

The Hall of Very Good

The Pro Football Hall of Fame selects new members each year and inevitably outcries are raised because this or that person was not chosen. Critics marshal arguments that their particular favorites are more deserving of enshrinement than those actually chosen.

Happily, the election of some has only been postponed for a year or two, but some excellent players will never find their busts in Canton. PFRA makes no judgment on whether those passed over were actually Hall of Fame-caliber players or not. What we do insist upon is that there are many, many players who deserve recognition as far better than the average.

As a way to honor these players, we hereby create The Hall of Very Good. The Class of 2003 was selected by the votes of the PFRA membership. Players chosen can not be enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and they must be passed over so many times that any ultimate enshrinement appears doubtful. Should any member of the Hall of Very Good be subsequently elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, he will immediately and joyfully be stricken from the HoVG.

GINO CAPPELLETTI

Outstanding kicker / receiver for Boston Patriots 1960-70. Ignored by NFL, AFL gave him a second chance. He caught 290 passes. His kicking and receiving accounted for 1130 points, including 155 in 1964.

CARL ELLER

Five-time All-Pro defensive end with Minnesota 1964-78, Seattle 1979. Played 225 games. Bulwark of famed "Purple People Eater" defense. Strong against run; fine pass rusher. Helped Vikes to 10 NFL/NFC crowns.

PAT FISCHER

Only 5'9" and 170 lbs, Fischer starred for 17 seasons (1961-77) with St. Louis and Washington. He made 56 career interceptions in 213 games and was chosen to three Pro Bowls.

BENNY FRIEDMAN

Friedman's fame ranked second only to Grange during the 1920s. Called the best defensive back ever seen, he really wowed them with his running, kicking, and above all with his passing, the greatest of his day.

GENE HICKERSON

In 15 seasons with the Browns (1958-60, 1962-73), Gene's blocks cleared the way Jim Brown and Leroy Kelly. His speed, power, durability, and athleticism made him a 6-time Pro Bowl selection.

JERRY KRAMER

A 5-time All-NFL choice with Lombardi's Packers, Kramer's most famous block came on Starr's sneak for the victory in the "Ice Bowl." He endured 22 operations during his career, but 5 championships made it worth it.

JOHNNY ROBINSON

Star safety with Dallas Texans / Kansas City Chiefs 1960-71. Had 57 career interceptions. Began as offensive back, but soon moved to defense. Sure tackler. All-AFL 1965-69, All-AFC 1970. 2 Super Bowls.

MAC SPEEDIE

Cleveland Browns' outstanding receiver 1946-52. Led AAFC in receptions 1947-49 and NFL in 1952. Caught 349 passes for 5,602 yards and 33 touchdowns in only seven seasons.

MICK TINGELHOFF

Minnesota Vikings' center 1962-1978. Extreme durability, set record for offensive linemen with 240 consecutive starts. All-NFL/NFC 1964-70; 6 Pro Bowls, 4 Super Bowls. Great quickness.

AL WISTERT

Outstanding Philadelphia Eagles' tackle 1943-51. All-NFL 1944-48. Quickness made up for lack of bulk at 217 pounds. Strong on defense; really excelled as a blocker. Led Eagles' line in NFL championship years 1948-49.