchanan 10 feet tall today.

The Chiefs would win the division in 1971 before losing to the Miami Dolphin in the longest game in football history 27 to 24 in the game the Chiefs totally controlled. After that there was a decline and they never were the same again. Well even the Roman Empire fell eventually but frankly I would have made the 1969 Chiefs the favorites to defeat the Roman Empire.



**CLASSIFIEDS**

2 FREE FOOTBALL WEBSITE:-www.boosterclubcfl.com ( all lower case letters no spaces, if any difficulty in getting onto the site, contact www.digitalslingshot.com all lower case letters no spaces and they will assist you. ). A different perspective on major league football of the 1960's. Also special items for sale.

TAR – The Autograph Review -- \$14.95 annually, 6 editions. Special to PFRA members for new subscriptions 5/\$9.95. Payable to JW Morey, 305 Carlton Road, Syracuse, NY 13207. Publishing 32 years – Addresses, info, helpful to researchers... Try us.

4 EVOLVEMENTS OF EARLY AMERICAN FOOTBALL: THROUGH THE 1890 / 91 SEASON by Melvin I. Smith.. This book is a 724 page revision/extension to the author's first book and includes many more games found under the name of foot ball played up through the 1890/91 season. The games are separated by three major styles in their time. The kicking game/association football/soccer is the original style of foot ball. The second form of foot ball is the carrying game/Boston rules game/American rugby game/English rugby union game/rugby. The third form of foot ball is the American collegiate game/American rugby football/football. By the 1905 period these games are known as soccer, rugby and football. All games are divided into three groups: colleges, independent clubs and high schools; plus divided into two and three divisions by seasons. There also is a section with early leagues/conferences. Three appendices list short histories and the types of foot ball played by most of the teams found in the book. It will be available in other bookstores after January 2009. AUTHORHOUSE, 1663 Liberty Drive, Suite 200, Bloomington, IN 47403 / Book Order Dept. Tele. 888-280-7715; Fax. 812-961-3134. Shipping by UPS

3 *Oklahoma's Carlisle Indian School Immortals* can be ordered from any bookstore that doesn't stock it, is readily available from on-line booksellers, or from the publisher at www.Tuxedo-Press.com or 546 E Springville Rd, Carlisle, PA 17015. Hardback. \$24.99. PFRA members get free shipping and can have their copies signed by the author if they supply the inscription desired with the order.

1 FREE Football Biographies. *Spec Sanders*. FREE Shipping for PFRA Members on Memorabilia purchases. *Phil Villapiano*. JockBio.com. *Bulldog Turner*. Get A Life!

1 WANTED: 1974 Canadian Football League Record Manual. Charley Hall, 1410 Lake Pointe Way #9, Centerville, OH 45459. hallbuckeye@sbcglobal.net. 937-436-9158.

1 WANTED: Regular season home game program 1974 Florida Blazers (WFL). Charley Hall, 1410 Lake Pointe Way #9, Centerville, OH 45459. hallbuckeye@sbcglobal.net. 937-436-9158.

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**Official Ballot**

President: \_\_\_\_\_ Jack Clary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Tod Maher  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please Specify)

Vice-President \_\_\_\_\_ Joe Plack  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please Specify)

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Chris Willis  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please Specify)

Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ Vince Popo  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please Specify)

Your Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*All write-in candidates must pass the vetting process before the vote will count. All candidates must be in good standing with PFRA dues and must accept (in writing) the responsibilities associated with their potential office.*

**Please send ballots to:**

Jeffrey Miller  
 300 W. Main St.  
 Springville, NY 14141  
 E-mail: ODOSAGIH@aol.com

**All ballots must be received by November 1, 2009. Please, only send ballots to the above address and not to Bob Carroll or Ken Crippen.**