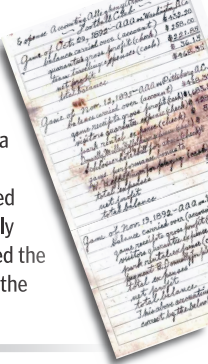


The past

Over the past 100-plus years, blacks have played a big role in taking football from a casual game to lucrative profession.

Pro football's "birth certificate," a ledger from the Allegheny A.A. club team



1892 | Allegheny Athletic Association pays William "Pudge" Walter Heffelfinger \$500 to play in a game against rival Pittsburgh Athletic Club. The payment remained secret for many years, but eventually The Pro Football Hall of Fame verified the transaction as the first evidence of the existence of professional football.



Charles Follis

1902 | Charles W. Follis, a halfback from Wooster University plays for the Shelby (Ohio) A.A. Club team. The first documented evidence of Follis as the first black player in professional football was printed in the (Shelby) Daily Globe in 1904, but there has been evidence to suggest that the Shelby team may have been professional as early as 1902.

1920 | The American Professional Football Association was founded in Canton, Ohio. Frederick Douglass "Fritz" Pollard a back for the Akron Pros and Bobby "Rube" Marshall a tackle for the Rock Island Independents were the league's first two black players.

1921 | "Fritz" Pollard becomes the first black coach in professional football. At the time, bench coaches were not allowed, so Pollard continued to play while he served as a player-coach for the Akron Pros.

1922 | The APFA is renamed National Football League.

1932 | Laundromat owner George Preston Marshall joined the NFL as owner of the Boston Braves franchise.

1933 | The NFL's only two black players, Ray Kemp of the Pittsburgh Pirates and Joe Lillard of the Chicago Cardinals, play their final seasons in the league. They were the last of 13 blacks to play in the pre-modern era of the NFL (1920-46).

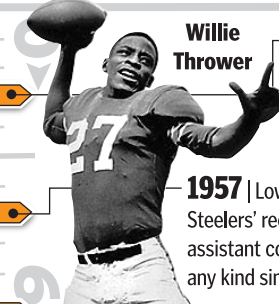
1934-45 | The NFL begins a 12-year stretch without any black players on its rosters. During this time there is no "official" ban on hiring black players, but many speculate Marshall may have had a hand in persuading other NFL owners to adopt an informal agreement that kept the league all-white.



Ray Kemp

1946 | The All-America Football Conference plays its inaugural season. Cleveland Browns teammates fullback Marion Motley and guard Bill Willis become the first black players to win all-league honors.

1949 | George Taliaferro, from Indiana University becomes the first black player chosen in the NFL draft, but chooses to play in the AAFC. The Detroit Lions later choose halfback Wally Triplett, who would become the first black draftee to play in the NFL.



Willie Thriver

1953 | Willie Thriver of the Chicago Bears becomes the first black player to play quarterback in an NFL game.

1957 | Lowell Perry becomes the Pittsburgh Steelers' receivers coach. He is the first black assistant coach and the first black coach of any kind since Pollard 36 years earlier.

1960 | The American Football League begins play. The league becomes known for recruiting players from smaller, predominantly black colleges.



The AFL operated from 1960-69 before merging with the NFL

1965 | Burl Toler becomes the first black official in the NFL. Toler served for 24 years as both a field judge and head linesman.

1967 | Emlen Tunnell becomes the first black player elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. The defensive back spent his 14 NFL seasons with the New York Giants and the Green Bay Packers.

1969 | The Kansas City Chiefs become the first team to draft a player from a black college No. 1 overall. The team acquires defensive tackle Buck Buchanan of Grambling State to begin that year's AFL draft.

Doug Williams

1987 | Washington Redskins quarterback Doug Williams becomes the first black quarterback to lead his team to a Super Bowl. He is named Super Bowl MVP in a 42-10 rout of the Denver Broncos.



1988 | Johnny Grier becomes the first black referee. Grier served as an NFL official for 23 seasons (1981-2004).

1989 | Art Shell is hired as head coach of the Los Angeles Raiders. He becomes the first black head coach of the modern era (1946-present).

2002 | League owners adopt the "Rooney Rule." The rule requires teams to interview at least one minority candidate when hiring a head coach. The Baltimore Ravens promote Ozzie Newsome; he becomes the first black general manager.

MCT

2003 | The Fritz Pollard Alliance is formed by minority members of the NFL community, in order to promote diversity and equality of job opportunity in the NFL.



Ozzie Newsome

2007 | Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith of the Chicago Bears become the first black head coaches to go to the Super Bowl.



