

July 18, 2006



HARRY CARSON

Pre Hall of Fame Induction Press Conference
Gallagher's Steak House
New York, New York

THE MODERATOR: Folks, we have got a collection of humanity that rivals none in the other room, which is making its way in here right now.

The formal part of this program will be **Bill Parcells** will say a few words. **Willie Jeffries**, **Harry's** college coach at **South Carolina State**, will say a few words. **George Martin**, because we can't bring 15 players up here and **George** played with **Harry** longer than any of his former teammates, **George** will say a few words, then **Harry** will say a few words.

Once **Harry** is done up here, we'll pull this podium out of here so we can spread this front table out a little bit, and we'll have an open Q and A with the whole cast of characters here.

Coach Parcells will lead off, set the tone.

BILL PARCELLS: I appreciate all of you players showing up here to pay tribute to **Harry**. When **Pat** asked me to do that, to say a few words, I told him this would be an easy one for me.

Over the past several years, five or six years, I've been getting calls every time the vote for the **Hall of Fame** came up from different media members, former players, friends, everybody that was interested in **Harry**. They always asked me, "**Bill**, you think **Harry** has a chance?"

My answer was always the same to them. I said, "Well, it will be a cinch."

They would respond by saying, "He was one of your players, you're prejudiced." I would agree with that. I would say, "Yeah, I am prejudiced."

They would say, "He has good talent." I'd say, "Yeah, but talent is a common thing." Look at all these guys right here; every one of them had talent, okay? It's like getting the lemons; you still have to make the lemonade. He did it.

Here are the reasons why I think **Harry** has some special qualities that are unique, and I think those are the only people that should be in the **Hall of Fame**, are the ones with unique qualities.

One, not many people know this, **Marty** knows, we were talking about it before the luncheon, **Harry** made a transition that was very difficult in professional football. He was a small college player, he never played on his feet in college, he was a defensive lineman. His college coach, **Willie Jeffries**, prepared him well. **Marty Schottenheimer** must have had the vision, because he got him started.

I can only think of two other players in my tenure in the **National Football League** that have played with any success that made the same transition, and that's **Matt Millen** and a guy name **LeVon Kirkland**, defensive tackle to 9-time Pro Bowl linebacker.

The other thing is he stood the test of time. He stood the test of time. He had to walk down that tunnel on a lot of icy Sundays in the **Meadowlands** when he wasn't feeling pretty good, probably wondering how he was going to get through these games he had to play. But he was there for all of us, most every Sunday for upwards of 12 years.

It wasn't like he didn't have good players around him. Take a look at these guys right here. He was able to separate himself from good players on a good team. He was a vital part. He was a key part to very successful defenses - sometimes great defenses - for a sustained period of years.

Here's some things you don't know. He's a good practice player. He's a team leader. He's a defensive signal caller. He served as captain. Those jobs aren't available to people that are selfish. They're only available to guys that are good teammates, good players, good leaders.

The only thing about the son-of-a-gun he couldn't do is he couldn't win a coin toss. I sent him out there for a hundred coin tosses, I bet you he didn't win 20 (smiling).

Every time I would talk to members of the media about **Harry**, I told them, I said, Why don't you ask some guys that really know, call **Schottenheimer** or **Bill Belichick**, or guys who spent their lives studying film and evaluating players, guys that really know. I guess they finally listened, talked to somebody.

So in a couple weeks, **Harry**, you're going to join your buddy, **Taylor**. That's a nice pair, a pair I'm very proud of. It's a pair that might beat any full house that I know. You're going to join him.

I want to commend you on your career, on how you helped me personally. I think all of us in this room that were with you at any period of time, probably our futures wouldn't have been the same hadn't you come along at the same time we did. I thank you for that. I congratulate you.

You're a difference-maker, pal (applause).

THE MODERATOR: **Coach Jeffries**, the microphone is all yours.

WILLIE JEFFRIES: Thank you. **President Bush** couldn't make it, but he sent a wire. So here's your wire (presenting **Harry Carson** a wire hanger).

Anyway, let me say that I've been involved in every important event in **Harry's** life. And, **Bill**, the reason he was not a good coin-toss-caller, I had him doing that, but I had to take it away from him. We went to play **Georgia Southern**. They said, "**Captain Carson** from **South Carolina State**, call it in the air," and **Harry** said "50 cent." So you shouldn't have even put him out there (laughter).

But I certainly would like to thank the **New York Giants** organization for having this press conference for **Harry Carson** to show your appreciation that he is an **NFL Hall of Famer** representing the **New York Giants**. Thank you, also, for inviting us up here.

It's easy for me when your best player is your best person. What a great -- that's just so great for a college coach, when your best player does everything right, was an honor student.

And I would like to say this. **Charlie Brown** played for the **Redskins**, and **Edwin Bailey** played for the **Seahawks**, and **Donnie Shell** had just graduated. They're a pretty good group down there. I played a 2-9 defense, put 9 over there, and **Harry** and **Donnie** on this side. Not two deep into the sidelines.

Charlie Brown and **Edwin** always copied **Harry's** paper because **Harry** could really ace a test; he really could. I'm not just putting that on.

