

Fame knocks on McPherson's door

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By Donnie Webb

Don McPherson learned of his election to the College Football Hall of Fame while taking a phone call sitting in the lobby of the Sheraton Hotel in Syracuse. He was in town surrounding the spring football game.

Flabbergasted and in disbelief, McPherson wondered if Steve Hatchell, the president and chief operating officer of the College Football Foundation, had the right phone number.

"This is Don McPherson, not Dick MacPherson," said McPherson, the quarterback of the Syracuse football team from 1984-87.

McPherson Hatchell had the right McPherson, who was sworn to secrecy about the announcement and has been sitting on the news for more than a week. On Thursday, McPherson was formally introduced in New York as one of 13 players and two coaches in the 2008 College Football Hall of Fame class.

Also elected were former head coach Lou Holtz, who won 249 games with six schools and a national title at Notre Dame in 1988; former Northwestern linebacker and current Wildcats coach Pat Fitzgerald; UCLA 2

quarterback Troy Aikman; LSU tailback Billy Cannon; Virginia offensive tackle Jim Dombrowski; Florida linebacker Wilber Marshall; Washington State running back Ruben Mayes; Arizona State guard Randall McDaniel; Wyoming tight end Jay Novacek; Texas Tech split end Dave Parks; Florida State nose guard Ron Simmons; Oklahoma State running back Thurman Thomas; and Army quarterback Arnold Tucker.

John Cooper, who went 192-84-6 with Tulsa, Arizona State and Ohio State, was the other coach elected.

At a National Football Foundation news conference in New York City, McPherson thanked each of the 10 Syracuse offensive teammates who walked into the huddle with him for the opener in the magical 1987 season when the Orangemen finished 11-0-1. He said the same 10 players walked into the huddle for the season finale against Auburn in the Sugar Bowl.

"I do get a lot of credit for what happened in 1987," McPherson said. "I got on other people's shoulders as well. That's why I've struggled with it a little bit. As time goes on, what happened that season will get better in our memory. One thing I do remember, I had great people around me...."

