



William C. "Bill" Davis

July 21, 1938 - January 18, 2020

BILL DAVIS

Long-Time NFL Coach and Personnel Executive

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- Davis was a long-time NFL coach and personnel executive with the Eagles (1976-78, 1986-90), Dolphins (1979-81) and Browns (1981-86). He assembled rosters that produced 30 Pro Bowl campaigns, four division titles and seven playoff appearances.
- In 1979, his first year in Miami, the Dolphins won the AFC East for the first time in five years with a 10-6 record. He also re-signed former Dolphin and Pro Football Hall of Famer Larry Csonka prior to that season.
- The Browns earned three playoff appearances during Davis' six-year tenure with the team, including back-to-back AFC Central championships in 1985-86. The Browns sent five players to the Pro Bowl each of those seasons.
- While in Cleveland, Davis acquired seven players who would later be selected by the team as Browns Legends, including quarterback Bernie Kosar, who would lead the team to three AFC Championship games in the late 1980s.
- He returned to Philadelphia, where he helped build three-consecutive playoff teams from 1988-90. Four players acquired by the Eagles during Davis' tenure were later inducted into the Eagles Hall of Fame, and another, Cris Carter, was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

William C. (Bill) Davis Sr. was born on July 21, 1938 in Youngstown, OH and built a career in football as a player, coach and executive that spanned five decades.

A standout prep athlete at Rayen (Youngstown, OH) High School, Davis played quarterback and defensive back at Mount Union and began his coaching career on the high school and college levels. He entered the NFL ranks with the Philadelphia Eagles in 1976, which began a 14-year tenure in the league as a coach and personnel director with the Eagles (1976-78, 1986-90), Dolphins (1979-81) and Browns (1981-86).

During his accomplished career, Davis assembled rosters that produced 30 Pro Bowl campaigns, four division titles and seven playoff appearances. He worked alongside prominent coaches such as Dick Vermeil, Don Shula, Sam Rutigliano, Marty Schottenheimer and Buddy Ryan.

After coaching at Austintown Fitch (OH) High School, Westminster (PA) College, Adrian (MI) College and Michigan State University, Davis was hired as the Eagles linebackers coach in 1976 before later coaching tight ends and special teams.

In February 1979, he was hired as director of pro personnel in Miami, where he negotiated all player contracts and evaluated NFL talent until May 1981. During his first season with the club, the Dolphins won their first division title in five years with a 10-6 record. Prior to that season, Davis re-signed former Dolphin Larry Csonka, who was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1987.

Davis returned to his native Ohio when he was hired by Art Modell as the

Browns VP of player personnel, a role in which he served from 1981-86.

“Bill Davis will be a 24-hour supervisor of all aspects of player personnel,” Modell said at the time. “He will be responsible for getting us the best 45 players via the draft, waiver process, trades and from free agency.”

Under Davis’ supervision, the Browns earned three playoff appearances in six years, including back-to-back AFC Central championships in 1985-86. The Browns sent five players to the Pro Bowl each of those seasons, and in 1985, Cleveland drafted quarterback Bernie Kosar, who would later lead the team to three AFC Championship games in the late 1980s. In addition to Kosar, the Browns acquired six other players during Davis’ tenure who would eventually be selected by the franchise as Browns Legends: Hanford Dixon (1981), Frank Minnifield (1984), Earnest Byner (1984), Kevin Mack (1985), Bob Golic (1982) and Eddie Johnson (1981).

Davis finished his NFL career where it began, in Philadelphia as the Eagles VP of player personnel from 1986-90. He was influential in the construction of three consecutive playoff teams from 1988-90, including the 1988 squad that claimed an NFC East title with a 10-6 record and went on to play in the famed “Fog Bowl” against the Chicago Bears.

Four players acquired by Philadelphia during Davis’ tenure were later inducted into the Eagles Hall of Fame: Jerome Brown (1987), Eric Allen (1988), Seth Joyner (1986) and Clyde Simmons (1986). Cris Carter, who was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2008, was drafted by the Eagles in the fourth round of the 1987 supplemental draft.

Davis and his wife, Joanne, raised three children, Diane, Bill Jr. and Bret. Bill Jr. is a 25-year NFL coaching veteran who is currently with the Arizona

Cardinals as the team's linebackers coach.

Bill Davis Coaching Breakdown

Year School/Team Position

1964–66 Austintown Fitch (OH) HS Head Coach

1967 Westminster (PA) College Assistant Coach

1968–72 Adrian (MI) College Head Coach

1973–75 Michigan State Offensive Backs

1976–77 Philadelphia Eagles Linebackers

1978 Philadelphia Eagles Tight Ends and Special Teams

NFL Personnel Career

Year Team Position

1979–81 Miami Dolphins Director of Pro Personnel

1981–86 Cleveland Browns VP of player personnel

1986–90 Philadelphia Eagles VP of player personnel

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Tribute Wall



“ *William C. "Bill" Davis*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *RIP-Coach Davis all the players from Frank Ohl Jr High
Want to thank you for the undefeated season and the
Great teaching of growing up under his watchful yet
Needed glare of the future transferred to his team.
God Bless and Peace to the Davis Family
Pete Getch and Bluedevil Team.*

Pete Getch - January 23, 2020 at 03:30 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for
the family of William C. "Bill" Davis.*



January 21, 2020 at 09:05 AM