

Dexter Coakley: The Best Dallas Cowboy That Will Never Make the Hall of Fame

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Of all the football greats to wear the star, of all the Hall of Famer's, of all the heroes, there is always an unsung hero.

One person can carry the burden to be one of the greatest things to happen to an organization and never make it to Canton. These unsung heroes are the guys who put on the jerseys, make magic happen, take them off, and then nobody remembers.

I remember one of my favorites, a guy who impressed me on any given Sunday. This guy was known as a consistent play-maker and quickly became one of Dallas's best defensive players. He was a small linebacker from a nobody college and made the All-

Rookie Team in his first NFL season.

Dexter Coakley. His speed and his athleticism were astounding. He quickly fit into a fast Dallas defense and became a play-maker from the start. He also had seven straight 100-tackle seasons. He actually set a franchise record for his consistent abilities.

Coakley made the Pro Bowl in 1991, 2001, and 2003. In his stint with the Cowboys he started 127 games. He missed only one game due to a mid-season knee injury in 2001. Solid, very solid. Dexter was a defensive coordinator's dream, always healthy, gave 100 percent all the time, and performed on a consistent level every Sunday.

Coakley's play has left an everlasting effect on the NFL. Coakley was a third-round draft pick in 1997. Since his entry into the NFL he surpassed all expectations. Of course, he knew all along what he was capable of, never doubting his own abilities, and working hard to be as good as he knew he could be.

This man is an unsung hero. He is not in the Hall of Fame, and he will probably never be in the Hall of Fame. Dexter was a hero to me, to his fan base, and to America's team. People like Dexter Coakley give me confidence to exceed everyday expectations, and to prove to anybody that I can do anything that I put my mind to. With enough hard work and dedication anyone can achieve greatness, and like Dexter I hope I do too.

Far too often there are NFL players who dont embody the meaning of football. The opportunities that are laid in front of them they take for granted. They wear the jersey, come out on Sunday and forget why they are there in the first place.

With Coakley that never happened. This man was a machine, built to play, built to succeed.

It is a shame to know that Dexter may never see the inside of the Hall of Fame. His years in Dallas pretty much ended in disappointment ever since he got there. He came a year to late, the last year the Cowboys won a playoff game.

It is truly remarkable to watch and learn from a player of his caliber. His work ethic is astonishing. His devotion is amazing. I can surely tell you one thing. I would shake in my cleats if Coakley was after me!