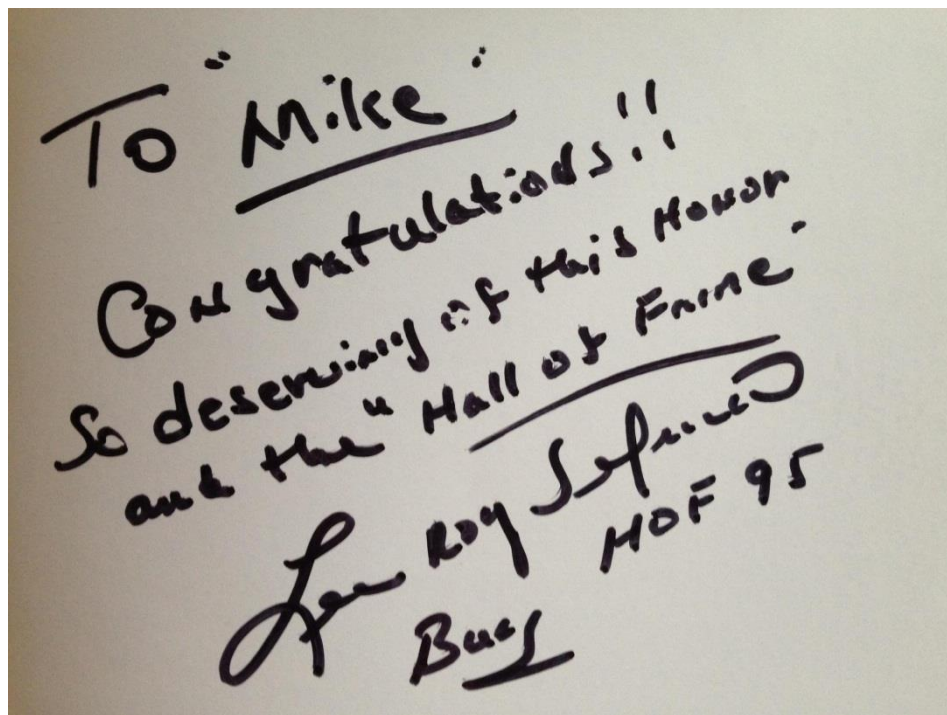


What They Said About Mike Kenn

Lee Roy Selmon (HoF Defensive End class of 1995)



Congratulating Mike on his Falcons Ring of Honor induction.

Jim Hanifan (NFL Coach) excerpts from a personal letter 9/9/2014

"Michael Kenn of the Atlanta Falcons was my left tackle for my three years with the Falcons. He was an outstanding player, blessed with great size, quickness and intelligence... If he had been with a playoff team or a Super bowl team, he would already be in the Hall of Fame... Having coached O-Line for 25 years in the NFL, I have coached many outstanding players. Most notably Dan Dierdorf of the St Louis Cardinals who is already in the Hall of Fame in Canton, OH and Orlando Pace of the St. Louis Rams who will be eligible for the Hall of Fame soon. I have to put Mike Kenn right up there with those two players."

Dan Hampton (HoF Defensive End class of 2002) via email August 8, 2014

"I would like to make a few comments on behalf of Mike Kenn, the fine left tackle of the Atlanta Falcons. Over the 1980's the Bears had many games VS Atlanta and their excellent offensive line. In my estimation, Mike was the best player on maybe the best line in football. Equally adept at run or pass blocking, he was a fixture as a starter in the NFC Pro Bowl for countless years. He, Munoz, and Covert were simply the best left tackles [easily the more difficult position of the two OT slots] in all of football. In a humorous way, he would force me to bring my "A" game every time we played because

I knew Richard Dent [HOF CLASS 2011] would have his hands full all day, a fantastic player for well over a decade."

Chris Doleman (HoF Defensive End class of 2012) via email July 31, 2014

"He was the prototype at the time. He moved well, great technique. He had great success against some great players. Hall of Famer? Yes, in my opinion."

Clyde Simmons (NFL Defensive End, 15yrs, 2x Pro Bowler) via email August 22, 2014

"Mike Kenn – The player who didn't get the recognition he deserved. When he played he was one of the top 5 left tackles in the game, rarely making a mistake on a pass set and a better run blocker than given credit for. If Mike was in a major media market like New York, the world would have known of how great a player he was. He wasn't a flashy player which draws so much attention, but consistency was Mike Kenn. The question is what's the standard for the Hall of Fame? In my opinion whatever standard there is to be a Hall of Famer Mike Kenn has met."

