

DO YOU REMEMBER BILL OSMANSKI?

By Stanley Grosshandler
(Originally published in *Football Digest*)

"I think I lost all my hair hitting those Packer lines," Dr. William T. Osmanski said while reflecting on his glory-filled days as a Chicago Bear. "Those games were really something!"

Memorable as the Chicago-Green Bay games of the late '30s and early '40s were, however, they didn't give Osmanski quite the thrill that he got out of one isolated victory over the Washington Redskins.

The year was 1940. It was the NFL championship game. The final score was 73-0.

"Early in the season we lost to the Skins, 7-3," Osmanski said, describing events which led up to the greatest rout in the history of pro football. "On the last play of the game I was in the end zone, waiting for a pass, when Frank Filchock pinned my arms to my side and another guy roll-blocked me.

"The ball hit my chest and fell to the ground. We complained, but the officials refused to call a penalty, and the Redskins immediately called us crybabies. This made the papers, and (Coach George) Halas plastered the dressing room with the clippings. All week we were boiling mad as we practiced."

In the return engagement with Washington, Osmanski got things off to a rollicking start. "On the second play of the game, I took the handoff and slanted off left tackle," he said. "The end had been only partially blocked, so I dipped to avoid him, something not in the playbook, and raced down the sidelines. George Wilson threw a block that wiped out two men, and I went 68 yards for the TD with only 55 seconds elapsed."

The rout was on.

Osmanski, who had captained Holy Cross to one of its most brilliant seasons in 1938, joined the Bears the following season at a time when they were the real "Monsters of the Midway. As a rookie, he led the league in rushing and was named fullback on the official all-star team.

While playing for the Bears, he also attended dental school at Northwestern. Then, as a rookie dentist, he practiced with the club in the morning, rode the el cross-town to his office in the afternoon and then commuted back across town again in the evening for a team meeting.

His seven years with the Bears (who won four league titles in that span) were sandwiched around a two-year stint with the Marines in the South Pacific. He rejoined Chicago in 1946 and played in the backfield with his brother, Joe.

Osmanski, who is enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame, retired after the 1947 season to become head coach at Holy Cross. He spent two years there before leaving football to devote all his time to dentistry in Chicago, the city of his fondest football recollections.

OSMANSKI, BILL
William Thomas Osmanski
FB-LB 5-11 197
Holy Cross
Central High School, Providence, RI
Born: 12/29/15, Providence, RI

RUSHING						
Year	Team	Lg	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD
1939	ChiB	N	121	*699	5.8	7
1940	ChiB	N	50	192	3.8	3
1941	ChiB	N	76	361	4.8	4
1942	ChiB	N	2	9	4.5	0

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1943 ChiB	N	37	102	2.8	1
1944-45	Military Service				
1946 ChiB	N	78	343	4.4	5
1947 ChiB	N	10	37	3.7	0
7 years		374	1743	4.7	20