Charlie Brown and **Edwin** would go early to get their seats so they would be right on **Harry's** shoulder, and **Harry** would come in late, ace the test, and leave. Old **Charlie Brown** and **Edwin**, they were looking, they got it all, they got everything. The next day the instructor said, Congratulations, class - class, you know one of those big-time professors - we had three young men to make 100 on my test: **Harry Carson**, **Harry Carson**, and **Harry Carson** (laughter).

They wrote it all.

To **Bill** and to **Marty Schottenheimer** and to **Bill Belichick** also, I know the coaches did a lot, and we shouldn't have had to try and get votes like **Harry** was a politician. We shouldn't have had to do that. They should have known the difference between a middle linebacker and an inside linebacker, some of the guys that were writing. They just didn't know the difference, the nomenclature of the techniques, of the intricacies of what it took to play that position.

We're happy that the votes came in. When you need 80%, that's a big percentage.

Harry, I enjoyed doing the **Valerie Fund** with you.

I'm not going to talk as long as **Coach Parcells** because my little talk will resemble what **Elizabeth Taylor** told each of her eight husbands: "I won't keep you long, I'm just gonna keep it short" (laughter).

We had a great golf tournament for **Harry**. I'd like to say this in closing. **Harry**, congratulations. It couldn't happen to a greater guy. We thank you for representing **South Carolina State**. I have a little note for you from **Coach Buddy Pough**, he was **Harry's** teammate. I'm just going to give it to you.

In that note from **South Carolina State University**, they're simply saying to **Harry**, Thank you for representing us so well. They are still striving, **Harry**, to keep that level of competence.

Thank you very much (applause).

THE MODERATOR: **George**, it's all you. **George Martin**.

GEORGE MARTIN: Good afternoon. Here's what I'd like to say to **John Mara**: **John**, thank you very much for putting this on, a wonderful tradition of **New York** football, the **Giants**, that organization. It shows the class and the dignity that that organization represents. I am just proud to be up here among this distinguished group of alumni. It is a proud fraternity of which if you ever get entry into it, you will never forget it.

I'm here today for one really simple fact, and that's to congratulate my long-time friend, because I'm the only one of his teammates that played with him for the full breadth and length of his career.

What I'd like to share with you today has nothing to do with his exploits on the field, but, more importantly, the type of man that **Harry Carson** is. To me, the greatest attributes that he has did not take place on the field of play. Although this **Hall of Fame** induction has been the journey of a thousand miles, I can tell you this, and **Harry** would echo the fact, that both the journey and the destination have been all the more sweet because of the people he has surrounded himself with.

Each one of us on this podium up here are indebted to **Harry** to some degree or another. I want to share with you just one series of stories that really reflect the kind of man that my friend is, because somehow this will be lost in the back pages of the sporting news. You won't see it found in *Sports Illustrated* or anything like that, but it talks about the quality of the man himself.

For those of you know who our organization, and I mean our organization, both of us who are active players and former players, took a hit this last year with our leadership and losing some of those individuals who have been instrumental in building this proud franchise. Of course it was expected of all of us to be there, front and present, on an occasion such as that. Sure enough, our leader - and I include myself in that - **Harry Carson** was front and center, as was expected.

What you don't know is that throughout his entire career, those individuals who were less than stellar dignitaries have also seen the presence of **Harry Carson** making his tribute and his respect.

It started out so many years ago. I remember an incident with **Doug Kotar**. For those of you with graying temples and expanding waistlines, you will remember the name **Doug Kotar**, No. 44, played with the **Giants**. He ultimately succumbed to cancer. It was **Harry Carson** who gathered all of his teammates, troops, and formulated a visitation to **Doug** who was still being hospitalized, and subsequently set up a scholarship fund for his kids. That spoke to me in ways that you could never imagine.

Subsequently, there was an individual who was in a car accident, well, not too long ago in which he almost lost his life. He stated to me emphatically that had it not been for **Harry Carson** paying out of his own pocket, coming to his bedside and reassuring him that there was something for him to fight and to live for, that he would not have made it. That was a backup quarterback by the name of **Jeff Rutledge**.

Most recently, there's a teammate, former teammate, whose name has faded from the annals of professional football, who started out with the **Pittsburgh Steelers**, who ended up with the **New York Giants**, who unfortunately passed away. He did so with no fanfare, no bands, no parades. Yet, still the gentleman who we call our team captain, **Harry Carson**, was there front and

center, paying his respects, acknowledging the fraternity of which he was a part of. That's the kind of person that **Harry Carson** is.

So I can tell you in all honesty that his ascension into the **Hall of Fame** is well-deserved, but it's not because he's been a 9-time Pro Bowler, it's not because he's been a leader by example on the field, and that each and every one of us is proud to follow him into the field of battle; it's been because he realizes that the impact in the field of life is more important than the impact that he's had in the field of play.

I want to congratulate my partner and tell him that it's been a real pleasure and a privilege, and that the honor **George Martin** holds most sacredly is that one day he can tell his grandchildren that he played with the **Legendary Harry Carson**.

Thank you all. And, **Harry**, very well deserved, my friend (applause).

