



March 7, 2010

Club Members,

Team News:

Hello everyone – it's time I chime in and talk about John Randle being elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. To start with I would like to congratulate John on this accomplishment – he truly deserves this honor. John played 11 seasons with the Vikes; 1990 to 2000. The two things I think about first are probably not what got him elected to the hall – I think of the face paint and that high energy motor he had, at times I didn't think even John could control that motor. He is another player that revolutionized his position; I believe that is why he made the hall as quickly as he did. John set the standard for defensive tackles and that standard is the same one used today. Let's look at a few of John's accomplishments.

The first thing that jumps to mind is that John was an undrafted rookie – which only says there'll be good players on the board this year for the Vikes, no matter the draft position. An undrafted rookie probably viewed as too small to play defensive tackle in most teams minds. The Vikings must have seen heart and realized they had a winner very early in camp that first year. I didn't go to camp that year with the club, but that sure would have been a treat. Can you imagine the coaches when they saw this guy on the field for the first time – even if they had an idea of what he brought to the table, I'm sure they were giddy when they saw him practice. John didn't start right out of the gate for the Vikes; but once he learned the defense and got to the starting lineup – he never relinquished the spot. John literally took over from there.

A quick peek at John's career: John played 11 seasons with the Vikes – as mentioned earlier. He had 10+ sacks in 8 straight of those seasons, 1993 to 2000. As a Viking he rates third in sacks and he is first among tackles with his 114 sacks. He started in 6 straight Pro Bowls – years 1993 to 1998. And he played for 14 seasons. If there's one guy on the Vikings team that understands what John brings to the game it's Brett Favre – he saw John's game first hand. If I had the chance to ask Brett anything – I think I would ask him to describe John Randle's play and what the Pack used to do to try and slow him down. I think that would lead to an interesting conversation.

John did attend one of our dinners and I did get a chance to meet him there. I wish I had an interesting story to tell you all about from that meeting, but I don't. When John attended our dinner it was on a return flight from one of his Pro Bowl visits; I felt it was incredibly gracious of him to join us, especially at that point in his career (everyone wants a little time from the current pro players – to the point where they get little privacy). But even with the time pressures of a pro athlete John and his wife made the trip and that was very special to me.

John; for the Southern California Viking Club I would like to congratulate you on being selected into the 2010 class of Pro Football's Hall of Fame. This is truly an honor and for those of us that watched your play – I can say you belong; you'll be among your piers for eternity. Congratulations!

Go Vikes!

Wm. R. Martin

President