

The Hall of Very Good 2005

Classes of 2003 and 2004

Gene Brito	Jerry Kramer
John Brodie	Jim Marshall
Jack Butler	Al Nesser
Gini Cappelletti	Dave Robinson
Pat Fischer	Johnny Robinson
Chris Hanberger	Duke Slater
Bob Hayes	Mac Speedie
Gene Hickerson	Mick Tingelhoff
Bill Howton	Al Wistert

Note: Carl Eller and Benny Friedman were members, but their subsequent elections to the Pro Football Hall of Fame automatically removes them from the Hall of Very Good.

Happily, the election of some great players to the Pro Football Hall of Fame 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 2004 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.

We are pleased to announce that a former inductee into the Hall of Very Good has been stricken from the roll. Benny Friedman, the great triple threat of the 1920s, was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame this year. The Hall of Very Good exists to remind us of outstanding players who deserve or nearly deserve enshrinement in Canton but who are unlikely to be named.

This year's H of VG choices are being announced later than usual because a strong candidate was among the "Final 15" nominees for Canton.

MAXIE BAUGHAN

Star linebacker with Eagles from 1960-65, then captained George Allen's complicated defense with Rams. Three times all-NFL; 9 Pro Bowls. Aggressive and quick, but most valuable for his ability to diagnose opponents' offenses.

JIM BENTON

Great receiver with the Rams from 1938 thru 1947. Led NFL in receiving with 63 catches in 1946. When he retired, his 288 catches ranked second all-time in NFL. Sure hands and good speed, plus an unusually long reach.

LAVIE DILWEG

Widely regarded as the best all-around end of the 1920s, he starred for Packers three championship teams of 1929-31. Remarkably steady, he was a reliable receiver and deadly on defense.

PAT HARDER

Fullback for the Cardinals' "Dream Backfield" that powered the championship 1947 team. Led NFL in scoring three times, 1947-49. Excellent placekicker. Helped Lions win titles in early 1950s with his running and kicking.

FLOYD LITTLE

Extremely popular running star for Denver from 1967-75, he led the AFC in rushing in 1970 and 1971. His career marks included 6,323 rushing yards and 43 touchdowns. Additionally a good receiver and outstanding kick returner.

THE COFFIN CORNER: Vol. 27, No. 1 (2005)

TOMMY NOBIS

After a great career at Texas, Nobis was the first pick of the 1966 draft with expansion Atlanta. He gave the Falcons 11 great years until his oft-injured knees gave out. Chosen to 5 Pro Bowls, he was often compared favorably to Dick Butkus.

PETE RETZLAFF

Sure-handed, a strong blocker and steady, Retzlaff could play flanker or tight end, starring for the Eagles from 1956-66. He tied for NFL lead in most pass receptions in 1958. Caught 452 for 16.4 average and 47 TDs in career. Five Pro Bowls.

TOBIN ROTE

Winning QB with 1957 NFL Lions champions and with 1963 San Diego AFL champs. After seven years with weak Green Bay teams, his '57 trade to Detroit proved his ability to lead when he had the horses. Passed for 18,880 career yards and 148 TDs.

LOU RYMKUS

After one season with Washington and two in the service, Lou joined the Browns in the AAFC and stayed through for five championships. Paul Brown said he was the best tackle on the team in each of his six seasons. Famous for playing hurt.

DEL SHOFNER

Five-time all-pro, Shofner was first tried as a defensive back with the Rams but quickly switched to wideout where his speed and catching ability made him the NFL's most feared deep threat. Traded to the Giants, he excelled in combo with Y.A. Tittle.