



## Professional Football Researchers Association

740 Deerfield Road  
Warminster, PA 18974  
www.profootballresearchers.org

**Name:** Mac Speedie

**Position:** End

**Teams:** 1946-52 Cleveland Browns

In *The Hidden Game of Football* by noted historians Bob Carroll, Pete Palmer and John Thorn, the authors listed the best receivers of all-time (at the time of publication, 1950-1988). Here are their top ten:

Paul Warfield\*  
Lance Alworth\*  
Pete Pihos\*  
Charley Taylor\*  
**Mac Speedie**  
Fred Biletnikoff\*  
Dante Lavelli\*  
Raymond Berry\*  
Elroy Hirsch\*  
Charley Hennigan

\*Members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame

### Pass Receiving Accomplishments:

- Led the AAFC three times (1947-49) and the NFL once (1952) in receptions.
- Finished first in receiving yards twice (1947, 1949).
- Speedie was the top receiver in three of his six Championship Game appearances.
- Speedie caught more passes during his three NFL seasons than all players except Hall of Famer Tom Fears.
- Ranked second all-time in career receptions and receiving yards at the time of his last NFL game, behind only Don Hutson and ahead of Hall of Fame contemporaries Tom Fears, Elroy Hirsch, Dante Lavelli and Pete Pihos.
- His average of 800 yards receiving per season over an entire career was the best all-time until it was broken 20 years after his last NFL game by Lance Alworth.
- Speedie's average of 49.9 receptions per season over an entire career was the best all-time until it was broken 25 years after his last game by

Charley Taylor.

- Speedie caught 4.06 passes per game in the AAFC and 4.06 per game in the NFL.

### All-Pro and Pro Bowl Honors:

- Named first team all-pro in six of his seven seasons (1946-50, 1952). He was a consensus choice all six times including three unanimous selections (1947-49).
- Of the 10 combined all-NFL/AAFC teams selected from 1946-49, Speedie was named to the first team on eight, more than every other player in both leagues except Hall of Famer Steve Van Buren (who was also named to eight) including 15 Hall of Famers who played all four of those seasons.
- Named to the Pro Bowl in two of his three NFL seasons.

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The Professional Football Researchers Association (PFRA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and, in some cases, reconstructing professional football history. The PFRA is incorporated in the state of Connecticut and has 501(c)(3) status as an educational organization with the Internal Revenue Service.



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### **Team Accomplishments:**

- Cleveland finished first in all seven of Speedie's seasons and posted the greatest 7-year winning percentage of all time.
- Cleveland won five consecutive Championship Games (1946-50).
- Cleveland finished first in yards three times during his career (1946-47, 1952).
- The Browns were first in passing yards four times during Speedie's career (1946-47, 1949, 1952).
- During his seven seasons, the Browns were first in points scored twice (1946-47).

### **Military Service:**

Speedie was in the Army from 1942-46 and missed four potential seasons. He was 26 when he played his first pro game and his 4+ years of service time is one of the reasons his career was only seven years. Hall of Famers Doak Walker, Arnie Weinmeister, Ace Parker, George McAfee and Steve Van Buren all played fewer games than Speedie's 86, while Hall of Famers Jack Christiansen (89), George Connor (90) and Bob Waterfield (91) played in a comparable number. Speedie's service to his country during a world war should be viewed as a plus, rather than as a minus for the way it shortened his career.

### **The AAFC:**

Many football historians consider the AAFC the equal of the NFL. Cleveland's dominance of the NFL from 1950-55 is one piece of evidence. Speedie's continued greatness in the NFL is another.

### **Testimonials:**

- Speedie was named one of the 300 greatest players ever by the authors of Total Football, the official encyclopedia of the NFL.
- Named to the Pro Football Hall of Fame's all-decade team of the 1940's.
- He was named by the PFRA to their first ever Hall of Very Good class in 2003.
- In his autobiography, Hall of Famer Tom Landry recalled being embarrassed by Speedie while a cornerback for the New York Yankees and New York Giants. Landry cited that experience as "the beginning of the challenge to really learn the game of football."
- In a 2002 article, football historian Andy Piascik called Speedie "the best receiver of his era and the best senior candidate for the Hall of Fame.
- In *The Hidden Game of Football*, esteemed football historians Bob Carroll, Pete Palmer and John Thorn developed a very important statistical analysis called Adjusted Yards per Game. Among receivers, Speedie's AYD is seventh best all-time (Hall of Famers Don Hutson, Jerry Rice and Lance Alworth rank 1, 2 and 3).

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- The authors of *The Hidden Game of Football* also analyzed the Hall of Fame credentials of hundreds of players and determined that of all players not in the Hall of Fame, Speedie was the third most deserving of enshrinement.

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