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**NFL LOGO GETS A FACE LIFT**

By **Tug McErlain** - The NFL has updated the "NFL Shield" for the first time in 28 years and while not drastically different, there are a few modifications to the logo that bare mentioning.

The new logo features a football that more closely resembles the one that adorns the Lombardi Trophy. It is set at a different angle than in the prior version and has a more curved, three-dimensional look.

The most drastic change to the logo is the number of stars. Instead of the familiar star-studded upper portion of the logo that consisted of 25 stars, now only eight remain. The new stars are larger and represent the eight divisions that make up the league much like the U.S. flag's fifty stars represent the number of states in the union.

The colors used in the new NFL logo are darker as well, and the logo itself is slightly taller and thinner. Finally, the letters "NFL" have evolved from a smoother, script look to a more block-lettered appearance, apparently borrowing from the font used in the past three Super Bowl logos.

While beauty is in the eye of the beholder, I must say that I am slightly disappointed with the new shield. There just seems to be something missing... some magic that didn't translate from old to new. Maybe it will grow on me, but when you're talking about the emblem of the greatest sports league in the land, I would have expected better. One thing I do like about the change is that the last time the league tweaked its logo, the Eagles went to the Super Bowl. Here's hoping history repeats itself.

Speaking of logos, the website logodesign.com recently conducted a survey to determine the best franchise logos in the NFL. A panel of 25 expert designers were polled to determine the top ten trademarks in the league. The Eagles logo, which debuted prior to the 1996 season, finished 6th in the survey. The top five logos as determined by the panel were as follows:

1. Broncos 2. Patriots 3. Texans 4. Seahawks 5. Rams
- Rounding out the top ten following the Eagles were:
7. Falcons 8. Cardinals 9. Panthers 10. Jaguars



**2008 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE**

Sunday, Sept. 7	RAMS	1:00 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 15	@Cowboys	8:30 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 21	STEELERS	4:15 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 28	@Bears	8:15 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 5	REDSKINS	1:00 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 12	@49ers	4:15 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 26	FALCONS	1:00 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 2	@Seahawks	4:15 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 9	GIANTS	8:15 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 16	@Bengals	1:00 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 23	@ Ravens	1:00 p.m.
Thursday, Nov. 27	CARDINALS	8:00 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 7	@Giants	1:00 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 15	BROWNS	8:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 21	@ Redskins	1:00 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 28	COWBOYS	1:00 p.m.

**EAGLES ALUMNI TRIVIA**

Which former Eagle is the bigger half of the talk show, Mike and Mike in the Morning?

1. Mike Pitts 2. Mike Golic
3. Mike Mamula 4. Mike Michel

*(Answer from last issue: TONY STEWART)*





## HEALTH & FINANCES

### 24th Annual Retired Players Convention

**June 11, 2008** - 175 retired players gathered in Puerto Rico this month to attend the 24th Annual NFLPA Retired Players Convention.

The event provided former players an arena to have their voices heard while offering stimulating and informative seminars that addressed the concerns of many retired players.

Gene Upshaw, the NFLPA's executive director, addressed the attendees during the opening session with his annual State of the Union presentation. Covering a broad range of topics, Upshaw discussed in detail the improvements in disability for retired players and reiterated the significance of the Player Assistance Trust Fund, which provides financial support to any former football player in times of financial crisis.

"There has been a lot of progress made," Upshaw said of retired player benefits. "When Roger Goodell and I sat down a year and a half ago and talked about things we could do to help out retired players, there were two issues that were on the table and those were disabilities and pension. We felt there was one area in which we needed to move quicker in than other areas and that area was disabilities."

Upshaw also described the issues involved in the labor dispute with NFL team owners, who voted to opt out of their collective bargaining agreement with players two years early.

"I believe that you need to understand these issues as well as the active players understand these issues, because we will all be facing the outcome of whatever happens in this negotiation," Upshaw told attendees.

Former Eagle Herschel Walker received the Award of Courage for publicly revealing in his autobiography *Breaking Free* that he suffers from dissociative identity disorder. "To me it's a little embarrassing to get an award because you never earn an award by yourself," Walker said. "But I'm honored the NFLPA would even consider me to receive this award."



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? #59 • LB • AL CHESLEY

**By Jim Gehman** - If only foresight was as 20/20 as hindsight, Al Chesley may have had a much more enjoyable experience as an Eagles linebacker, particularly during the closing weeks of his three-plus seasons in Philadelphia.

Selected in the 11th round of the 1979 draft from the University of Pittsburgh, Chesley had his work cut out for him during that first training camp and did all he could to demonstrate that he had NFL-caliber potential. "I was confident of my ability that I could overcome (being chosen late) and get a spot on that roster," Chesley said. "Every day at practice, I had the coaches calling my name out, saying something positive. Coach (Dick) Vermeil, I can still hear his voice screaming, 'Al Chesley, great play! Great play!' One of the things he suggested is 'every down you get a snap, perform! You're starting out deep on the depth chart so reps are critical.'

