



Southern California Viking Club

February 2, 2009

Club Members,

Hall of Fame:

Today I get to talk to you about Randall McDaniel who was selected to Pro Football's Hall of Fame on Saturday. Of all the finalists this year; Randall was clearly the most recognized and was clearly the most deserving of this honor. (And I'm not trying to take anything away from the other players inducted). His string of Pro Bowl starts is a Pro Bowl record and only a few players have had more Pro Bowl appearances than Randall. At one of our dinners; I remember Stu Voigt describing Randall as one of the few players that could transcend any generation of Viking football. Randall clearly could have played on the same line as Mick Tingelhoff and Ron Yary as well as he could start today. He was a very special athlete and possibly one of the best athletes to ever play the game – at any position. He truly was the best left guard of all time and has set the standard for all offensive linemen.

I've had the fortune of talking with Randall at a couple of our dinners and the thing that jumps out to me is the quality of the person. When Randall was playing; during the off season he was volunteering in the Minneapolis area school systems because of his strong belief in education. Both Randall and his wife, Marianne work as educators and are truly dedicated to this profession. I've said before that the news primarily reports on the negative aspect of pro athletes and the vast majority of players are good people at heart. Well - Randall is truly a great person at heart. I read the other day that Randall is now teaching second grade special education. It takes a very special person to teach this type of class. I'm sure of this because my wife also taught special education for years. God bless you Randall for these efforts.

Randall McDaniel started 12 consecutive Pro Bowls (1989-2000) setting an NFL record. He earned a spot on Pro Football Hall of Fame's Team of the Decade for the 1990's. Randall was selected with the 19th overall pick in the 1988 NFL Draft by the Vikings and was inducted into the Vikings Ring of Honor on December 17, 2006. Randall was also known for playing fullback in short yardage and goal-line situations. You can't watch a highlight video of Randall without seeing the devastating block he laid on Mike Singletary from the fullback position. He knocked Singletary backward five yards with most of that being in the air. I don't believe there has ever been as versatile a lineman as Randall and when you saw him line up in the fullback position, everyone expected the Vikings were going to pick up the first down or score the touchdown (and they usually did).

Randall; for myself and the Southern California Viking Club I would like to congratulate you on being selected to the 2009 class of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. There has never been a more deserving person, both on and off the field, for this great honor. To me you represent the good in football and the good in humanity; a better person the Hall of Fame couldn't find - congratulations.

Wm. R. Martin

President
Southern California Viking Club