



PRO FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
January 10, 2007

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17 FINALISTS FOR HALL OF FAME ELECTION

Paul Tagliabue, Thurman Thomas, Michael Irvin, and Bruce Matthews are among the 17 finalists that will be considered for election to the Pro Football Hall of Fame when the Hall's Board of Selectors meets in Miami, Florida on Saturday, February 3, 2007.

Joining these four finalists, are 11 other modern-era players and two players nominated earlier by the Hall of Fame's Senior Committee. The Senior Committee nominees, announced in August 2006, are former Cleveland Browns guard Gene Hickerson and Detroit Lions tight end Charlie Sanders. The other modern-era player finalists include defensive ends Fred Dean and Richard Dent; guards Russ Grimm and Bob Kuechenberg; punter Ray Guy; wide receivers Art Monk and Andre Reed; linebackers Derrick Thomas and Andre Tippett; cornerback Roger Wehrli; and tackle Gary Zimmerman.

To be elected, a finalist must receive a minimum positive vote of 80 percent.

Listed alphabetically, the 17 finalists with their positions, teams, and years active follow:

- **Fred Dean** – Defensive End – 1975-1981 San Diego Chargers, 1981-1985 San Francisco 49ers
- **Richard Dent** – Defensive End – 1983-1993, 1995 Chicago Bears, 1994 San Francisco 49ers, 1996 Indianapolis Colts, 1997 Philadelphia Eagles
- **Russ Grimm** – Guard – 1981-1991 Washington Redskins
- **Ray Guy** – Punter – 1973-1986 Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders
- **Gene Hickerson** – Guard – 1958-1973 Cleveland Browns
- **Michael Irvin** – Wide Receiver – 1988-1999 Dallas Cowboys
- **Bob Kuechenberg** – Guard – 1970-1984 Miami Dolphins

- **Bruce Matthews** – Guard, Tackle, Center – 1983-2001 Houston Oilers/Tennessee Oilers/Titans
- **Art Monk** – Wide Receiver – 1980-1993 Washington Redskins, 1994 New York Jets, 1995 Philadelphia Eagles
- **Andre Reed** – Wide Receiver – 1985-1999 Buffalo Bills, 2000 Washington Redskins
- **Charlie Sanders** – Tight End – 1968-1977 Detroit Lions
- **Paul Tagliabue** – NFL Commissioner – 1989-2006
- **Derrick Thomas** – Linebacker – 1989-1999 Kansas City Chiefs
- **Thurman Thomas** – Running Back – 1988-1999 Buffalo Bills, 2000 Miami Dolphins
- **Andre Tippett** – Linebacker – 1982-1993 New England Patriots
- **Roger Wehrli** – Cornerback – 1969-1982 St. Louis Cardinals
- **Gary Zimmerman** – Tackle – 1986-1992 Minnesota Vikings, 1993-1997 Denver Broncos

Dent, Grimm, Guy, Hickerson, Irvin, Kuechenberg, Monk, Derrick Thomas, Thurman Thomas, Wehrli, and Zimmerman have all been finalists in previous years.

From this year's list, 10 nominees – Grimm, Guy, Hickerson, Irvin, Kuechenberg, Matthews, Sanders, Derrick Thomas, Tippett, and Wehrli – spent their entire NFL career with just one team.

Hickerson and Sanders were selected as senior candidates by the Hall of Fame's Seniors Committee at their August 2006 meeting. The Seniors Committee reviews the qualifications of those players whose careers took place more than 25 years ago. The remaining 15 modern-era finalists were determined by a vote of the Hall's 40-member Board of Selectors from a list of 111 preliminary nominees that earlier was reduced to a list of 25 semifinalists. To be eligible for election, modern-era players must be retired at least five years while a contributor need not be retired.

The Board of Selectors will meet in Miami, Florida, on Saturday, February 3, 2007, to elect the Hall of Fame Class of 2007.

At the 2007 election meeting, the selectors will thoroughly discuss the careers of each finalist before narrowing the field to six candidates. At least three candidates must be elected but the total class cannot number more than six.

Of the 2007 finalists, Hickerson has been eligible for 29 years, Sanders 25 years, Wehrli 20, Kuechenberg 18, Dean 17 years, Guy 16, Grimm 11, Tippett nine, Monk seven years, Dent and Zimmerman five years, Irvin and Derrick Thomas three years, Reed and Thurman Thomas two years, and Matthews is in his first year of eligibility. Contributors, such as Tagliabue, need not to be retired to be considered for Hall of Fame election. Therefore there is no specific year at which he first became "eligible" for consideration.