THE MODERATOR: The podium is yours, **Harry**, if you want to say a few words. Then we'll do a Q and A with the whole group.

HARRY CARSON: **George**, you got me on that one.

Good afternoon, everybody. I want to echo what has already been said, especially by **George**. I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity to play the game of football starting in high school, Boys Club, high school, and to go on and play at **South Carolina State**, play black college football and play amongst some of the best talent to play like **Walter Payton**, **John Stallworth**, **Doug Williams**, and so forth.

I stand here today because **South Carolina State**, in particular **Coach Jeffries**, quipped me into being a leader, into being a good player on the college level. He became basically my father figure, my mentor, and he was the one who delivered the news to me that my father had passed away. We've always maintained a very close relationship. Any time I have any important decisions to make, I try to run it past **Coach Jeffries** because I trust his wisdom.

When he asked me to make the switch from defensive end to nose tackle my senior year, I was like, Whoa, don't want to play nose tackle. But for the betterment of the team, I was willing to make that adjustment.

As it turned out, it was really a blessing to have been able to play the nose tackle position as a senior because then **Marty Schottenheimer** had the foresight to draft me. I want to thank **Marty**, because **Marty** could have drafted anyone. He had the pick in the fourth round. **Giants** had two fourth-round picks. First-round pick, drafted **Troy Archer**, and two fourth-round picks. He could have drafted anyone, but he chose me, a player who had never played a position of linebacker, to draft, and he brought me to camp a month early to teach me how to play middle linebacker.

Everything I tried to do, that he tried to get me to do, I did ass-backwards, but I think I got the same or better results. He just sort of threw his hands up and just allowed me to go out and play.

Marty is an excellent teacher, excellent coach, and I owe him so much because **Marty** prepared me for coaches to follow. **Marty** prepared me for **Bill Parcells**. **Bill** instituted the 3-4 defense. I had become very comfortable playing a (4-3) defense. I was able to make the adjustment, especially with you bringing in a talent like a **Lawrence Taylor**. I mean, I had the opportunity to play with **Brad** and **Brian Kelley**, **Brad Van Pelt** and **Brian Kelley**. We thought that we had a strong linebacking core, and we sort of told the **Giants** and told the media, Why would you bother wanting to go out and choose another linebacker when you have three really good linebackers? And they chose this guy, and it didn't take us long. It was like maybe the second day at practice that we realized why they chose him with the second pick in the draft.

But **Bill Parcells** worked with me. He knew I was a pretty good linebacker, but he knew that I could do better, and he worked with me to hone my skills and just get better.

When **Bill** took over as the head coach, I sort of fell into the lap of **Bill Belichick**. There were times we didn't know if **Belichick** knew what he was talking about or not (laughter)...

But lo and behold, he was one of the most brilliant coaches that we had the opportunity to play for. It's really been a pleasure to have had the opportunity, first, to play the game of football. It's been great to have had the opportunity to play for the **Giants** organization. I've learned so much from these men who are up here as coaches how to play the game hard, fair, play smart, be in shape, and that's all I wanted to do when I stepped on the field. I wanted to not venture too far away from what they were trying to teach me and teach us to do, but play smart defense.

The guys who are here, I love all of these guys. This is why I'm standing here. These coaches, all of these players. **Jim Burt**, my personal protector. He started the whole Gatorade thing. It was his idea because he knew I was **Parcells'** guy and he knew that if he did it by himself, **Parcells** was gonna have his ass. So he was smart enough, even though he went to the **University of Miami**, he was smart enough to know that he better have some help, so he asked me to help him. That was in '85. Then '86, the whole thing sort of just took off.

Phil Simms, who battled through adversity and established how tough he was as a quarterback and basically led the **Giant** organization with his leadership in the '80s and then '90s.

I look at **Pepper Johnson** over here. I remember we were in **Green Bay** and, you know, Saturday afternoon, you're flying to **Green Bay** to play a game. There's nothing to do in **Green Bay**. I remember watching **Minnesota** and **Ohio State**, and I kept looking at this guy, I think it was No. 99 or something like that. I said, That guy's gonna be a great player for somebody some day. Lo and behold, the **Giants** drafted him, and they drafted him to play my spot. I made sure every time he did something, I did it a little bit better. He kept me going.

Gary Reasons, who came in. **Gary** helped to solidify the linebacking core. As linebackers, we took a great amount of pride in the way we played the game, because the **Giants** had great defense. They didn't have anything else, they had great defense. That's one of the things I wanted to do as a player when I came on board, was to help perpetuate the defense of the organization. So **Gary Reasons** came on board after **Brad** and **Brian** had left, and **Carl Banks**, and he was able to help the linebacking core and play well.

And on and on and on.

Brad and **Brian**, those are the guys who got **Lawrence Taylor** put into rehab (laughter).

I had nothing to do with it. I had absolutely nothing to do with it. **Lawrence** followed those guys around, that's why he went to rehab (laughter).

But standing here, I can stand here and talk all day about what happened on the football field, but, truth be known, I'm more about off the field. It was about these guys were my guys, whether it was in high school, whether it was in college. Those guys in college, those were my guys. I felt personally responsible for them.

