

Remembering Bob Jeter

By Brendan Stiles

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On Friday evening, former Iowa running back Bob Jeter was one of six selected as members of the 2010 class for the Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame.

When I worked at *The Daily Iowan*, I wrote an entire 12-part series chronicling 12 former Hawkeye football players that had the opportunity to start in a Super Bowl during their NFL careers. One of those 12 former players I wrote about was Jeter. In fact, my story about him was the first one published in our Pregame section. This was back in 2007.

As a Hawkeye, Jeter will be remembered best for being the MVP of Iowa's last Rose Bowl victory in 1959, when the Hawkeyes defeated California. In that game, Jeter, one of two running backs used back then by then-head coach Forest Evashevski, rushed for 194 yards on only nine carries. One of those nine touches was an 81-yard touchdown run.

After playing in the CFL, Jeter got his NFL break when Vince Lombardi told him to come to Green Bay. He played seven seasons for the Packers, where he started at cornerback opposite Pro Football Hall-of-Famer Herb Adderley.

During this span, Jeter started in and won each of the first two Super Bowls ever played. He also won an NFL championship in 1965 when the Packers beat the Cleveland Browns, and the famous "Ice Bowl" against Dallas on Dec. 31, 1967.

I went back and found the transcript of my entire phone interview with Jeter three years ago, and figured I'd share a little of what he told me.

Jeter on his performance in the 1959 Rose Bowl:

"I wasn't even really aware of the crowd. All I was worried about was making sure I did the right thing, and that I didn't have any mistakes. I tell you, I didn't even realize that I had gained all those yards until the game was over and somebody mentioned it to me."

On playing for both Lombardi and Evashevski:

"They talked a lot about football and the name of the game and how to play the game. Coach Lombardi, he wasn't that hard, but he made sure you knew what you were doing. He did not like mistakes, just like Evashevski, who was the same way. Actually, playing for Evashevski got me ready for Coach Lombardi."

About covering Bob Hayes in the "Ice Bowl":

"I didn't believe anybody could outrun me for the first 50 [yards]. All I was concerned about was how I was going to stop him. He made my job kind of easy, too. When he came to the line of scrimmage, he would put his hands inside of his pants above the waist, and he did that about two or three times, and the ball wasn't thrown to him. Then when he was involved in a pass pattern, he had his hands out. So I said, 'OK, that's how I'm going to play him all day.' When he had his hands in, I just left him alone. I didn't even worry about him catching the ball."

The good news was when my story was published in the DI, Jeter was doing well. He was working for the Park District in Chicago, and his son, Rob Jeter, is still the men's basketball head coach at UW-Milwaukee. Unfortunately, Jeter passed away in November of 2008 and will be enshrined into the Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame this coming September posthumously.

Thinking back, working on that series was one of the highlights of my DI career, and Jeter was one of the interviews I did that I found so interesting back then. It was an honor to have had the privilege of speaking to him, and

even though he won't be among us when he is enshrined into the Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame, I'm glad he's being recognized and that everyone gets to know his story.