The Class of 2007 will be announced at a press conference at 2:30 p.m. (ET) on Saturday, February 3, at the Super Bowl media center in the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Representatives of the accounting firm Deloitte & Touche will tabulate all votes during the meeting. At the press conference, they will present Hall of Fame President/Executive Director Steve Perry with an envelope containing the names of the nominees elected. The Hall will contact each new member immediately after the announcement. Members of the Class of 2007 in Miami for the Super Bowl will be asked to join the press conference. Those not able to attend will be asked to join via teleconference.

Enshrinement of the Class of 2007 will take place at the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, on the weekend of August 4-5, 2007.

CLASS OF 2007 17 FINALISTS

FRED DEAN

Defensive End. . .6-3, 230. . .Louisiana Tech. . .1975-1981 San Diego Chargers, 1981-1985 San Francisco 49ers. . .11 seasons, 141 games. . .Selected by San Diego in the second round (33rd player overall) in 1975 NFL Draft. . .A linebacker in college immediately moved to defensive line with the Chargers. . .Quickness, speed, strength made him a feared pass rusher. . .As a rookie, recorded seven sacks, 93 tackles (63 solo, 30 assists), four fumble recoveries. . . Career sack total near 100, but unofficial since sacks were not an official NFL statistic until 1982. . .Unofficially recorded 15.5 sacks in 1978, nine in 1979, and 10.5 in 1980. . .Contributed 12 sacks in 11 games with the 49ers in 1981. . .Had career best 17.5 sacks in 1983, including a then-NFL record six sacks in one game, Nov. 13 vs. New Orleans Saints. . . Played on five division winners, and two Super Bowl Championship teams (Super Bowl XVI and Super Bowl XIX). . .Named All-Pro in 1980 and 1981, All-AFC in 1979 and 1980, All-NFC in 1981 and 1983. . .Selected to play in four Pro Bowls (1980, 1981, 1982, and 1984). . .Born February 24, 1952 in Arcadia, Louisiana.

RICHARD DENT

Defensive End. . .6-5, 265. . .Tennessee State. . .1983-1993, 1995 Chicago Bears, 1994 San Francisco 49ers, 1996 Indianapolis Colts, 1997 Philadelphia Eagles. . .15 seasons, 203 games. . .Selected by Chicago in eighth round (203rd player overall) of 1983 NFL Draft. . .Played in every game as rookie. . .Became full-time starter early in 1984, beginning a 10-year period in which he recorded 10 or more sacks in eight of 10 seasons. . .An intimidating player, could speed rush or power rush the quarterback. . .Twice, once in 1984 and again in 1987, recorded 4.5 sacks in a game, both vs. Raiders. . .One of game's premier pass rushers with 137.5 career sacks, which at time of retirement third all-time best. . .Recorded double-digit sacks eight times including streak of five consecutive years (1984-1988). . .Led NFC with team record 17.5 sacks, 1984. . .Following year, led NFL with 17 sacks as an integral part of Bears dominating defense. . .His three tackles, 1.5 sacks, one pass defended and two forced fumbles earned him Super Bowl XX MVP honors following Bears lopsided 46-10 win over Patriots. . . Career statistics include eight interceptions (one touchdown), a safety, and fumble recovery for a touchdown. . .Named first- or second-team All-Pro four times, All-NFC five times. . . Selected to play in four Pro Bowls (1985, 1986, 1991, 1994). . .Born December 13, 1960 in Atlanta, Georgia.

RUSS GRIMM

Guard . . .6-3, 273. . .Pittsburgh. . .1981-1991 Washington Redskins. . .11 seasons, 140 games. . .Selected in third round (69th player overall) in 1981 NFL Draft. . .Originally pegged to play center, moved to left guard as rookie. . .Immediate starter on line that earned nickname "The Hogs". . .Teaming with tackle Joe Jacoby, formed perhaps most punishing side of an offensive line in football at the time. . .With Grimm's speed and strength, Redskins rode success of dominating running attack to victory in Super Bowl XVII in which John Riggins rushed for then-record 166 yards. . .During playoff run that year, team averaged 152 yards rushing. . .Following 1983 season, Grimm was selected to first of four straight Pro Bowls. . . Also marked start of four consecutive years (1983-1986) of All-Pro recognition. . . Also named All-NFC in each of those seasons. . .In 1987 moved to center and started five games before being sidelined until season finale with knee injury. . .Missed 11 games in 1988 with knee injury. . .Appeared in five NFC championship games and four Super Bowls including wins in Super Bowls XVII, XXII, XXVI. . .Elected to NFL's 1980s All-Decade Team. . .Born May 2, 1959 in Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