Coach Jeffries can talk about the story about where we went to play I think **North Carolina A&T** and we were staying at a hotel. There were some girls trying to get into a room. Lo and behold, I was the one who had to go out and make these girls go away.

JIM BURT: Yeah, right. Yeah, okay.

LAWRENCE TAYLOR: Lo and behold (laughter).

HARRY CARSON: But I felt a sense of responsibility as a leader, as a team leader at **South Carolina State**, and I think I brought it on to the **Giants**.

It's one thing to go out and play on the football field week in and week out. It's another thing to go through what you have to go through in training camp and during the course of the week, and you have to try to keep things together. It's not easy to keep things together, especially when the team isn't playing well and we have to circle our wagons against you guys in the media because you're always looking for something to write about negatively. We had to find ways of just staying together.

That's when I would go to **Bill** and I'd say, "**Bill**, can I take the guys to Beefsteak Charlie's." We'd go, all the guys would come together. We would have drinks, eat at Beefsteak Charlie's. I think situations like that are where you find out what people are made of. You can play together and not really know each other, but when you let down your guard and you're able to share a meal together and just be together, you learn what makes another person tick.

So I've always loved and cared for the guys who I played with. I don't know, it's just something that is inside of me. Getting in the car and driving seven hours to see **Jeff Rutledge** because I wanted to make sure that he was okay and then getting the word back to my teammates, that, to me, is what being a leader is all about.

The situation with **Doug Kotar**, after practice, you know, going and spending time with a guy who's in a hospital, a guy who you've gone through wars with, together. You have to care about individuals like that. That's the thing that I feel good about. It's not so much about how many tackles I made in a game and all of that stuff, it's about these guys up here. Because as I wear this **Super Bowl** ring, there are only 52 other guys who have earned the right to wear this ring. We're really bonded.

But I think anybody who steps on the football field and goes through what you have to go through, especially on a day like today, you bond. I mean, you really have to love the game to put all of that equipment on and go out and play. And when you don't want to run one more lap but you have to, and your teammates are urging you and they're just encouraging you to make it through one more lap, whether it's on the college level, on the high school level, on the professional level, you know, you bond. You're going through all those experiences together.

So those are the things that I think about more than anything else. You can throw stats out there. You can throw numbers out there. If those were the reasons why I didn't make the **Hall of Fame** years ago, it really doesn't matter to me, because all of that stuff is irrelevant. But I know, and I know very clearly, this is the reason why I wrote the letter to the **Hall of Fame** to have my name removed from consideration even though everybody said, Don't do it. I felt very comfortable with it. I knew where I stood with my teammates. I knew that I'd earned their respect over the years. I also knew that those people who I played against, by virtue of the fact of going to nine Pro Bowls, my teammates could not vote for me, my coaches could not vote for me. It's the people I played against who voted for me. The one thing you can't do, you can fool your coaches sometimes, you can fool your teammates sometimes, but you can't fool those people that you line up against. So I knew that I had earned their respect.

So I felt comfortable just going on with my life and just enjoying what I had accomplished as a player. I feel, once again, very, very blessed to have had the opportunity to know all of these individuals up here, to be coached by all of these coaches because they're really fantastic coaches. They know what buttons to push, they know how to get the max out of the players that they've coached.

I feel tremendously honored to have had the opportunity to play with all of these guys up here. I consider them my brothers. If they ever need anything, they know that they can just pick up the phone and I'll always be there for them. So that's what this whole **Hall of Fame** thing is for me. It's about them, because I certainly wouldn't be here without these coaches, without these players, and so many other players who have had a profound impact on me over the years.

In a couple of weeks, I know many of these guys won't be able to be there; coaches have to coach, and some of these players will probably be going to play golf instead of coming to camp, but that's okay, **Curtis McGriff**.

Lawrence will be there in his golf attire.

But it's just an honor to be elected to the **Hall of Fame** and represent all of these guys here, because in terms of my own personal thing, I don't need honors to validate who I am. I think I said that over and over. Every year **Gary** would call me, **Gary Myers**, and **Steve Serby** would call me. They'd wonder how I felt about the whole **Hall of Fame** thing. I never needed honors to validate who I am. I feel very comfortable, very secure with who I am. But the specialness of this whole thing is about these guys here, about these coaches, about my athletic directors at **South Carolina State**, **Andy Robustelli** who was the GM when I was drafted, **George Young** who we had our battles but I had the utmost respect for him, and **Wellington Mara**, the owner of the organization, who lived and died with the team, who sometimes didn't get a fair shake here in **New York**, especially back in the late '70s. But I think about **Mr. Mara** and how much he wanted this honor for me. A question might come up today about the letter and my whole mindset about going to **Canton**, but when I went to **Mr. Mara's** going-home service, I realized how much he wanted this for me and how even if I was elected, I had to act nice, play fair. I didn't want to tarnish his memory, because this is something that he wanted so much for me, as is the case of **Bill Parcels**, **Bill Belichick**, **Marty Schottenheimer**, **Willie Jeffries**, **William Long**, my high school coach, **Ladson Cubbage**, my other high school coach.

I give thanks to all of them and all of these guys here, because they've made it possible for me to be here in this position this afternoon.

