



(1999) This Homecoming Special For Brister

By Paul J. Letlow

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THIBODAUX – Denver Broncos quarterback Bubby Brister is still enjoying the prime years of a lengthy NFL career and owns two Super Bowl rings to boot.

But he ranked his induction into the Northeast Louisiana University athletic Hall of Fame Saturday night among his greatest honors.

"It means a great deal," said Brister, one of five NLU sports figures who were inducted into the Hall during a banquet at Ewing Coliseum.

Fellow inductees included former sports information director Bob "The Dean" Anderson, swimming great Dr. Scott Claycomb, women's basketball coach Linda Harper and two-sport star Alton Thomas, who played baseball and football.

Brister, a Monroe native and Neville graduate, played quarterback at NLU in 1984 and 1985. Brister was originally recruited by Alabama but signed a pro baseball contract. He later attended Tulane before transferring to NLU.

"Northeast gave me my second chance," Brister said. "I live in Colorado now, but Monroe will always be my home. It's always great to come back."

In two seasons he completed 205-of-376 passes for 3,030 yards and 17 touchdowns. As a senior Brister threw for 2,880 yards and was named Louisiana's Offensive Player of the Year.

Originally a third-round draft pick of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Brister played for the Philadelphia Eagles and the New York Jets before signing with the Broncos in 1997.

His most recent claim to fame is as the probable successor to John Elway, if the future NFL Hall-of-Famer decides to retire this off-season. Even Brister, a 12-year veteran with 75 starts and 95 games played in the league, isn't sure what his buddy Elway plans to do.

"I talked to John the other day," said Brister, who brought teammate and star linebacker Bill Romanowski along for the festivities and a bass fishing trip. "I think he's 90 percent sure he's not coming back but the three-peat is dangling in front of his face. He has a chance to do something with the team that no one has ever done and I think that's weighing heavily on his mind."

Brister said he's ready to take the reins if Elway does leave. "I feel 27," said Brister, who turns 37 in August. "I haven't been beat up in a long time. I'm healthy and understand the

West Coast system. I feel like I can step in if John retires and get the job done and hopefully I can take us to a third Super Bowl."

Overall the evening was filled with memories and stories galore as the newly-minted inductees took their turns in the spotlight.

Harper is the coach who guided the Lady Indians in their finest era, a memorable stretch that included a Final Four berth in 1985. Harper, who owns an overall record of 213-121, coached two of the greatest players in school history - Eun Jung Lee and Lisa Ingram. Together they led the Lady Indians to a 102-15 record from 1982-86.

"Any success that we had, I just had a small part of it," Harper said. "There were a lot of other people who had credit in it too. So much of the credit has to go to the players and assistant coaches."

Anderson served as NLU's SID for 33 years, helping serve up publicity for the school's many great athletes. When he retired in 1994, the school named the press box at Malone Stadium "The Bob Anderson Press Box."

"I'm tickled to death to go in," Anderson said. "I don't think I deserve it, but I'm dang sure going in anyway."

Claycomb, who is now an ophthalmologist in Warren, Ark., was an Academic All-America in 1986 and is the first swimmer to go into the NLU Hall. He ended his career with school records in the 100 breast stroke, the 200 breast stroke and the 200 individual medley. Claycomb was on two record-setting 400 medley relay teams and led NLU to its first two 10-win seasons.

Thomas parlayed his natural speed into a productive two-sport career at NLU from 1963-66.

The Shreveport product was all-conference three times as an outfielder and twice as a football player at two different positions. He was all-Gulf States Conference as a running back and a defensive back. He won the GSC stolen base title in 1965.

More than 30 current NLU Hall of Fame members returned to campus for the event, which was conducted by the N-Club. There are now 78 members in the Hall, which was established in 1977.

Courtesy of:

Paul J. Letlow
Sports editor
The (Monroe, La.) News-Star
411 N. Fourth St.
Monroe, La., 71201
(800) 259-7788, ext. 294
PLETLOW@monroe.gannett.com
www.thenewsstar.com