

49ers number 85 history

49ers number 85 history is a rich tapestry woven into the fabric of the San Francisco 49ers franchise. The number 85 has been donned by several players throughout the team's history, but it is most famously associated with Hall of Famer Jerry Rice. This article explores the significance of the number 85 for the 49ers, highlighting its notable players, memorable moments, and the impact these athletes had on the franchise and the NFL.

Early Years of the Number 85

The number 85 has been worn by various players since the inception of the San Francisco 49ers in 1946. While many of these players had commendable careers, none left a mark quite like Jerry Rice. Before diving into Rice's legacy, it is essential to acknowledge some of the earlier players who wore the number.

Notable Players Before Jerry Rice

1. Bob Windsor (1962-1963): Windsor was a tight end who played for the 49ers during the early 1960s. He was known for his solid blocking and occasional receptions, contributing to the team's offensive strategies.
2. Donn Moomaw (1966-1968): Moomaw, a versatile player, played both tight end and linebacker. His adaptability on the field showcased the evolving role of tight ends in the NFL during that era.
3. John Frank (1980-1986): Frank was a reliable tight end for the 49ers and was part of the roster during the team's 1981 Super Bowl victory. He was known for his excellent hands and ability to make crucial catches.

While these players contributed to the foundation of the franchise, it was Jerry Rice who transformed the number 85 into a symbol of excellence.

The Jerry Rice Era

Introduction to Jerry Rice

Jerry Rice, often regarded as the greatest wide receiver in NFL history, joined the 49ers in 1985 after being drafted as the 16th overall pick. His arrival marked the beginning of an era that would redefine the position and elevate the franchise's status in the league.

Record-Breaking Career

Rice's tenure with the 49ers was nothing short of extraordinary. Here are some key highlights:

- Super Bowl Victories: Rice helped lead the 49ers to three Super Bowl titles (XXIII, XXIV, and XXIX). He was named Super Bowl MVP in XXIII, showcasing his ability to perform in high-pressure situations.
- All-Time Leader: At the time of his retirement, Rice held numerous NFL records, including:
 - Most career receptions: 1,549
 - Most career receiving yards: 22,895
 - Most career touchdown receptions: 197
- Pro Bowl Selections: Rice was selected to the Pro Bowl 13 times, which speaks volumes about his consistency and dominance on the field.

Impact on the Franchise

Rice's impact on the 49ers cannot be overstated. He became the face of the franchise during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and his work ethic, professionalism, and performance set a standard for future generations of players. His success directly contributed to the 49ers' reputation as one of the premier franchises in professional football.

Post-Rice Era and the Legacy of Number 85

After Rice's departure from the 49ers in 2001, the number 85 remained a coveted jersey among players. While none reached the heights of Rice, several notable athletes donned the number, each contributing to the team's legacy in their unique way.

Players Who Followed Jerry Rice

1. Terrell Owens (1996-2003): Owens, who is now a Hall of Famer himself, wore number 85 after Rice. While he had a tumultuous career, his time with the 49ers showcased his incredible talent. Owens was a two-time Pro Bowler with the team and was instrumental in the offensive schemes during his tenure.
2. Brandon Lloyd (2003-2005): Lloyd wore number 85 and showed flashes of brilliance during his time with the 49ers. Known for his acrobatic catches and deep-threat ability, he had a memorable touchdown reception against the Seattle Seahawks in 2005 that showcased his skills.
3. Derrick Hamilton (2005): Hamilton had a brief stint with the 49ers but

wore the number 85. Although he didn't have a significant impact, he continued the tradition of wearing the iconic number.

4. Kendrick Bourne (2017-2020): Bourne, who wore number 85, emerged as a reliable target for the 49ers during his time with the team. He played a crucial role in the 49ers' run to Super Bowl LIV, showcasing his ability to make clutch catches.

The Significance of Number 85 in 49ers Culture

The number 85 holds a special place in the hearts of 49ers fans. It symbolizes not just the greatness of Jerry Rice but also the high standards of excellence that the franchise has maintained. The legacy of number 85 is characterized by:

- Excellence: The players who have worn this number are often among the best in the league, setting records and achieving accolades.
- Tradition: The number 85 has become synonymous with wide receiver excellence in the 49ers' history. It serves as a reminder of the team's commitment to outstanding performance.
- Inspiration: Younger athletes look up to the legends who wore 85, drawing inspiration from their achievements and work ethic.

Conclusion

The 49ers number 85 history is a testament to the impact of exceptional talent on a franchise. From the early days with players like Bob Windsor to the legendary career of Jerry Rice, and beyond to modern players like Kendrick Bourne, the number 85 has come to represent a lineage of excellence. As fans continue to celebrate the rich history of the 49ers, number 85 will forever be associated with one of the greatest wide receivers to ever play the game, as well as a legacy of inspiring performances and unforgettable moments on the gridiron. The story of this number is not just about statistics and records; it's about the hearts and passions of those who have worn it, creating a unique bond with fans and the franchise that will endure for generations to come.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who wore the number 85 for the San Francisco 49ers during their Super Bowl victories?

The number 85 was famously worn by wide receiver Brent Jones, who was a key player in the 49ers' Super Bowl victories in the 1980s and 1990s.

What impact did Brent Jones have on the 49ers while wearing number 85?

Brent Jones was known for his exceptional blocking skills and reliable receiving ability, contributing significantly to the 49ers' offensive success and helping them win three Super Bowls.

Has the number 85 been retired by the San Francisco 49ers?

No, the number 85 has not been officially retired by the San Francisco 49ers, so it remains available for future players.

Which other players have worn the number 85 for the 49ers besides Brent Jones?

Other players who have worn number 85 for the 49ers include tight end Eric Johnson and wide receiver J.J. Stokes.

What is the significance of number 85 in the context of the 49ers' franchise history?

Number 85 holds significance as it represents a period of success for the 49ers, especially during the era of Brent Jones, who was instrumental in their championship runs, making it a notable jersey number in the team's legacy.

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