

# Former EFL Oiler, Boxers' running back McGee to enter AFA Hall of Fame



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*Former Brockton High star Jay McGee, who played for the Randolph Oilers and now lives in New Bedford, goes into the American Football Association Hall of Fame on Friday in a ceremony to be held in Bloomingdale, Illinois. Courtesy Photo*

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**By Matt Tempesta**

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From his time as a standout running back at Brockton High School to his 14 years spent with the Randolph Oilers of the Eastern Football League, Jay McGee's football career has brought him many memorable moments.

The moment awaiting him Friday night, however, may be the best.

McGee will be in Bloomingdale, Ill., where he will join the likes of Johnny Unitas and Vince Lombardi when he is inducted into the semipro wing of the American Football Association Hall of Fame.

"It's something I wasn't expecting," said McGee, who now lives in New Bedford. "I'm very grateful to be in the hall of fame. It means a lot to me."

Playing for the Boxers in the early Eighties, McGee was team MVP his junior year in 1981 and started in all three Super Bowls for Brockton.

McGee was a three-time Enterprise all-scholastic after leading the state in Div. 1 scoring in 1980 and 1981, amassing 170 points and 1,300 yards rushing in his senior year after rushing for 1,620 yards and scoring 31 touchdowns his junior year to earn induction into the Brockton High School Hall of Fame in 1998.

"Brockton is like the football capital of New England," said Oilers general manager and owner Peter O'Kane. "Jay was a legend there."

After graduating in 1982, McGee received a scholarship to play football at the University of Hawaii. He returned home to attend Massasoit Community College and Mass. Bay Community College, but was a sophomore tailback for the Rainbows in 1985.

When he returned to the mainland in 1986, McGee discovered semi-pro football.

“When I came back from Hawaii, my oldest brother, Skip, played that year when they were called the Brockton Oilers,” said McGee. “So when I came back home, it was something I knew about and I just called up Peter (O’Kane) one day and said I wanted to come out and try out for the team.”

“No one was ever better at playing his position than Jay McGee,” said O’Kane, who nominated McGee for induction into the AFA Hall of Fame. “He could do everything. He was a phenomenal blocker. He could run inside, he could run outside.

“The guy never missed a practice. He was a leader. He led by example. He was such a hard worker. You can’t say enough about him.”

Long-time friend Mimi DiGiammo witnessed McGee’s impressive career first-hand. For DiGiammo, there’s no difference between the McGee she watched on the field, and the one she has called a friend for 30 years.

“Off the field, Jay McGee is a humble, honest, hard-working man who remains a respectable citizen and lives a quiet, low-key life,” said DiGiammo. “Jay is a football icon in Brockton, right up there with Ken MacAfee Jr, Rich Miano, Rudy Harris, and Armond Colombo.

“Jay is a deserving recipient of the honors he has humbly accepted over the past few years, and he is a good, decent guy.”

Wearing the same No. 21 with the Oilers as he did with the Boxers, McGee set the standing record for all-time rushing yards in the EFL with more than 2,000, leading Randolph to a league championship in 1990 and leading the league in fumble recoveries in 1996 while never missing a single game.

Now 45, McGee looks back on his days in the EFL with fondness.

“It was a great bunch of guys, tight-knit guys,” said McGee. “We didn’t really have any superstars that year. We just all played together. I sort of miss playing, but I got to point in my life where I was all set. I had played 14 years. The thing I miss most is hanging out with the guys.”

McGee now works for Hytex, a textile manufacturer in Randolph, and still attends games and helps out whenever he can with his former team.

While it’s been almost a decade since he has played in the EFL, McGee says he has definitely seen some changes in the league.

“I think when I was playing, it seems like we went to practice and we weren’t late,” said McGee. “I’m getting this from Pete. He says sometimes guys don’t show up to games. The competition is not as competitive as when I was playing.”

“It’s a lot of commitment. You have to work then you have to go to practice. It’s a love of the game.”

That love of football is what has brought McGee to Bloomingdale, a city just west of Chicago. Even though McGee’s football career has spanned the U.S., he just can’t help but feel some jitters leading up to the big induction ceremony as one of 16 semipro football players going in.

“I’m a little nervous,” said McGee. “I don’t know what to expect because it’s out in Chicago and I don’t even know anybody. I don’t think there’s anyone from this area that’s being inducted. So I’m not going to know anybody once I get there.”

McGee is glad that Skip will be going with him.

“Me and my brother are like best friends,” said McGee. “He’s very happy for me and I’m very happy that he’s going with me. It’s a special moment.”

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