



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



EARL MONROE LUNSFORD

October 19, 1933 - September 3, 2008

Stillwater High School Class of 1952

14th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

October 10, 2009

Earl Lunsford was born October 19, 1933 in Mehan, Oklahoma to Jess M. Lunsford and Joeceil (Sinclair) Lunsford. Earl played football, baseball and wrestled at SHS. He made the Oklahoma All-State baseball team in 1952. He probably would have made the All-State football team but was injured and

missed 6 or 7 games.

After graduating with the Class of 1952 at Stillwater High School, Earl entered Oklahoma A&M College where he played football. He earned a bachelor of science in geology and a master of education from Oklahoma State university and then joined the Calgary Stampeders in 1956, which was interrupted by serving 2 years in the U.S. Army.

Lunsford returned to Calgary in 1959 and became the hammering Calgary Stampeders' fullback until he retired following the 1963 season. He was a three-time recipient of the league's most outstanding player award. He had 28 100-yard games and posted five 1,000-yard seasons. It was said that he did not have great speed, but he had great balance and power. He ran low and he ran hard. His wrestling experience gave him great balance and body control. He finished his professional career with 6,994 yards rushing, second to Kelvin Anderson on the team's all-time list, and his 55 rushing touchdowns is tops in Stamps history. Once he scored five touchdowns in a game. No wonder they called him "Earthquake", a name given to him by Stillwater's own Otis Wile while playing football for A&M.

Earl was admired for his lack of pretense. A former teammate, George Hansen said, "He's just Earl. There are no airs about him at all, just a good, down-to-earth guy. He was as tough as hell."

Lunsford returned to Canada after a short stint of coaching the Stillwater Pioneers along side then head coach Jim Harris. Upon his return to Winnipeg, Earl became the general manager of the Blue Bombers, from 1968-1982 and left a lasting legacy on the franchise. The improvements made to the Blue Bomber's facility were made during his regime. The stadium was expanded from 22,000 to 32,000 seats and additions were made to the East and West side upper decks. He was a football executive who understood that professional sports entertainment was a business.

"Earl was passionately committed to the Canadian Football League, both as a player and a general manager," said Paul Robson, who worked under Lunsford as Blue Bombers assistant GM. "He was a straight-talking, no-nonsense Oklahoman who served the Winnipeg Football Club extremely well." After leaving the Blue Bombers, he served as general manager of the Calgary Football Club until 1987.

Lunsford was elected to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1983. He was inducted, as a builder, into the Winnipeg Football Club Hall of Fame in 1990.

Away from the game, Lunsford was known as a man of honesty and integrity.

Presenter
Bob Andrew
Stillwater High School Class of 1952