



March 17, 1997 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



Leonard "Fritz" Shurmur Class of 1950

Leonard "Fritz" Shurmur distinguished himself as an athlete, author, and veteran coach of 42 seasons, including the last 21 with the National Football League.

"Fritz" studied at Albion College, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Education, and in 1956, a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership. While at Albion, Fritz was considered an outstanding athlete and was selected the MIAA-Most Valuable Player in 1953.

Fritz launched his coaching career in 1954 as a graduate student at Albion College where he served as Assistant Football Coach and Head Swimming Coach through 1961. In 1962 he joined the University of Wyoming as an Assistant Football Coach for nine years. As Wyoming's defensive coach, Shurmur's team gained national recognition by leading the nation's major colleges in defense in 1966 and 1967. The Wyoming Cowboys participated in the Sugar Bowl in 1966, the Sun Bowl in 1967, and paced the Western Athletic Conference for five years. In 1971 Fritz was elevated to the position of University of Wyoming Head Coach, a position he held for four years. In 1975, Fritz became part of the National Football League, serving as Defensive Line Coach/Coordinator for the Detroit Lions (1975-77), New England Patriots (1978-81), L.A. Rams (1982-90), Phoenix Cardinals (1991-93), and the Green Bay Packers (1994-present). On January 26, 1997, 800 million viewers around the world watched Fritz Shurmur's defensive team in action as the Green Bay Packers won Super Bowl XXXI.

Innovator/Technician define Fritz Shurmur's style. When faced with the Los Angeles Rams injury depleted defensive unit, Fritz developed the infamous 2-5 "Eagle" defense which led the Rams to two post-season victories. With the Phoenix Cardinals, Fritz developed the "11 men to the football" concept that triggered 37 opponent fumbles, the third highest single-season total in franchise history. A year later, the "Big Nickel" alignment fueled a defensive surge that crippled opponents rushing yards per game.

Fritz Shurmur has authored four books: *Coaching Team Defense*; *The Five Linebacker Eagle Defense*; *Coaching Team Defense, Second Edition*; and *Coaching the Defensive Line*. His books have earned acclaim from fans and peers. His defensive style is often the focus of prominent analysts during nationally televised games.

Fritz is an active supporter of the Roosevelt High School Alumni Football Club and lends his support to numerous fund raising efforts. A much sought after speaker, Mr. Shurmur speaks at approximately 35 charitable and professional functions per year.

Leonard "Fritz" Shurmur and his wife Peggy have three children. They reside in Suamico, Wisconsin.