Thank you (applause).

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

HARRY CARSON: I promised him that if I was the President, that he would be my **Helen Thomas** because he was the first member of the media who I encountered when I came to not in training camp, but even prior to training camp. This man and I go back a long, long way. So **Dr. Howard Livingston**, you get the honor of asking the first question.

DR. HOWARD LIVINGSTON: I think it might be more interesting if I talk about how we first met. It was two weeks before camp opened up. **Harry** was there, learning how to run backwards. He was out there on the field running backwards. We were in the cafeteria and he was eating at one table and I was at another table. I looked over, something didn't look right. I go over there and say, You're too (inaudible) to be one of my students. The **Giants** haven't arrived yet. Who are you?

He said to me, **Harry Carson**.

I said, "Fourth-Round draft pick, defensive-end from **South Carolina State**."

His chin hit his chest. He said, "I didn't think anybody north of the **Mason-Dixon** line ever heard of me," and I said, "Well, you met one who has." That was our first meeting, and for 30 years we've been friends.

HARRY CARSON: For 30 years **Dr. Livingston** and I have always been friends. He's always been a very, very good supporter of mine. I think he's also one of those individuals who sort of lived and died with the whole process of the **Hall of Fame**. **Dr. Livingston**, I'm so glad you're here.

Q. Two parts. Dorothy Jo McDuffie is she still alive?

HARRY CARSON: As far as I know, she's still alive.

Q. For those of you who don't know, she took Harry to North Carolina A&T --

HARRY CARSON: She took me to **South Carolina State**.

Q. They reneged on the scholarship.

HARRY CARSON: **Coach Jeffries** was at **North Carolina A&T** when they reneged on the whole scholarship.

Q. She was a teacher who said you're going to go to college, went down there, and made Coach Jeffries watch film?

HARRY CARSON: Yeah, I was a little - well, I still am a bit impulsive - but my coach in high school, I had a bad ankle. He yelled, as coaches do sometimes. He said, **Carson**, if you can't run any faster than that, get off the field.

So I got off the field. And so with that, basically, I cut my own throat in terms of scholarships and so forth. But I'm just one of those people that react sometimes and I don't think about what I do, I just go ahead and react.

So when I walked off the field, basically I was quitting the football team. So they finished the season and there were no scholarship offers in the mail for me. But **James Madison**, who was one of our assistant principals, thought that I should be playing somewhere. He packed me up and took me to **North Carolina A&T**, his alma mater. This is when I first met **Coach Jeffries**, because he was an assistant coach at **North Carolina A&T** at that time. Coach Hornsby Howell (phonetic) offered me a full scholarship. I thought I had it made in the shade. I went back home a few days later, got a letter from **North Carolina A&T** indicating that they did not have scholarship money.

So **Dorothy Jo McDuffie**, who worked as a teacher and also as an advisor in my school, my high school, she also thought I should be playing ball somewhere. She packed me up and took me to **South Carolina State**. It was at that point that I met **Orrie Banks**, who was the head coach at that time, and **James Carson**. Right on the spot after watching film they gave me a full scholarship.

Q. She told them to watch film.

HARRY CARSON: Yeah, they took film down. We watched film and they gave me a full scholarship. After that season, **Coach Banks** was fired. We won one game by one point. There was some individuals who were telling me that I should transfer to **University of South Carolina** where **Coach Banks** had gone to. Instead, I just decided to stay, and **Coach Jeffries** was named the head coach. I remembered **Coach Jeffries** from **North Carolina A&T**, so it worked out very well.

The attitude that he brought to the school, to the team, was fantastic. So I sort of gravitated to **Coach Jeffries** and the coaching staff and did whatever they wanted me to do.

One thing I didn't want to do -- and I knew how strict he was. He sort of set the tempo early. I knew how strict he was. There were guys who were being sent home right and left because of smoking grass or smoking or drinking or whatever. We had to run a 12-minute run almost every week, and he would stand and smell the guys as they would walk by. You could smell stuff coming out of a person's pores, sort of like **Brad Van Pelt** when he would come to practice. We could smell the vodka coming out of his system (laughter).

But that's the way **Coach Jeffries** was, and I knew he was strict. I didn't want to lose my scholarship. So, I mean, that's the story. **Dorothy Jo McDuffie** was a catalyst, she was instrumental in getting me to **South Carolina State**.

I said, when I left as a senior, I said **South Carolina State**, my four years at **South Carolina State** were the best four years of my life. And while I've had a good career, I still maintain that my four years at **South Carolina State** were the absolute best four years of my life.

Q. Bill Parcells, was there a moment when you took over as assistant coach and first coached Harry that kind of made something go off in your mind where you knew that he was going to be a special player, as he was?

BILL PARCELLS: Well, we put the 3-4 in. I wanted to put him at the weak side because that was a position that we felt was going to have to be the high producer. As I said, he had a pretty good background. The only thing that was different was

now he was encountering a different style of game, and basically the middle linebacker in a 4-3 is a free player where he would run and roam. Now, he had to learn how to protect lanes and also get into the pursuit lanes as well.

