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Giants linebacker Antonio Pierce played in last season's Pro Bowl and was voted an alternate this season. He is disappointed that the 9-5 Giants had only one player make this year's N.F.C. team.**cheap nfl jerseys wholesale**

It could be worse: the 10-4 Jaguars and 9-5 Buccaneers had no one make the Pro Bowl rosters,**cheap nfl jerseys,cheap mlb jerseys** which were announced Tuesday and selected by fans, players and coaches.**cheap nfl jerseys wholesale**

Pierce offered his insight Thursday on how one player,**cheap nfl jerseys wholesale**at least, views the Pro Bowl:**cheap nfl jerseys wholesale,basketball jerseys cheap,cheap jerseys com,custom hockey jerseys,nfl jerseys womens**

Pierce said. "And two of the games we lost he could have won it by himself, too, if we would have played some defense."**cheap nfl jerseys wholesale,basketball jerseys cheap,cheap jerseys com,custom hockey jerseys,nfl jerseys womens**

On snubs: Pierce seemed most bothered by the omission of Giants receiver Plaxico Burress, one of six N.F.L. receivers with at least 10 touchdown catches. "All the games we've won – I would say seven out of nine he was probably the reason we won,"

On the criteria: Pierce thinks too much is made of individual statistics. He looks at a team's total defense first, picking players from the best units. The Giants, he pointed out, are second in the N.F.C. in total defense (seventh in the N.F.L.), but had one player — defensive end Osi Umenyiora — selected. "If you're on a losing team you're going to have better stats than everybody else, because you're on the field all the time.

On other deserving teammates: The Giants have three players among the top 10 in sacks in the N.F.C. — defensive ends Umenyiora (12.0), Justin Tuck (10.0) and Michael Strahan (9.0). He marveled at the possibility of three defensive ends with at least 10 sacks each. "I don't know when that's ever happened," he said.

When you're on the field a lot, you have an opportunity to make more tackles. If you have three-and-outs, who knows? Forty plays or 80 plays? You better have 15 sacks."

On Sean Taylor: Pierce is a former teammate of the slain Redskins safety, who became the first player to make the Pro Bowl posthumously. Pierce voted for Taylor, but as a practical matter, not simply an honorary one. "Week 10 or so, he had five interceptions already.

On how teams vote: Most teams take the voting seriously,**practrice hockey jersey** Pierce said, and even discuss the voting in team meetings. Players will ask defensive linemen about the best offensive linemen, for example. And while the Giants played nine different N.F.C. teams (out of 16 total), he said he voted for players he did not see this season. "You've watched them on film," he said.

I think by the end of the season he probably would have had eight, the way they play the defense over there with him so deep. It's good that he got on." Taylor's five interceptions (in nine games) remain tied for third in the N.F.C.

While watching film in preparation for the next opponent, players are also seeing how other teams — and players — played against the upcoming foe.

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One way to evaluate a cornerback is to determine how long it takes for him to recover after the receiver makes his break. At that moment, **cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,buy nfl jerseys** the corner's momentum is still carrying him backward. Almost all of them will take at least two steps to react and close the gap on the receiver. Only the best, like Deion Sanders, are what John Madden calls "one-steppers."

Not Deion. He would align 4 or 5 yards off and, at the snap, just stand there, seemingly daring the receiver to beat him. When that receiver closed the cushion to about 2 yards, it looked as if he was in great position to win the battle. Then, Sanders would turn, dip his shoulder and catch up in no time.

In man-to-man coverage, many corners line up as much as 10-12 yards deep and, if they don't expect help over the top from a safety, are furiously backpedaling at the snap.

Sometimes, like Willie Brown of the Raiders,**cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage**

jerseys,nfljerseys,cheap nfl jerseysSanders seemed to let the receiver get away just enough to bait the quarterback into thinking he was open. When he released the ball, however, the quarterback quickly found out he really wasn't open at all.

Over his 14-year career, Sanders was a six-time first team All-Pro. He intercepted 53 passes and scored 22 touchdowns: 3 on offense as a receiver, 10 on defense (9 interception returns and 1 fumble return) and 9 on special teams (6 punt returns and 3 kickoff returns).

A Hall of Famer should usually excel at all aspects of his position. The best tight ends should be able to catch, run and block. A Hall of Fame offensive lineman should be outstanding at both run and pass blocking. There are exceptions, however, and Sanders is one of them.