RAY GUY

Punter...6-3, 195. . .Southern Mississippi. . .1973-1986 Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders. . .14 seasons, 207 games. . .All-America, nation's top collegiate punter, 1972. . .First punter ever to be selected in first round, Raiders 1973 (23rd player overall). . .Became impact player from very first game as a rookie. . .Averaged under 40 yards only one season in NFL career. . .Had best average (45.3 yards) as rookie. . .Led NFL in punting, 1974, 1975, 1977. . .Had only three of 1,049 punts blocked. . .Career average was 42.4 yards. . .Had 619 punts without a block, 1979-1986. . .Veteran of 22 postseason games, adding 111 punts for 42.4 average. . . All-Pro six straight seasons, 1973-1978. . .All-AFC seven times. . .Played in seven Pro Bowls, including six straight from 1974 to 1979. . .Played in seven AFC championship games, Super Bowls XI, XV, XVIII. . .Three-game totals: 14 punts, 41.9-yard average. . .Had 57 punts inside 20-yard line, 1984-1985. . .First punter to hit Louisiana Superdome scoreboard, 1977 Pro Bowl. . .Doubled as Raiders' emergency quarterback with strong accurate passing arm. . .Born December 22, 1949, in Swainsboro, Georgia.

GENE HICKERSON

Guard. . .6-3, 248. . .Mississippi. . .1958-1973 Cleveland Browns. . .15 seasons, 202 games . . .Selected as future choice in the seventh round of the 1957 NFL Draft. . .A tackle in college, was shifted to guard as a rookie with Browns to better utilize speed. . .Was lead blocker for three Hall of Fame running backs, Jim Brown, Bobby Mitchell, and Leroy Kelly. . .Suffered broken leg in 1961 preseason opener, missed entire season. . .Fractured leg again later in year when hit while standing on sideline. . .After sitting out two games in 1962, never missed another game during stellar career. . .Earned first-team All-NFL acclaim five consecutive seasons (1966-1970). . .Voted to Play in Pro Bowl six straight times (1966-1971). . .During Hickerson's tenure, Browns never had a losing season. . .Played in 202 games during career and started at right guard in four NFL title games, including Browns' 27-0 win over Colts in 1964. . .Prior to Hickerson joining Browns, just seven runners in NFL history reached 1,000 yards rushing. With Hickerson as lead blocker, Browns posted 1,000 yard rusher in 9 of his first 10 seasons. . .Cleveland featured league leading rusher in seven of those 10 seasons. . . Named to NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1960s. . .Born February 15, 1935, in Trenton, Tennessee.

MICHAEL IRVIN

Wide Receiver. . .6-2, 207. . .Miami (FL). . .1988-1999 Dallas Cowboys. . .Selected by Dallas in first round (11th player overall) of 1988 NFL Draft. . .12 seasons, 159 games. . .Earned starting role as rookie, but injuries caused him to miss 12 games in first two seasons. . .His 20.4 yard per catch average during rookie year led NFC. . .Feared by opponents for his combination of speed, size, strength. . .In 1991, caught 93 passes for a league-leading 1,523 yards and 8 touchdowns. . .Consensus All-Pro that year and earned the first of five straight Pro Bowl trips. . .Recorded 1,000-yard seasons in all but one year from 1991 through 1998. . . In 1995 recorded finest season with 111 receptions for 1,603 yards, recorded an NFL record eleven 100-yard games, and scored 10 touchdowns. . .Had seven receptions for 100 yards and two touchdowns in the Cowboys' 38-27 win over Packers in 1995 NFC Championship Game. . .Capped off year with five catches for 76 yards in Dallas' 27-17 victory over Steelers in Super Bowl XXX. . .Accumulated 750 receptions for 11,904 yards, 65 TDs during career. . .A member of the NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1990s. . .Had 100 or more yards receiving in a game 47 times. . .Born March 5, 1966 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

BOB KUECHENBERG

Guard. . .6-2, 253. . .Notre Dame. . .1970-1984 Miami Dolphins (inj. res. - 1984). . .Selected by Philadelphia Eagles in fourth round (80th player overall) of 1969 AFL-NFL Draft. . .15 seasons, 196 games. . .Spent 1984 season on injured reserve. . .Released by both the Eagles and Atlanta Falcons. . .Played semi-pro football before signing as free agent with Miami Dolphins in 1970. . .Highly competitive and driven to succeed, played in more regular season games (196) than any other player in Dolphins history at the time of his retirement. . .Also only player to play in all 19 playoff games in franchise's history at that time. . .A versatile player, spent time at tackle and center positions. . .In 1978 played eight games at guard and seven at tackle, earning Pro Bowl spot at guard and Sporting News All-AFC honors at tackle. . .In 1977 suffered a pair of fractures in back in August but returned to lineup after missing just two regular season starts. . .Named to six Pro Bowls (1975, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1983, 1984). . .All-Pro 1975, 1978; All-AFC 1974, 1975, 1978; All-Pro Second Team 1975, 1977, 1978. . .Had memorable performance in Super Bowl VII victory. . .Born October 14, 1947 in Gary, Indiana.