So I think **Harry** mentioned a couple of things that we worked on the first year I got here. Coaching guys like this is easy, though, because they inspire you to give them everything you've got. They want to take it to the field with them and they want to use it. So the more you go, the further you want to go because you know he starts to see some of the nuances that can be available to him. We started work on perfecting those. Pretty soon it got to where nobody could block him, and that was really pretty much about it.

He knew how to protect himself well enough to where nobody could block him. His talent from there we just...

I say this, had he come up under a different coach, **Marty**, if **Marty** hadn't had the vision to let him go, he could have turned him into a robot by giving him too much too soon. I was really just - **Bill** certainly after me added to it - we just put the polish on the car. The car was ready to run.

HARRY CARSON: I think the question should be posed to **Marty** as to what did he see in me as a coach that he would tap me as a middle linebacker having never played the position. Because it really was a bold move to make with a fourth-round draft pick, especially in this market.

MARTY SCHOTTENHEIMER: Well, the fact of the matter was while I was involved in the process of the selection, it was **Andy Robustelli** and **Bill Arnsparger** who pulled the trigger, as it were.

It was apparent to us very early on that this was a unique talent. I remember he came in early and we ran him in a 40. We did a height, weight. He was 6'2"-and-change, and he was 234 pounds if memory serves me right. He ran a 4.65 on grass. That was a unique speed for a linebacker at that time.

While he didn't start the first few games, ultimately, his presence and the things that he was able to exhibit in practice, we said, Hey, we've got to give this young man an opportunity to play right away.

So we went ahead and did it. The only time in my career - all of us, as coaches, we have information in our minds that we try to get across to our players and all - but the only time in my coaching career I took great care about making sure we didn't give him too much. Because he was going to be able to make the plays that you had to make as long as you didn't bog him down. And, of course, ultimately, as you look at his career, I've always said that there are certain people that you have to account for that play defense. The system on offense will give you an opportunity to match up against some players, but there's other players that you have to focus on.

Of course this football team, the **Giants**, with people like **Lawrence Taylor**, they had people like that, and **Harry Carson** clearly was a player that you had to account for on every single play, or you probably were going to end up in a negative situation.

Q. I was wondering, Phil and Lawrence, if you would give a story about Harry, maybe one thing you remember about him, one moment about playing with Harry.

LAWRENCE TAYLOR: Basically, I mean, most of the stuff I know about **Harry** we can't talk about (laughter).

No, but there's a lot of things about **Harry** that have always been, you know... **Harry** is a little comedian in the locker room and stuff. He did a lot of different things.

I remember when we were going down to **Philadelphia** one day to play a game. I shouldn't tell this story, should I?

HARRY CARSON: No.

LAWRENCE TAYLOR: No, no, I won't. **Brad** told me to tell you that story, because you've been doggin' him all day.

No, there's really no stories I really want to tell about **Harry** because it's not appropriate right now (laughter).

But I have enjoyed playing with him. I enjoyed playing with him for those years. Coming into the league, **Harry** was the first person that really took me under his wing even though the rest of the veterans didn't really like me at the time. He took me under his wing and he taught me the proper way to play football. While **Brad** and **Brian** taught me the street life, he taught me football.

I tell you, I'm really appreciative towards **Harry**. Of course I will be there at the **Hall of Fame**. I got to see my boy going. Even though I will be playing golf, I will stop by (smiling).

But no stories that I can tell right now.

PHIL SIMMS: I'll just say a couple things. I'm, of course, happy to be here today. I think I speak for all the ex-players up here, I'm proud of **Harry Carson**, that he's finally made it to the **Hall of Fame**. **Coach Parcells** and all these coaches up here always said to us many times, The game is hard. Because if it was easy, a lot more people would be trying to play it.

For **Harry**, going into the **Hall of Fame**, it's been hard, but I hope that it makes him -- I hope he appreciates it even more because it's well-deserved.

I'll never forget coming from **Moorehead State University**, my very first snap of my professional life, in practice at Pace University, it's a play-action pass. I get up underneath the center, look over there, see **Harry Carson**. I go, "Oh, my God," because, believe me, we didn't see middle linebackers like that at **Moorehead University**.

LAWRENCE TAYLOR: Black guys?

PHIL SIMMS: Yeah, black guys (laughter). So well-put, **Lawrence**.

Brad Van Pelt never got beat on a field like he's getting beat out here today.

I'll never forget throwing the pass, and I think it's wide open and **Harry Carson** intercepted. I just went, It's incredible.

But I think **Coach Parcells** said it right. If you talk to the guys in the **NFL**, to his teammates, I think we all knew all along that he was a shoo-in for the **Hall of Fame**. I'm just proud of him and happy for him and look forward to seeing that day down in **Canton** (applause).

Q. Are there any other players you feel deserve to be in Canton who waited as long as you have that deserve to be in there as well?

HARRY CARSON: Any other players?

Q. That come to mind.

HARRY CARSON: You know, I think there are quite a few players. To be quite honest with you, every player who has played in the **National Football League** deserves to be in the **Hall of Fame**. That's just it.