We all know that Sanders wasn't very physical and usually tackled only when he had to. He didn't defend the run or punish the receivers after the catch like, for example, Night Train Lane or Herb Adderley. But there's also little doubt that Deion Sanders was one of the greatest cover corners in N.F.L. history. That, both in his era and today, with the increased emphasis on the passing game, is an ability more valuable than ever.cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,cheap nfl jerseys

He established a then-record 303 return yards on 6 interceptions with the 49ers in 1994, including a 74-yarder against New Orleans, a 93-yarder versus Atlanta and a 90-yarder against San Diego, all for touchdowns.

Marshall Faulk

After executing a run fake on the isolation play, Faulk drifted into the left flat, caught the screen pass from Kurt Warner, turned and exploded down the sideline like a rocket. At about the 30, he cut all the way across the field, leaving defenders diving at his feet. They were able to get in position to tackle him just as he crossed the goal line. That play reminded me of Hollywood's usual depiction of a long run, where the "defenders" are trying to make it look realistic, but are really falling on purpose.

Late in the first quarter of their divisional playoff game against the Vikings in 1999, the St. Louis Rams had a second-and-6 on Minnesota's 41-yard line, leading, 7-3. Deep in the I formation, the Rams had the most dangerous offensive weapon in football at that time, Marshall Faulk.

From 1999 to 2001, the Greatest Show on Turf was one of the most potent offenses in N.F.L. history. In addition to making first-team All-Pro and being named A.P. Offensive Player of the Year in each of those seasons, Faulk led the league in scoring in 2000 with 160 points, and in 2001 with 128 points, in yards from scrimmage in 1999 with 2,429 (he also led in yards in 1998 with 2,227), and averaged more than 5 yards per carry to lead the N.F.L. in all three years. He scored a then-record 26 touchdowns in 2000, the year he won the M.V.P.

Marshall was the glue for everything we did. He basically redefined his position, widening what you could

expect a running back to do. Not just where he ran the ball, but also in blocking and pass routes. He was

more than willing to participate in all these areas; he had such a passion for football. Marshall also had

a better understanding of the game than any back I ever coached. cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,cheap nfl jerseys

For all of his statistical achievements and individual honors, Faulk's greatest asset might have been his love for, and dedication to, the game. Here's Mike Martz, from Ron Jaworski's recent book "The Games that Changed the Game":

Faulk was also one of the greatest pass-catching running backs, and not just out of the backfield. The Rams would frequently split him out wide or, even better, put him in motion to the slot where they frequently could get him one-on-one with a linebacker. He could run pass routes as well as many N.F.L. wide receivers.

Faulk's versatility made him a matchup nightmare. cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,cheap nfl jerseys If the defense was having some success rushing the passer, Warner would take the snap, pump-fake downfield, then hand it to Faulk on a draw play. That usually slowed down the rush.

In my mind's eye, I always picture Marshall Faulk 7 yards deep, in a 2-point stance, with his hands on his knees, his head up, always looking straight ahead so the defense couldn't key his eyes. Warner recently said that after one of Faulk's spectacular runs against the Browns, he stopped turning his back to carry out his fakes. He, like everyone else watching, didn't want to miss what might happen next.

Willie Roaf

Before the 1993 draft, the New Orleans Saints traded linebacker Pat Swilling to the Detroit Lions to move up to the eighth spot in the first round. They had targeted either of two Alabama defensive linemen, John Copeland or Eric Curry.

After seeing Roaf on tape early in his rookie year, Chuck Knox, who, before he was a head coach, was an outstanding offensive line coach, called him the "best young tackle I've seen come into the league in my 31 years." (Sports Illustrated, Dec. 27, 1993) He started that year on the right side but then found a home at left tackle for the next 12 seasons.

Roaf was a three-time first-team All-Pro and an 11-time Pro Bowler, including 7 in a row with the Saints from 1994-2000 and in all 4 of his seasons with Chiefs from 2002-2005. He was named to the 1990s All-Decade first team and the

2000s All-Decade second team.

When it came time for their pick however, both were gone. Their focus now shifted to two offensive tackles, Lincoln Kennedy from the University of Washington, cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,buy nfl jerseys and Willie Roaf from Louisiana Tech. In taking Roaf, the Saints chose wisely.

In addition to excellent size (6'5", 320 pounds), Roaf had exceptional body control, agility, balance, explosion off the ball, timing, and intelligence. He had long, strong arms that he used very effectively to maintain leverage.