"And I knew that it was tough, that I had to block injuries from my mind. You've got to find a way to stay healthy. And at the end of that training camp Bill Cowher and I were vying for that one spot on the 45-man roster and fortunately, I beat him out." The following season, Chesley and his teammates posted a 12-4 record and beat out 13 other NFC teams to capture the conference championship and play in Super Bowl XV against Oakland. "We had great teams, the teams within the team," Chesley said. "We had a good offense, a top-notch defense, and most of all we had the No. 1 specialty teams in the whole league. The special teams were key. We won probably a handful of games with special teams alone."

After becoming a starter at inside linebacker in 1981, any momentum that the Eagles had as a team and that Chesley had personally was greatly diminished when the players hit the picket line after two games of the '82 campaign. "The strike-shortened season was a disaster for me. I sort of got lost," Chesley recalled. "I didn't participate with the team. They had some unofficial workouts that coach Vermeil was kind of like monitoring, I guess, seeing who participated in them. And the day we came back after the strike, I was demoted to the second team. I was just shocked.

"The second game back after the strike was against the Redskins and it took on a big significance with me because I'm from Washington and we were playing in front of my (family and friends) and my ego and pride was really hurt that I was sitting on the bench. We lost, and I said some things that weren't too smart in the papers. The media sticks that microphone in your face and I didn't have the discipline to just do my talking on the field. The bottom line is somehow I said 'play me or trade me' and I wish I could have taken that back. It was so stupid! Coach Marion Campbell, George Hill, coach Vermeil, they really were like father figures," Chesley continued. "They wanted the best for me, but I was just so young. If I would have just went to work and let the boss be the boss and me just be a player and realize that, 'Hey Al, if you don't be quiet, you are replaceable.'"

And, in fact, he was replaced. Chesley, who co-led the Eagles in tackles the previous season and had started 18 consecutive games before the players' strike, was released on Dec. 1, with five games remaining on the '82 schedule.

"I was very surprised," Chesley said. "I thought he would have a little more patience, but as I look back I have to look at the part I played in it and grow from that. But I was shocked. I guess I was in a delusional state and didn't realize that it's just a business. I thought it was just a game." *(continued on back page)*





## TURN BACK THE CLOCK...CLINCHING DIVISIONS IN BIG D

**By Tug McErlain** - When the 2008 NFL schedule was released, one game at the end of the Eagles slate stood out above the rest. Week 17, December 28th, Lincoln Financial Field... Eagles vs. Cowboys. For only the third time in franchise history, Philadelphia will conclude the regular season with a contest against their bitter rivals from Big D. The first two times this scenario presented itself, Philadelphia traveled to Dallas with an opportunity to clinch the divisional title. This time, the Cowboys come north and if history repeats itself, this game could determine NFC East supremacy going into the post-season. As we turn back the clock, let's take a look back at the previous two times the Eagles capped off the regular season against the Cowboys.

**DECEMBER 21, 1980:** Philadelphia traveled to Dallas with a 12-3 record and an opportunity to clinch their first division title in twenty years. Standing in their way, as always, was a Dallas team chomping at their heels at 11-4. One season prior, the two teams finished with identical 11-5 records, with Dallas emerging as the division champion due to a better conference record (10-2 vs. 9-3). This time around, Philadelphia was poised to turn the tie-breaker tables around on Dallas. Even with a loss, the Eagles would take the division title as long as the spread did not exceed 24 points. Sure enough, Dallas jumped out to a 25-point lead and it was white-knuckle time for the team and their legion of fans back home. Sensing the gravity of the situation, the Eagles roared back into contention before eventually losing 35-27. Despite losing the battle, Philadelphia had won the war for the division title and three weeks later, Dallas had to travel to Veterans Stadium for the NFC Championship game. The home field advantage made all of the difference as the Eagles moved to 9-1 at The Vet that season, punching their ticket to Super Bowl XV with a convincing 20-7 triumph.

**DECEMBER 18, 1988:** As Buddy Ryan's squad took the field that day, anything was possible. A loss to the Cowboys and Philadelphia would miss the playoffs for the sixth season in a row. Even a win wouldn't guarantee a post-season berth but if all of the stars aligned, the Eagles could finish the day

with a division title and a first round bye. After eeking out a 24-23 win in dramatic fashion against Dallas eight-weeks earlier, Philadelphia sought a season sweep in what would prove to be the final game of Tom Landry's coaching career. Unlike their first meeting that season, Dallas failed to put up much of a fuss and the Eagles rolled to a convincing 23-7 victory. After taking care of business on their end, players and coaches alike gathered around the television to watch their playoff fates unfold. In the waning seconds of a game between the Jets and the Giants, Al Toon hauled in a pass in the corner of the endzone, snatching the division title away from the Giants and handing it to Philadelphia. Not only did the catch cost the Giants the game and the division title, but after all of the tie-breaking scenarios were settled, New York missed out on the playoffs altogether for the first time in five years.