We all lead with something, we all pay a certain price. When I look at guys like **L.C. Greenwood** and my friend **Donnie Shell** who played exceptionally well during their time, **Bob Kuechenberg**, **Claude Humphries**, who was a guy who I sort of emulated, you know, there are a whole bunch of guys who should be in the **Hall of Fame**.

That's another reason why I wrote the letter, because I wanted to draw attention to the process, not so much the **Hall of Fame**. It wasn't so much about me not wanting to be in the **Hall of Fame**; it was about just drawing attention to the process in which players are selected and elected to the **Hall of Fame**, because those members of that committee shouldn't have any biases. You should go with what they do on the football field.

There were guys who wanted to keep **Lawrence Taylor** out, but you can't get off of that, you have to go off of what a guy does on a football field. It's my firm belief that there should be some **Hall of Fame** players on that committee to help the people on the Selection Committee get a clear understanding of the difference between an inside linebacker and a middle linebacker, the difference between a 4-3 defense and 3-4 defense, because I don't think everybody on that committee is up to speed as to what it's all about. There are people who are bringing their biases to the table, and that should not be the case.

Q. Brad, you've taken a lot of heat here today. What do you remember about playing with him?

HARRY CARSON: **Brad** doesn't remember a whole lot about anything (laughter).

BRAD VAN PELT: I was gonna go to **Canton**, but I don't know about it now (laughing).

Brian, Harry and I were obviously in the beginning, it was wonderful. **Lawrence** just added to it. The four of us still get together quite a bit, and they're family to me.

All I can say is we are talking a little bit about the voting, the process. They blew it. If there's ever been a first-ballot recipient, it should have been **Harry**. You guys just blew it. There has to be some changes made in the voting. No, he's just a great guy on top of that.

And I'm not as bad as he says (laughing).

Q. Harry, from what we were told, you didn't know that all these guys were going to show up here today. What were your thoughts when you walked in and saw all these guys, that they took time out of their vacation and golf to come here today?

HARRY CARSON: I was really touched when I walked in. I thought **George** would be here, maybe one or two other guys, **Curtis McGriff**. But when I saw **Parcells** and I saw **Belichick** and then I saw **Marty**, then I saw **Coach Jeffries**, I mean, I've been planning this whole **Hall of Fame** and it's been like planning a state funeral. You want to include everybody.

But I got a little emotional deep down inside, because to see all of these guys in one place, and it's all because of me, I mean, they gave their time. **Marty** came out from **San Diego** to be here. **Bill** came out from **Dallas**. **Bill** came down from **New England**. **Pepper Johnson** came down from **New England**. **Coach Jeffries** came down. It's a lot of traveling, and it's for me. I really appreciate it, that they would make the time to come in and be with me this afternoon. This is really special. This is really special for me.

Then to have my teammates here, **Bart, Phil, George, Leonard Marshall**, you know. To me and to players, you guys in the media may not understand, but this is really showing me a tremendous amount of love. It's not lost on me that all of these guys are here. I mean, this is really special for me.

These guys - my sisters and brothers, I got my kids, and that's family - but these guys, you know, they're my family. They are my family. That's something that will always be the case, I mean, until we all go to our graves. We are part of the same family.

Q. I was wondering if, Coach Belichick, you could talk about Harry.

BILL BELICHICK: Like **Coach Jeffries** said, I'll keep it quick here.

I think from what's been mentioned by just about everyone that's spoken, it comes back to one word, and that's respect. I think **Harry**, of all the players that I've been associated with in the **National Football League** for over 30 years, is as respected as any player I've been associated with on and off the field, as **Bill** mentioned, on the practice field; in a meeting room; with his teammates; with his coaches; with the organization; by the opponents; by literally everybody that he's come in contact with with regard to football.

It was certainly a great opportunity for me to have the privilege - I really mean that, the privilege - to coach **Harry**. He's as easy a player as there ever was to coach. He's well prepared, worked hard, and always put the team first. That's really what, to me, a good football player is all about.

One story I would share with you that very few of us probably were there and even fewer of us remember, especially as we're getting older, I remember the first year that I came to the **Giants** in 1979. We didn't have a very good football team. **Harry** was there, and with **Dave Jennings**, the only two Pro Bowl players on that team, although **Brad** I think had also gone, but from the previous year.

But anyway, we got off to a rough start. I think it was maybe 0-4, 0-5, something like that before we finally beat **Tampa** for **Coach Perkins'** first win. Of course **Ray** came in with a very hard-nosed, tough attitude, really trying to develop some toughness and intensity in the team. We had very hard practices, very demanding and so forth. Again, **Harry** kind of led the way on those.

I remember after one of those games, we were maybe 0-4, 0-5, something like that, and **Ray** stood up in front of the team with his normal stern demeanor, and said, "How many of you guys yesterday had fun playing out there?"

We had just gotten beat by two or three touchdowns. I remember **Harry** was the only person who put his hand up. He said, "I did. I love to play football."

And I remember **Perkins** saying, "Damn it, that's the way everybody should feel. I mean, sometimes you can't do anything about the score or the situation, but you should love to play the game and play hard and put your heart into it. Kind of all of you need more of an attitude like that."