BRUCE MATTHEWS

Guard, Tackle, Center. . .6-5, 289. . .Southern California. . .1983-2001 Houston Oilers/Tennessee Oilers/Titans. . .19 seasons, 296 games. . .Selected by Houston in first round (9th player overall) 1983 NFL Draft. . .Regarded as one of game's finest offensive linemen for nearly two decades. . .Played in more games than any positional player in NFL history. . .Three-time Offensive Lineman of the Year. . .Started 292 of 296 games played and 15 playoff games in which he played. . .Played at every position on line. . .Was also team's long snapper for the majority of career. . .Most starts came at guard position (99 on left side, 67 as right guard) and 87 starts at center. . .Also had 22 starts at right tackle, 17 at left tackle. . .Was anchor on offensive line that contributed to team's seven consecutive playoff seasons. . .Named to first of 14 consecutive Pro Bowl teams (9 at guard, 5 at center) following 1988 season. . .Pro Bowl selections tied Hall of Famer Merlin Olsen for most ever. . .Was named All-Pro 9 times (1988-1993, 1998-2000) and All-AFC 12 times (1988-1993, 1995-2000). . .Selected as guard on NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1990s. . .Born August 8, 1961 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

ART MONK

Wide Receiver. . .6-3, 210. . .Syracuse. . .1980-1993 Washington Redskins, 1994 New York Jets, 1995 Philadelphia Eagles. . .16 seasons, 224 games. . .Selected by Washington in first round (18th player overall) of 1980 NFL Draft. . .Prototype for today's bigger, stronger receivers. . .Caught 58 passes as a rookie and was unanimous All-Rookie choice. . .Had 50 or more receptions in a season nine times. . .Gained 1,000 or more receiving yards in a season five times. . .Set then-NFL records for catches in a season (106), most consecutive games with at least one reception (164), and career receptions (820). . .Finished career with 940 catches. . .A strong receiver, especially effective over the middle in traffic, made the "dodge pattern" his signature play. . .Had finest season in 1984, catching eight or more passes in six games, five games of 100-plus receiving yards, and in one game caught 10 passes for 200 yards. . .Named Redskins 1984 Most Valuable Player. . .First Redskin to produce three consecutive 1,000 receiving yard seasons. . .A three-time Pro Bowl selection, was All-Pro choice in 1984 and 1985. . .First- or second-team All-NFC three times. . .Born December 5, 1957 in White Plains, New York.

ANDRE REED

Wide Receiver. . .6-2, 190. . .Kutztown. . .1985-1999 Buffalo Bills, 2000 Washington Redskins. . .16 seasons, 234 games. . .Selected by Buffalo in fourth round (86th player overall) of 1985 NFL Draft. . .Most prolific receiver in Buffalo Bills history. . .His 941 career receptions still Bills record and 266 more than number two on that list. . .His 13,095 career reception yardage, 36 games with 100-plus receiving yards, and 15 catches in a game are current team records. . .Known for his "yards after catch". . .His 951 career receptions were third all-time in NFL history at the time of his retirement. . .His 13 seasons, including nine consecutive, with 50-plus receptions is exceeded only by Jerry Rice. . .Reed is tied with Bills running back Thurman Thomas for team best career touchdowns (87), most on passes from Jim Kelly. . .Kelly-Reed tandem held NFL record for career receptions (663) until 2004 when eclipsed by Peyton Manning to Marvin Harrison. . .Known for toughness as he made most of his receptions over the middle. . .A four-time All-AFC choice and three-time All-NFL second team, was selected to play in seven consecutive Pro Bowls (1989-1995). . .Added an additional 85 catches for 1,229 yards, including five 100-yard games in postseason play. . . Born January 29, 1964 in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

CHARLIE SANDERS

Tight End. . .6-4, 230. . .Minnesota. . .1968-1977 Detroit Lions. . .10 seasons, 128 games. . . Selected by Detroit in third round (74th player overall) of 1968 AFL-NFL Draft. . .In an era of blocking tight ends, he became team's "secret weapon" as a receiver. . .Combined great leaping ability, big hands, strength, speed and elusiveness. . .As a rookie recorded impressive 40 receptions for 533 yards. . .Had a 10-reception, 133-yard game against Redskins in rookie season finale. . .Was only rookie selected to play in Pro Bowl following 1968 season. . .In all, was named to seven Pro Bowls. . .In second season caught 42 passes for 656 yards and three TDs earning first of three consecutive All-NFL honors. . .Missed five games due to injury in 1972, but still managed 27 receptions for 416 yards. . .Recorded 30 or more receptions in a season seven times and more than 500 receiving yards in six seasons. . .At time of retirement was Lions all-time reception leader (336), his career receiving yards (4,817) ranked second . . .Was Lions leader or co-leader in receptions six of his 10 seasons. . .Earned first- or second-team all-conference honors six times (1969-1971, 1974-1976). . .Named to NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1970s. . .Born August 25, 1946 in Richlands, North Carolina.