As the 2008 season approaches, Dallas is considered the odds-on favorite to represent the NFC in Super Bowl 43. Don't believe the hype! If that final game proves to be a meaningful one, and history suggests it will, Dallas will be hard pressed to leave Lincoln Financial Field with their title hopes intact. Conversely, a victory over the Cowboys that day could prove to be the perfect springboard into a playoff run that finally brings the Lombardi trophy to the city of brotherly love.





## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

*(continued from page 2)* "I was a young kid who was very naïve, but I've got nothing but good things to say about coach Vermeil. He gave me an opportunity and I'll always respect him. I just thought I should have been out there. I can remember it just like it was yesterday because it was a critical time in my career and was the start of a downward spiral because if I had stayed in Philly I don't know how many Pro Bowls I would have made. I didn't know how good I had it in Philly until I lost it."

Chesley, who says he's thankful to now be living a more balanced life, makes his home in Washington and for nearly six years has been working with the Creative Non-violence Organization, a non-profit outreach program that deals with inner-city youths and gang violence.

"Most of the kids I deal with are African-Americans, Latino kids, and don't have a father figure around the house," said Chesley. "You try to reach these kids before they get a scar on their record that will damage them for life."

Speaking of scars, Chesley revealed one of his own on March 5, 2008, when he joined the Survivor's Network of those Abused by Priests at a press conference in Delaware to praise the state's new Child Victim's Act, which allows victims of child sexual abuse to pursue civil damages even if the statute of limitations has expired. He said when he was 13, he was in fact a victim at the hands of a Washington policeman. "I don't know where that person is, but you know what, I just freed myself," Chesley said. "The bigger picture is that unfortunately it does happen to kids. But if I can help one kid it'd be great."

"I saw Laveranues Coles on The Oprah Winfrey Show talk about how he was sexually abused by his stepfather, and I said, 'Wow, what courage it takes to do that. I wish I could have done something like that. I would never think of doing something like that when I was playing and I wish I had the courage to do it now.' And here, three years later, I just thank God that I had the courage to come up and talk about it for all the right reasons."

"I can't explain it entirely, but it's a feeling that I'm free. I'm not as sick as that secret I've been carrying for years. I want kids to know that they, like myself, are victims. I'm a survivor now, but I was victimized then. Here I am halfway through life realizing I didn't do anything wrong."

## NFL ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

### GRIDIRON GREATS LAUNCH MEDICAL PROGRAM RETIRED NFL PLAYERS IN DIRE NEED OF MEDICAL CARE TO RECEIVE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN COMPREHENSIVE DONATED MEDICAL SERVICES

**May 13, 2008** – The Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund, a not-for-profit organization that provides assistance to retired NFL players in dire need, recently announced a groundbreaking medical program that will provide millions of dollars in donated medical care to former NFL players.

The program is expected to have a significant impact on the lives of many former NFL players who suffer due to their inability to care for their football-related injuries and are unable to secure affordable medical insurance.

This unprecedented program will be facilitated by the Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund and is being made possible through a new partnership between a group of doctors at two prestigious medical centers: the Surgical Specialty Hospital of Arizona in Phoenix and the OAA Orthopedic Specialists in Allentown, Pa.

"There's been a lot of talk in recent years about the medical issues many retired players face due to the game and the lack of post-career healthcare or affordable insurance," said Mike Ditka... "This has resulted in many players being forced into dire situations. There's been too much talk, in fact, and not enough action. We're pleased to announce today the start of the Gridiron Greats Medical Program. Due to the generosity of a group of medical specialists and their facilities, players who qualify will be able to get the medical care they need without incurring any cost. And it will happen fast."

Ditka was joined by former players Andy Livingston (Chicago Bears), Mercury Morris (Miami Dolphins), JD Hill (Detroit Lions/Buffalo Bills) and Brian Demarco (Jacksonville Jaguars, Cincinnati Bengals). Each of the former players that joined Ditka suffers from severe football-related medical issues and are unable to afford costly treatments and procedures. They will be some of the first to be evaluated for the program.

"Both the administrations and physicians at these institutions understand the problem and wanted to offer their help. When they contacted us and we started putting this program together it was just amazing, the level of compassion that these physicians have," said Jennifer Smith, Gridiron Greats Executive Director. "Because of their generosity, the lives of many retired players will be transformed and a quality of life restored."

The medical initiative will be facilitated through the Gridiron Greats Assistance Fund. Retired NFL players can apply to the program by contacting the Gridiron Greats Administrative offices **1-800-708-1078**.

### THE PHILADELPHIA EAGLES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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