Dan Dierdorf (HoF Offensive Tackle class of 1996) via email August 27, 2014

"There is not a doubt in my mind that Mike Kenn is worthy of Hall of Fame election. When I was an NFL player, whenever an Atlanta game film came on, I watched Mike's technique very closely. His footwork was excellent, his leverage was enviable. A truly gifted pass-protector and a born leader. Please consider this as the strongest possible endorsement for one of the games great offensive tackles."

Steve Bartkowski (NFL Quarterback, 12yrs, 2x Pro Bowler)

AJC 7/31/14 "Mike Kenn should be in Canton," Bartkowski said. "He was the best offensive tackle in football, if not the best, one of the top two or three for 17 years. For him not to be able to get a nod, it breaks my heart for those guys because I know how great they were."

Bo Schembechler (University of Michigan Head Coach '69-'89)

"He's a pro's pro and a man's man, and he's an honor to his alma mater"

Jeff Van Note (NFL Center, 18yrs, 6x Pro Bowler)

Via phone call on 12/23/14 "Mike was a great technician at the left tackle spot and a master of his craft. He played all the great defensive ends and played well against all the different styles of defensive player. He was a great pass protector with exceptional speed, long arms, quick feet, intelligence, possessed great work ethic, and always provided great leadership on and off the field." **AJC 1994** "By any standards you want to adopt, it has been a remarkable career, the longevity alone makes it that way. But years from now, when coaches are still teaching young offensive tackles how to pass block, somebody will wish they had written a book on Mike."

Art Shell (HoF Offensive Tackle class of 1989)

Via phone call 12/9/14 "I was a great admirer of Mike Kenn, a real prototypical left tackle that played the game at a very high level for many years. As a matter of fact when I was preparing to play Philadelphia Eagles RE Carl Hairston in 1981 at Super

Bowl XV, he had given a lot of tackles a problem, so I watched film on him. Mike was the only tackle that had Hairston figured out, I practiced his technique from the film, and perfected it so that I could play Hairston." **AJC 1994** When asked about the Hall of Fame and Mike Kenn's retirement "Does he fit with that group? You're damned right he does. When he came into the league, he was the trendsetter of sorts. You know, tall, angular guy with a big wingspan. Then the game sort of gravitated toward the 300-pounders, "The Hogs" and people like that, and he was still excellent. And now it's come back his way again, and he's still good. My only question is, why's he leaving? On film, he looks damn good to me."

SI 10/31/94 "He's a master at some forgotten skills, a guy who still pays attention to the detail stuff that's foreign to a lot of linemen nowadays."

Leslie O'Neal (NFL Defensive End, 13yrs, 6x Pro Bowler)

SI 1991 "It was like playing against a human text book" 3. Mike Kenn, T, Falcons: A five-time Pro Bowl player, Kenn, 35, was thought to be washed up as the decade ended. Banged up for most of the past two seasons, he reported to camp healthy and won a fight to retain a starting job. This year Kenn has lined up across from Scott Davis, Chris Doleman, Charles Haley, Ken Harvey, Leslie O'Neal, Pat Swilling and Derrick Thomas -- and held each of them to no sacks.

Al "Bubba" Baker (NFL Defensive End, 13yrs, 3x Pro Bowler)

From Tom Danyluk's book, with permission to use: "(Kenn) became the best tackle I ever faced, technically perfect. Kenn was No. 1, Anthony Munoz second, Jim Lachey third." Baker's total: 2½ sacks

Pat Swilling (NFL Defensive End, 12yrs, 5x Pro Bowler)

Noted Detroit linebacker, faced Kenn twice yearly during seven seasons with New Orleans: **AP 1992** "I am not talking about Mike Kenn this week, I'll talk to you about anything but Mike Kenn. People have created a monster, and each time we play Atlanta, this monster seems to get bigger and bigger."

AJC 1994 - "It was tough going up against him but it was fun because it was such a challenge, he always knew what I was trying to do, whether it was making a move on the inside or blitzing on the outside. He's definitely a dying breed, a lot of the younger guys just don't prepare like Mike does"... "Every trick in the book? To tell you the truth, he might have written the book."

Bill Walsh (HoF Coach 1993)

Herald-Journal 1981 *Several Falcons On Streaks Including Unknown Tackle* "Mike is not a power blocker, but he has real quick feet and is able to force his man to the outside, I've never seen anybody with his agility or quickness".