PAUL TAGLIABUE

Commissioner. . .Georgetown, New York University. . .1989-2006 National Football League. . . During tenure, NFL has grown to unparalleled heights. . .By a wide margin, NFL with its competitive equity is considered nation's most popular sport. . .Committed to a "league think" philosophy, his leadership enabled NFL to address several key priorities. . .The league expanded to 32 teams. . .Nearly two decades of labor peace with the NFL Players Association . . .League supported some 20 new stadium construction projects. . . Established NFL as a global brand with operations in overseas markets. . .Was first league to operate on a weekly basis on two separate continents. . . Created a league-wide internet network and subscriber-based NFL TV Network. . .Secured largest TV contracts in entertainment history totaling some \$25 billion. . .Before becoming league's CEO, represented NFL as attorney. . .Served in office of U.S. Secretary of Defense as policy analyst. . .Currently a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. . .Born November 24, 1940 in Jersey City, New Jersey.

DERRICK THOMAS

Linebacker. . .6-3, 243. . .Alabama. . .1989-1999 Kansas City Chiefs. . .11 seasons, 169 games. . .Selected in the first round (4th player overall) in 1989 NFL Draft. . .Consensus All-America. . .Amassed 10 sacks and 75 tackles to earn Defensive Rookie of the Year honors. . . In 1990 recorded league-leading and team record 20 sacks; including NFL record seven sacks in game vs. Seahawks. . .Also recorded six forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries, 63 tackles, five pass deflections, 35 quarterback pressures and was named to first of nine Pro Bowls. . .No player amassed more sacks during 1990s than 116.5 by Thomas. . .Finished career with 126.5 sacks; fourth highest total by linebacker in NFL history. . .Had 10 or more sacks in a season seven times; recorded multi-sack games 27 times. . .Forced 45 fumbles, had 19 fumble recoveries, scored four touchdowns on fumble returns and added three safeties during career . . .Lone interception came in final season. . .Member of NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1990s . . .All-NFL three times. . .Named first-team All-AFC seven times during eight-year stretch (1989-1996). . .In 11 years Thomas anchored defense, Chiefs finished first or second in AFC West ten times, made seven playoff appearances, won three division titles. . .Born January 1, 1967 in Miami, Florida. . .Died February 8, 2000.

THURMAN THOMAS

Running Back . . . 5-10, 198. . .Oklahoma State. . .1988-1999 Buffalo Bills, 2000 Miami Dolphins. . .13 seasons, 182 games. . .Selected in the second round (40th player overall) in 1988 NFL Draft. . .Epitomized heart and soul of Bills team during their glory years in early 90's. . .A vital component to Bills unprecedented run of four straight Super Bowl appearances . . .Only player to lead NFL in total yards from scrimmage four consecutive seasons. . .In 1991 gained over 2,000 yards from scrimmage and was voted league's Most Valuable Player. . .At time of retirement ranked sixth all-time in career yards from scrimmage (16,532). . .One of only four running backs to gain 1,000 yards in 8 consecutive seasons. . .Rushed for 12,074 yards during career. . . Only Emmitt Smith and Barry Sanders rushed for more yards in decade of the 90s. . . At time of retirement, one of only three running backs (Walter Payton and Marcus Allen) to have over 400 receptions and 10,000 yards rushing. . .Played in five AFC title games and four Super Bowls. . .Set playoff records for career combined net yards (2,124), touchdowns (21), and consecutive games with a TD (9). . .Selected to play in five consecutive Pro Bowls. . .First- or second-team All-Pro five consecutive years (1989-1993). . . All-AFC/All-AFC Second Team 1989-1993/1994. . . Born on May 16, 1966 in Houston, Texas.