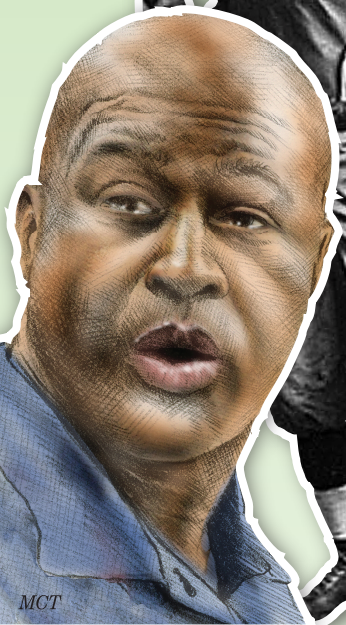
Breaking through the line

By CHRIS MOWDER
The Sun News

THE STORY OF BLACK PLAYERS IN PRO FOOTBALL

Courtesy of Wayne County (Ohio) Public Library

Courtesy of Indiana University Alumni Association



Age | 48

Lovie Smith

Head coaching record 31-20-0*

Hired Jan. 15, 2004; Became fastest head coach in Bears history to lead the team to a division title and was named the Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year in 2005

PLAYING CAREER

1976-79 | University of Tulsa, Safety/Linebacker

EARLY COACHING JOBS

1983-86 | University of Tulsa, Linebackers coach

1987 | University of Wisconsin, Linebackers coach

1988-91 | Arizona State University Linebackers coach

1992 | University of Kentucky, Linebackers coach

1993-94 | University of Tennessee, Defensive backs

1995 | Ohio State University, Defensive backs coach

COACHING IN THE NFL

1996-00 | Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Linebacker coach; Coached under Tony Dungy

2001-03 | St. Louis Rams, Defensive coordinator; Super Bowl appearance against New England; L 20-17

2004-present | Chicago Bears, Head coach

* Note | Records include postseason

In the weeks leading up to this Sunday's Super Bowl XLII, much of the hype has focused on the coaching milestone Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith achieved by becoming the first African-American head coaches to reach the big game.

However, it is likely that either coach, both classy and humble men, would much rather talk about those who opened the doors for this achievement than take any credit for how far they have come.

They would likely speak of the struggle of black athletes and their tireless efforts for integration into professional football. They may single out pioneers such as Charles Follis and Frederick "Fritz" Pollard, who were known as much for their ability to admirably handle the unpleasantness of racism as they were for their talent on the field.

But one thing is for sure, seeing two black men leading teams of mostly black athletes into battle on the first Sunday of Black History Month on the world's biggest stage is great example of how far African-Americans have come in the fight for equality in pro sports and something all Americans can be proud of.

Age | 51

Tony Dungy

Head coaching record 122-70-0*

Hired Jan. 22, 2002; Has led the Colts to four playoff appearances during his four seasons at Indianapolis

PLAYING CAREER

1973-76 | University of Minnesota, Quarterback

1977-78 | Pittsburgh Steelers, Safety, led team in interceptions and helped win Super Bowl XIII in 1978

1979 | San Francisco 49ers, Safety

EARLY COACHING JOBS

1980 | University of Minnesota, Defensive backs coach

COACHING IN THE NFL

1981-88 | Pittsburgh Steelers, Defensive assistant coach; Became NFL's youngest defensive coordinator in 1984