Leeman Bennett (NFL Coach)

Via phone call on 12/9/14 "As a coach I drafted Mike Kenn, he was an outstanding player and is an excellent candidate for the Professional Football Hall of Fame. He is

very deserving of recognition, was a great player for many years, and was a major part of our offense. We always felt confident with Mike playing the left tackle position and protecting the quarterback's blindside." **Herald-Journal 1981** "He's just so consistent. His play varies little from game to game. None of our players studies his opponents more than Mike."

Fred Dryer (NFL Defensive End, 13yrs, 1 Pro Bowl)

"Kenn was a very fine player; big, smooth, with very good feet and balance with great technique and focus, very tough minded and very mean."

Jackie Slater (HoF Offensive Tackle class of 2001)

1994 - "He's always been considered by my teammates to be a very formidable foe, he's always brought more to the table than just athleticism. The thing I've been most impressed with is his adaptability. He played well when they were primarily a running team and he has played well in this wide-open offense."

12/31/91 - TOP OF THE LINE In his 14th season, Mike Kenn is playing at a Hall of Fame level: That Atlanta Falcons all-pro Mike Kenn, the prototype left tackle of the 1980s and one of the most technically correct players ever to play the position, is still winning the battle of the trenches is not altogether surprising... "I just took out some film of him today to look at and, while I marvel at what he's done this season, I probably shouldn't be shocked by it," said Jim Hanifan, the Washington Redskins offensive line coach who held the same position with the Falcons from 1987-89. "You're talking about a guy who knows and thoroughly understands his craft so well." *"If someone ever sits down to write a textbook about all the little intricacies and components of pass-blocking, for instance, they'd have to start by talking to Mike. Someone ought to put the films from this year into a time capsule. His career ought to be bronzed."*... Will a bronze bust of Kenn someday accompany the likenesses of those men in the Canton, Ohio, museum? Shell, coach of the Los Angeles Raiders, says so. He has studied Kenn in person and on film this year and calls his play "among the best" he's ever seen. *"He's a future 'Hall' guy, sure. If the folks who do the voting have any sense about them, he'll walk right in when it's his time," said Shell.*

Best player in team history, NFC edition: 49ers among hard calls By Elliot Harrison *NFL Media analyst* Published: May 29, 2014 ATLANTA FALCONS: Mike Kenn, left tackle: We're only in the 2-hole and we're already having trouble with the lineup. Tommy Nobis was the organization's first elite-level player. Claude Humphrey will be enshrined in Canton this August, thanks to a brilliant decade in Atlanta. But the choice here is Kenn, despite his relative obscurity to much of the football world. A 17-year starter at left tackle, Kenn was named to five Pro Bowl teams and twice earned first-team All-Pro honors. His former teammate (and my current colleague) Jamie Dukes summed it up nicely: "He is among the 10 best tackles to ever play." Yes, Kenn held his own against the very best, including Lawrence Taylor.

Port Arthur News 1/20/82 These Aren't Just any Pros by John Madden and Steve Cassady "In the interior line, I'd want people who are primarily pass blockers, the ones with the quickest feet, the best balance, the most refined techniques, and the great upper body strength. I'd put Atlanta's Mike Kenn at one tackle. He may be the best technical pass blocker in the league right now. And next to him, I'd put the Jet's Marvin Powell."

Sports Illustrated 10/31/94 by Franz Lidz "Kenn remains, at 38, the consummate offensive-line technician, a 6'7", 287-pound high priest of angles, leverage, and footwork."

Atlanta Journal Constitution 7/22/94 by Len Pasquarelli "Members of the NFL's influential Competition Committee, which proposes rules changes and decided on areas of emphasis for on-field officiating, have frequently used video of Kenn to demonstrate pass blocking techniques. In Atlanta's 1991 playoff season, Kenn permitted one sack. In 1992-1993, he unofficially permitted only 5."

Pro Football Weekly 11/11/90 1990 PFW Midseason All-Pro Team by Steve Silverman "Atlanta OT Mike Kenn, another gray beard at 34, has been rejuvenated by Jerry Glanville's red-gun offense. Kenn and the entire offensive line have played well for the Falcons, who rank third in average gain per offensive play."

The Atlanta Journal 12/6/80 by Glenn Sheely "Left Tackle Kenn, the strongest of the offensive lineman, bench pressing 425 pounds. Has not drawn a penalty this season and had only one in 1979. Has allowed only 3 sacks. Said (Bill) Walsh: "His upper body strength and leg strength have been a big help to him, and he's a better drive blocker now. He studies his opponents well, and he knows what he's doing when he makes a mistake which isn't often." Pro Football weekly scouting specialist Joel Buchsbaum calls Kenn "clearly the best tackle in the NFC."