ANDRE TIPPETT

Linebacker. . .6-3, 240. . .Iowa. . .1982-1993 New England Patriots. . .10 seasons, 151 games. . .Selected in the second round (41st player overall) 1982 NFL Draft. . .Used primarily on special teams in strike-shortened rookie season. . .Earned starter's role following season . . .In 1984 established team record 18.5 sacks and earned first of five consecutive (1985-1989) Pro Bowl selections. . .Was a factor in team's success that led to first Super Bowl (SB XX) appearance. . .That season (1985) led AFC with 16.5 sacks (2nd in NFL), had three forced fumbles, recovered three fumbles, returned one for a 25-yard TD, earning AFC Defensive Player of the Year honors. . .Began 1986 season with 9.5 sacks before injury sidelined him for five games following surgery. . .Returned for final two games of season and one postseason game. . .Even in shortened season, still earned Pro Bowl, All-AFC, and All-Pro second team honors. . .In 1987 had AFC-leading 12.5 sacks, team-best three fumble recoveries (one returned for TD), blocked a field goal that was returned by teammate for 71-yard TD. . .Missed four games in 1988 and entire 1989 season due to injuries. . .Remained a dominant player through final four seasons. . .At time of retirement, his 100 career sacks, 18.5 sacks in a season, 17 opponent fumbles recovered were team bests. . .Named to NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1980s. . .Born December 27, 1959 in Birmingham, Alabama.

ROGER WEHRLI

Cornerback. . .6-0, 190. . .Missouri. . .1969-1982 St. Louis Cardinals. . .14 seasons, 193 games. . .Selected in first round (19th player overall) 1969 AFL-NFL Draft. . .Starter as rookie recording three interceptions and leading team in punt returns. . .In 1970 picked off career-high six passes (a feat he matched in 1975) to earn first All-Pro, All-NFC, and Pro Bowl honors. . .Led or tied for lead in interceptions for Cardinals four times. . .Maintained enough speed and savvy to play demanding position for 14 seasons. . .Registered interception in all but two seasons and amassed 40 career interceptions – two for touchdowns. . .From 1974 to 1976, picked off 12 passes as Cardinals put together string of three straight double-digit win seasons including back-to-back NFC East titles (1974, 1975). . .Intercepted three Roger Staubach passes during key 31-17 win over division rival Dallas, Dec. 7, 1975. . .In 1981, was moved to left cornerback position. . .In first start on left side made four tackles and broke up two passes as Cardinals shutout Bills, 24-0. . .Had a knack for finding ball . . .Recovered franchise record-tying 19 fumbles during career. . .Named to NFL's All-Decade Team of 1970s, was first-team All-Pro choice five times (1970, 1974-1977) and All-NFC five times, and named to Pro Bowl seven times. . .Born November 26, 1947 in New Point, Missouri.

GARY ZIMMERMAN

Tackle. . .6-6, 294. . .Oregon. . .1986-1992 Minnesota Vikings, 1993-1997 Denver Broncos . . .12 seasons, 184 games. . .Selected in first round (3rd player overall) 1984 NFL Supplemental Draft. . .Originally selected by Giants, signing rights traded to Vikings for two second-round picks in 1986 draft. . .Spent two seasons with the L.A. Express of failed USFL before reporting to Vikings. . .After joining Vikings, began streak of 169 consecutive starts that lasted until 1996 when surgery sidelined him. . .Anchored offensive line that helped Vikings lead NFC in rushing, 1991. . .Acquired by Broncos in trade prior to start of 1993 season. . .With Zimmerman blocking, Broncos recorded most successful offensive output in franchise history. . .Led AFC in total combined yards, 1995. . .Led NFL in that category, 1996, 1997. . .Broncos also led NFL in rushing, 1996. . .Had a streak of 169 consecutive starts before being sidelined with shoulder surgery. . .Equally adept at pass blocking, Minnesota and Denver quarterbacks led their conferences in passing 1986, 1988, 1993, and 1996. . .One of just handful of players to earn honor of being named to two NFL All-Decade Teams, 1980s, 1990s. . .NFL Lineman of the Year in 1987. . .Earned first- or second-team All-Pro honors eight times. . .Selected to play in seven Pro Bowls. . .Born December 13, 1961 in Fullerton, California.

IF ELECTED. . .SPECIAL NOTES ON 2007 FINALISTS

THE ROSTER OF HALL OF FAME MEMBERS COULD INCREASE FOR 16 NFL TEAMS

The Buffalo Bills and Washington Redskins have two finalists and the Chicago Bears, Cleveland Browns, Dallas Cowboys, Denver Broncos, Detroit Lions, Houston Oilers/Tennessee Titans, Kansas City Chiefs, Miami Dolphins, Minnesota Vikings, New England Patriots, San Diego Chargers, San Francisco 49ers, Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders, and St. Louis/Arizona Cardinals, each have one finalist who spent all or a significant part of their careers with that team.

If elected. . .