I'm telling you, when he put his hand up, I didn't know what **Ray** was going to do, what was going to happen. But it was absolutely the right thing to do, the right thing to say. I think that's just a typical example of how **Harry**, in his own unselfish way, can be independent and earn everybody's respect. I think it's something that, on behalf of I think everybody here, how much we admire and respect you, and think that transcends to a lot of other people who aren't here who have also come in contact with you both on and, as **George Martin** mentioned - and I do remember the whole **Doug Kotar**, that was one of the most emotional and really one of the greatest experiences that I had, even though it was so tragic; **Doug** didn't have much time left, and I saw him a couple months after that - but it was one of the most memorable moments of my career in the **National Football League**.

So I think on and off the field, **Harry** just has a tremendous amount of respect from everybody that he's come in contact with.

Thank you.

HARRY CARSON: Let me just say one thing, and perhaps maybe it's one too many shots to the head, concussions and so forth. I just want to acknowledge that my fiancée is here, **Maribel Solis**, she's been here, she's been my rock. She's the one who's been keeping me -- whenever I would not be elected, she's the one who I would have to take out to dinner to appease, to soothe her, because she took it so personally, along with my family. I always sort of took it in stride.

I knew that with support, the support that I have from her - I had to snag her - that's my fiance, **Maribel**.

But also my son, my younger son, **Lucky**, is here. **Lucky** is about 6'4", 6'5" now. He looks down on his father at 17. He's looking down on me like, "Who's bigger now?"

So I just wanted to acknowledge them. My son **Donald** is dealing with some medical issues. We had a second round of treatment about three weeks ago at **NIH** down in **Bethesda**. He will be there for the induction ceremony to present me.

My daughter has made me a grandfather, and **Jamison** will be there dressed in yellow or gold or whatever the color is, my granddaughter. My daughter will be there.

So I hope as many of my old teammates as possible can be in **Canton**. I just thank all of my coaches for making the time and the effort to come here and be a part of this. I truly appreciate the presence.

I appreciate all of you guys in the media, because all of you guys in the media have been very good to me; I've tried to be good to you. Many of us, we go back a long way, you guys in the media. I've always tried to be very open, very cooperative, even when it was very difficult at times, especially those years when we went 3-12-1 and things weren't really going all that great.

I also want to thank all **Giant** fans, because when you step on that field - and I came in in 1976 - I developed a relationship with people in the stands because week in, week out, those same people were in the same seats. There was one fan who I developed a relationship with even though I didn't know her name. But she sat right behind the **Giant** bench. Her name was **Betty Morgan**. **Betty Morgan** was really my No. 1 fan. I could tell just from looking in her eyes what she wanted me to do, if the team wasn't playing well. I could see it in her eyes. I'd try to encourage the guys to play better, play harder. When the team was winning, when the team was doing well, I could see the joy in her eyes.

Betty Morgan really became a symbol that I sort of relied on as a fan. I mean, there are fantastic **Giant** fans all around the country, and I just give thanks to all of the **Giant** fans who have been so courteous and so appreciative of my play over the years. I tell you, I don't think there's been a day that has gone by where a **Giant** fan hasn't stopped me, and it doesn't matter whether it's in my hometown, here in the city, in **Paris**, in the **Caribbean**, in **Hawaii**, and said, "Thanks for being there during those dark years."

So I really appreciate the fans. In a couple weeks - and I will mention this - one of the things I wanted to do, I wanted to acknowledge all of those fans who were in the **World Trade Center**. If you've ever been to a **Giant** practice, the **World Trade Center**, really, you could see the **World Trade Center** from the practice field at **Giants Stadium**. There were so many times that we looked over during practice, looked over at the **World Trade Center** and not really think anything, and then all of a sudden, it's no longer there.

But all of those people who were **Giant** fans who lost their lives, I want to acknowledge them. So we will do that in a couple of weeks when we go to camp, because I think they really...

When I say that going into the **Hall of Fame** is not necessarily about me, but it's about everybody who helped to get me to this point, I got fitted for the bust and I was told that bust is going to last 40,000 years. I wish I could just take little pieces and just give them to everybody because there's so many people who have inspired me along the way - all these coaches, all these players, the GMs, the owner, and on and on and on, and the fans in the supermarket who have encouraged me along the way. There have just been so many people who have encouraged me.

So this is a time for them, not necessarily a time for me, but I'm very proud to have been the representative sort of selected to sort of represent all of those people who have helped me get to this point.

So with that, I just want to say thank you all for coming, and look forward to talking with you further today or any time between now and August 5th. I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

Once again, **Marty, Brad, Brian, Gary, Pepper, Maurice Carthon, Bart, Bill, George, Bill, Coach Jeffries**, "Anthead" **Lawrence Taylor, Phil Simms**, my personal protector **Jim Burt, Curtis McGriff, Leonard, Phil McConkey** is here, "**Mr. Ed**," **Ed Croke**. All of you guys, I can't tell you how much I love and care for each and every one of you. I consider you brothers.

Every time I stepped on the field and we all stepped on the field, we were just fighting for one cause, and that was to be the best that we could be. We were just out there for one another. I just give thanks for your presence today. I just want to tell you how much I love you guys and respect you for being here this afternoon.