

Hall of Famers vs. Team Season Records

by Harold D. Jones

The article in the fall issue of the Coffin Corner about the futility of the 1964-1967 Washington Redskins, despite there being 4 (5?) Hall of Famers on the roster, caught my attention. I have done some research on Hall of Fame members and after reviewing it, I agree that the Redskins were the most consistent losers with four or more Hall of Famers.

However, there are several other teams that had bad seasons, even though they had an impressive number of future Hall of Fame players. The all-time loser was the 1958 Green Bay Packers (1- 10-1) with seven (7) Hall of Famers (Ford, Gregg, Hornung, Nitschke, Ringo, Starr and Taylor).

To date there have been 23 teams with 4 or more Hall of Famers that have managed to have losing seasons:

Hall of Famers			
NO	Team		Record
7	1958 Green Bay		1-10-1
6	1955 San Francisco		4-8
6	1956 San Francisco		5-6-1
6	1968 Green Bay		6-7-1
5	1956 Baltimore		5-7
5	1956 Cleveland		5-7
5	1933 Green Bay		5-7-1
4	1964 New York Giants		2-10-2
4	1953 New York Giants		3-9
4	1955 Detroit		3-9
4	1945 Chicago Bears		3-7
4	1929 Chicago Bears		4-9-2
4	1974 Kansas City		5-9
4	1958 Detroit		4-7-1
4	1963 Detroit		5-8-1
4	1952 Chicago Bears		5-7
4	1966 Chicago Bears		5-7-2
4	1964 Washington		6-8
4	1965 Washington		6-8
4	1970 Green Bay		6-8
4	1971 Pittsburgh		6-8
4	1967 Washington		5-6-3
4	1927 New York Yankees		7-8-1

Some of the Hall of Famers may not have been available for all games due to injuries or other reasons. The 1945 Bears had Stydahr, McAfee and other players for only part of the season due to military service.

The team with the most Hall of Famers was the 1961 Green Bay packers with 10 (Adderley, Davis, Gregg, Hornung, Nitschke, Ringo, Starr, Taylor, Tunnell and Wood). The leading Hall of Fame teams:

Hall of Famers			
NO	Team		Record
10	1961 Green Bay		11-3
9	1960 Green Bay		8-4
9	1962 Green Bay		13-1
8	1953 Cleveland		11-1
8	1963 Green Bay		11-2-1
8	1964 Green Bay		8-5-1
8	1965 Green Bay		10-3-1
8	1966 Green Bay		12-2
7	1935 Green Bay		8-4
7	1950 Cleveland		10-2
7	1951 Cleveland		11-1
7	1952 Cleveland		8-4
7	1954 Cleveland		9-3
7	1958 Green Bay		1-10-1
7	1959 Green Bay		7-5
7	1961 Baltimore		8-6
7	1971 Oakland		8-4-2

The most future Hall of Fame players involved in an NFL game would have been 17 in the Packer (10) - Colt (7) match-ups in 1961. The Packers won the first game in Green Bay, 45-7 and the Colts took the second in Baltimore, 45-21.

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TRIVIA: Can you name an NFL Championship team without a single Pro Football Hall of Famer on the roster?

Answer: Easy, the '89 49ers.

Okay, trick question. Lots of people on the champs of the '80s will EVENTUALLY be in the Hall. They've already started carving busts for Joe Montana, Lawrence Taylor, Mike Singletary and a whole wing of others. They're just not eligible yet because a player has to be retired five years. So, allow for eligibility and a few "declining years." Name an NFL Championship team – pre-1981 – without a Hall of Famer on the roster.

Start with 1980 and work back. And back. And back. You have to go all the way back to, believe it or not, 1920 Akron!

And, of course, the league wasn't called the NFL then. So the real answer – none.