Andre Reed and/or Thurman Thomas would be the 6th and/or 7th Buffalo Bills Hall of Fame member. They would join Joe DeLamielleure, Jim Kelly, Marv Levy, Billy Shaw, and O.J. Simpson.

Russ Grimm and/or Art Monk would be the 16th and/or 17th Washington Redskins Hall of Fame members. They would join George Allen, Cliff Battles, Sammy Baugh, Bill Dudley, Albert Glen "Turk" Edwards, Ray Flaherty, Joe Gibbs, Ken Houston, Sam Huff, Sonny Jurgensen, George Preston Marshall, Wayne Millner, Bobby Mitchell, John Riggins, and Charley Taylor.

Richard Dent would be the 27th long-time Chicago Bear to be added to the Hall of Fame honor roll. Doug Atkins, George Blanda, Dick Butkus, George Connor, Mike Ditka, John "Paddy" Driscoll, Jim Finks, Dan Fortmann, Bill George, Harold "Red" Grange, George Halas, Dan Hampton, Ed Healey, Bill Hewitt, Stan Jones, Sid Luckman, Link Lyman, George McAfee, George Musso, Bronko Nagurski, Walter Payton, Gale Sayers, Mike Singletary, Joe Stydahar, George Trafton, and Clyde "Bulldog" Turner are the others.

Fred Dean would join six previously elected San Diego Chargers Hall of Famers: Lance Alworth, Dan Fouts, Sid Gillman, Charlie Joiner, Ron Mix, and Kellen Winslow.

Fred Dean also played a significant part of his career with the San Francisco 49ers. He would join 11 other 49ers Hall of Fame members including Jimmy Johnson, Ronnie Lott, Hugh McElhenny, Joe Montana, Leo Nomellini, Joe Perry, Bob St. Clair, Y.A. Tittle, Bill Walsh, Dave Wilcox, and Steve Young.

Ray Guy would be the 14th Oakland/Los Angeles Raider elected to the Hall. Marcus Allen, Fred Biletnikoff, George Blanda, Willie Brown, Dave Casper, Al Davis, Mike Haynes, Ted Hendricks, Howie Long, John Madden, Jim Otto, Art Shell, and Gene Upshaw are the other Raiders Hall of Famers.

Gene Hickerson would be the 16th long-time Cleveland Brown to be elected. Jim Brown, Paul Brown, Joe DeLamielleure, Len Ford, Frank Gatski, Otto Graham, Lou Groza, Leroy Kelly, Dante Lavelli, Mike McCormack, Bobby Mitchell, Marion Motley, Ozzie Newsome, Paul Warfield, and Bill Willis are the other Browns Hall of Fame members.

Michael Irvin would be the 10th Dallas Cowboys Hall of Fame member. Troy Aikman, Tony Dorsett, Tom Landry, Bob Lilly, Mel Renfro, Tex Schramm, Roger Staubach, Randy White, and Rayfield Wright are the current Cowboys Hall of Fame members.

Bob Kuechenberg would be the 10th long-time member of the Miami Dolphins to be elected. Nick Buoniconti, Larry Csonka, Bob Griese, Jim Langer, Larry Little, Dan Marino, Don Shula, Dwight Stephenson, and Paul Warfield are the other Dolphins Hall of Fame members.

Bruce Matthews would be the seventh Tennessee Titans (Houston/Tennessee Oilers) Hall of Fame player. Elvin Bethea, George Blanda, Earl Campbell, Ken Houston, Warren Moon, and Mike Munchak are the other Oilers/Titans Hall of Famers.

Charlie Sanders would be the 13th player to play all or a significant part of his career as a member of the Detroit Lions. Previously elected Lions include Lem Barney, Jack Christiansen, Dutch Clark, Lou Creekmur, Bill Dudley, Dick "Night Train" Lane, Yale Lary, Bobby Layne, Barry Sanders, Joe Schmidt, Doak Walker, and Alex Wojciechowicz.

Derrick Thomas would be the eighth Kansas City Chiefs Hall of Fame member. He would join Bobby Bell, Buck Buchanan, Len Dawson, Lamar Hunt, Willie Lanier, Jan Stenerud, and Hank Stram.

Andre Tippett would be the fourth New England Patriots player elected to the Hall of Fame. He would join Nick Buoniconti, John Hannah, and Mike Haynes.

Roger Wehrli would be the 11th long-time member of the Arizona (Chicago, St. Louis) Cardinals franchise to be elected to the Hall of Fame. Other Cardinals to be elected include Charles Bidwill, Jimmy Conzelman, Dan Dierdorf, John "Paddy" Driscoll, Dick "Night Train" Lane, Ollie Matson, Ernie Nevers, Jackie Smith, Charley Trippi, and Larry Wilson.