Roaf was consistently excellent over a long period of time. I recently had a chance to watch him on tape from some games late in his career, and even though he was dealing with some injuries, he still dominated. Roaf was one of the best offensive linemen of his era and one of the greatest left tackles in N.F.L. history.

Curtis Martin

Even a dedicated football fan might be surprised to learn that Curtis Martin is the fourth-leading rusher in N.F.L. history. Maybe that's because he didn't have many spectacular runs, wasn't flashy, didn't possess blazing speed, and was loath to bring attention to himself.

Like all the great left tackles, Roaf had quick feet within a confined area. When he was pass-blocking the fast defensive ends, he had his right foot up and his left foot back to avoid being beaten to his inside, the shortest route to the quarterback. Roaf had enough power and strength to handle the bull-rushers, too.

Martin was selected by the Patriots in the third round of the 1995 draft (74th over all). He made the first two of his five Pro Bowl appearances with New England in 1995 and 1996. After the 1997 season, as a restricted free agent, he signed a six-year, \$36 million dollar offer sheet with the Jets.

Martin was durable, consistent, and, most of all, productive. He gained over 1,000 yards in each of his first 10 seasons, and in 7 of those years he rushed for more than 1,200 yards. He finished his career with 14,101 yards rushing, 17,430 yards from scrimmage (8th on the career list), cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,buy nfl jerseys and scored 100 touchdowns, one of only 20 players to reach that mark. In 2004, at age 31, he led the league with 1,697 yards rushing and made first-team All-Pro.

The Patriots decided not to match the offer, took draft picks as compensation, and Martin became a Jet. He went on to become the leading ground gainer in the history of the franchise with 10,302 yards in 8 seasons.

Over the years, Martin's game didn't change much. He had excellent vision, good strength and power to burst through the hole, and made a lot of yards after initial contact. He also had enough quickness to make the first tackler miss.

Curtis Martin was, by all accounts, an outstanding person and teammate. He was a quiet leader who let his performance speak for itself.

Jerome Bettis

At 5 feet 10 inches and 255 pounds, Jerome Bettis was quicker than he looked. His 13,662 career rushing yards place him fifth on the career list, right behind Curtis Martin.

He could plant either foot, turn, square his shoulders and accelerate. Martin was also a capable receiver in the flat, although he did occasionally attempt to catch the ball too close to his body.

In 1995, Bettis's playing time and number of carries diminished under new head coach Rich Brooks, so he was traded to the Steelers. He also made first team All-Pro in his first season in Pittsburgh, in 1996.

Bettis was picked by the Los Angeles Rams in the first round of the 1993 draft (10th over all). He rushed for 1,429 yards as a rookie under Chuck Knox, a master of the running game, was named first team All-Pro and made the first of six Pro Bowl appearances.

Of course, Bettis was usually called the Bus, a nickname he says originated in his college newspaper at Notre Dame. It was popularized, however, by Myron Cope, the Steelers' longtime radio color commentator, and one of the great characters in the game. I always thought his other nickname, the Closer, was more descriptive.

Those were tough, but necessary yards. They didn't do a lot for Bettis's yards per carry, but they helped put away many a Steeler victory.

Many games are lost every year because the offense can't get a first down late in the fourth quarter and has to punt the ball back to the opponent, which then goes down and scores. Bettis was especially effective in Pittsburgh's four-minute offense when they were running out the clock. They didn't try to fool anyone.

Bettis had great vision and quick feet at the line of scrimmage in finding the hole. He was able to sustain a 13-year career, however, primarily because of one attribute: intelligence. Bettis knew when and how to go down to live to fight another day. He didn't try to fight battles he couldn't win. If he saw one defender in the hole, he would deliver the blow. But if there were two or three defenders in front of him, he would turn and twist his body just enough to avoid a direct collision.

Martin and Bettis might have to wait a year or two. Remember,**cheap nfl jerseys from china,nfl toddler jerseys,nhl vintage jerseys,nfljerseys,buy nfl jerseys** the selection committee can only pick up to five modern-era candidates.

Prediction: Deion Sanders and Marshall Faulk will get in this year, on their first ballot. Roaf should make it and, since he's the only offensive tackle, probably has a very good chance.

Andy Barall writes about pro football history for The Fifth Down. In his final game, in his hometown, Detroit, the Steelers defeated the Seahawks in Super Bowl XL, 21-10. Jerome Bettis went out as a champion.

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