1989-91 | Kansas City Chiefs, Defensive backs coach

1992-95 | Minnesota Vikings, Defensive coordinator

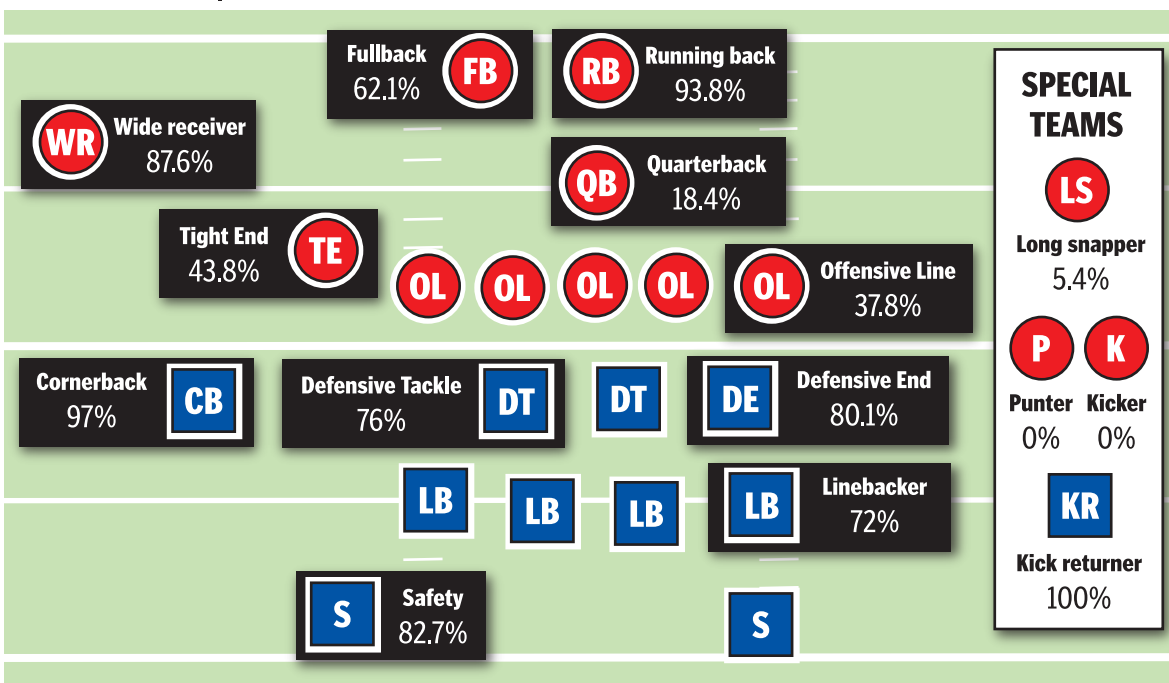
1996-01 | Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Head coach

2002-present | Indianapolis Colts, Head coach

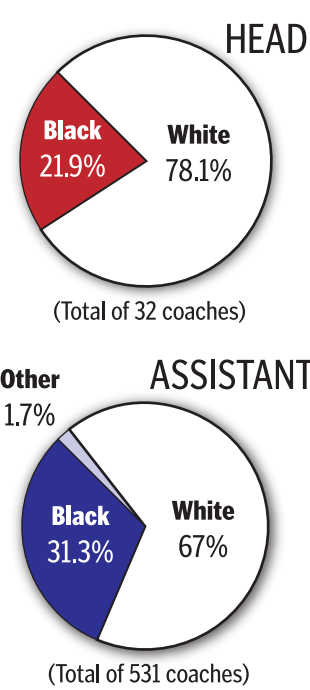
The present

In the more than 100 years since the first black player broke into professional football, they have come to represent nearly 70 percent of the players in the National Football League. Here's a look at the current state of race in the NFL based on 2006 team rosters as listed on NFL.com:

POSITION | PERCENTAGE OF BLACK PLAYERS ON NFL ROSTERS



COACHES



TEAM | NFL FRANCHISES BY PERCENTAGE OF BLACK PLAYERS*

Team	Black	White	Other	League Average	Black	White	Other
Jacksonville Jaguars	77.8%	18.1%	4.2%	Detroit Lions	65.8%	31.7%	2.5%
New York Giants	75%	25%	0%	New York Jets	65.7%	31.3%	3%
Green Bay Packers	74%	26%	0%	Kansas City Chiefs	65.2%	30.4%	4.4%
Oakland Raiders	71.0%	27.5%	1.5%	San Francisco 49ers	65.2%	31.8%	3%
Arizona Cardinals	69.7%	24.2%	6.1%	Carolina Panthers	64.9%	34.7%	1.4%
Cincinnati Bengals	69.3%	26.7%	4%	Washington Redskins	64.9%	31.2%	3.9%
Seattle Seahawks	69.3%	25.3%	3.3%	Pittsburgh Steelers	64%	30.7%	5.3%
Philadelphia Eagles	69%	26.8%	4.2%	Dallas Cowboys	63.2%	32.4%	4.4%
Atlanta Falcons	68.9%	31.1%	0%	Houston Texans	63.2%	34.2%	2.6%
Minnesota Vikings	68.5%	28.8%	2.7%	St. Louis Rams	62.7%	34.3%	3%
Baltimore Ravens	68.1%	27.5%	4.4%	Buffalo Bills	60%	38.6%	1.4%
Cleveland Browns	67.6%	31.1%	1.4%	New Orleans Saints	59.7%	40.3%	0%
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	67.5%	31.2%	1.3%	San Diego Chargers	59.1%	36.4%	4.6%
Chicago Bears	67.2%	25.4%	7.5%	New England Patriots	58.9%	38.4%	2.7%
Denver Broncos	66.7%	32.1%	1.3%	Indianapolis Colts	54.6%	41.6%	3.9%
Miami Dolphins	66.2%	26.8%	7%	Tennessee Titans	53.7%	41.8%	4.5%

*Note | Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

CONFERENCES