Gary Zimmerman would be the eighth Minnesota Vikings player elected to the Hall of Fame. He would join Carl Eller, Jim Finks, Bud Grant, Paul Krause, Alan Page, Fran Tarkenton, and Ron Yary.

Gary Zimmerman would also join John Elway to become the second member of the Denver Broncos elected to the Hall of Fame.

THE MODERN-ERA POSITION ROSTER WILL CHANGE AFTER 2007 ELECTION (*The Modern-Era is defined as a majority of an enshrinee's career occurred after 1946*)

If elected . . .

Fred Dean and/or Richard Dent would become the 14th and/or 15th modern-era defensive end(s) to be elected to the Hall of Fame. Other Hall of Fame defensive ends are Doug Atkins, Elvin Bethea, Willie Davis, Carl Eller, Len Ford, Dan Hampton (DT-DE), Deacon Jones, Howie Long, Gino Marchetti, Andy Robustelli, Lee Roy Selmon, Reggie White, and Jack Youngblood.

Russ Grimm and/or Gene Hickerson and/or Bob Kuechenberg and/or Bruce Matthews (also center and tackle) would be the 10th, 11th, 12th and/or 13th modern-era player(s) who played primarily as a guard to be elected. The other Hall of Fame guards previously elected are Joe DeLamielleure, John Hannah, Stan Jones, Larry Little, Tom Mack, Mike Munchak, Jim Parker (G-T), Billy Shaw, and Gene Upshaw.

Ray Guy would be the first punter elected to the Hall of Fame.

Michael Irvin and/or Art Monk and/or Andre Reed will join 17 other modern-era receivers in the Hall of Fame. Other Hall of Fame modern-era receivers include Lance Alworth, Raymond Berry, Fred Biletnikoff, Tom Fears, Elroy Hirsch (also a halfback), Charlie Joiner, Steve Largent, Dante Lavelli, James Lofton, Don Maynard, Tommy McDonald, Bobby Mitchell (also a halfback), Pete Pihos, John Stallworth, Lynn Swann, Charley Taylor (also a halfback), and Paul Warfield.

Charlie Sanders would be the 7th tight end elected to the Hall of Fame. Other Hall of Fame tight ends include Dave Casper, Mike Ditka, John Mackey, Ozzie Newsome, Jackie Smith, and Kellen Winslow.

Paul Tagliabue would become the 18th contributor elected to the Hall of Fame. He would join Bert Bell, Charles Bidwill, Joe Carr, Al Davis, Jim Finks, George Halas, Lamar Hunt, Curly Lambeau, Tim Mara, Wellington Mara, George Preston Marshall, Hugh "Shorty" Ray, Dan Reeves, Art Rooney, Dan Rooney, Pete Rozelle, Tex Schramm.

Derrick Thomas and/or Andre Tippett would be the 17th and/or 18th modern-era Hall of Fame linebacker(s) joining Bobby Bell (also DE), Nick Buoniconti, Dick Butkus, Harry Carson, George Connor (also DT and OT), Bill George, Jack Ham, Ted Hendricks, Sam Huff, Jack Lambert, Willie Lanier, Ray Nitschke, Joe Schmidt, Mike Singletary, Lawrence Taylor, and Dave Wilcox.

Thurman Thomas would join 24 other modern-era running backs in the Hall of Fame including Marcus Allen, Jim Brown, Earl Campbell, Larry Csonka, Eric Dickerson, Tony Dorsett, Frank Gifford, Franco Harris, Paul Hornung, John Henry Johnson, Leroy Kelly, Ollie Matson, Hugh McElhenny, Lenny Moore, Marion Motley, Walter Payton, Joe Perry, John Riggins, Barry Sanders, Gale Sayers, O.J. Simpson, Jim Taylor, Charley Trippi, and Doak Walker.

Roger Wehrli would be the 17th modern-era defensive back in the Hall of Fame. Other Hall of Fame defensive backs include Herb Adderley, Lem Barney, Mel Blount, Willie Brown, Jack Christiansen, Mike Haynes, Ken Houston, Jimmy Johnson, Paul Krause, Dick "Night Train" Lane, Yale Lary, Ronnie Lott, Mel Renfro, Emlen Tunnell, Larry Wilson, and Willie Wood.

Gary Zimmerman would be the 16th modern-era player who played primarily as a tackle to be elected. Other Hall of Fame tackles include Bob Brown, Roosevelt Brown, Lou Creekmur, Dan Dierdorf, Forrest Gregg, Lou Groza (also PK), Mike McCormack, Ron Mix, Anthony Muñoz, Jim Parker (G-T), Bob St. Clair, Art Shell, Jackie Slater, Rayfield Wright, and Ron Yary.