



EMMITT SMITH – NFL LEGEND

“I've given everything I can possible to the game, on and off the field,” Emmitt proclaimed about his 15 year NFL career. Born May 15th, 1969 in Pensacola, Florida, Emmitt began his illustrious career at Escambia High School, before attending the University of Florida and being drafted by the Dallas Cowboys in the first round of the 1990 draft.

Prior to Emmitt's arrival at Escambia, the Gators had just one winning season in its previous 18. When Emmitt stepped on the field his freshman year, the losing would stop. Emmitt rushed for 1,525 yards and 19 touchdowns in his first year and carried the team to the divisional playoffs. Although Emmitt opened a few eyes his freshman year, no one could have predicted the numbers Emmitt would post over the course of his high school career. His sophomore year he rushed for 2,424 yards and scored 26 touchdowns and led his team to their first state football championship with a 47-14 victory over St. Petersburg in the Class 3-A final. Escambia was moved to Class 4-A, Emmitt's junior year, but this would have no affect on Emmitt's ability to run over the competition. He rushed for 2,918 yards and 33 touchdowns that year and the Gators regained the state championship title. Although Escambia was not able to recapture the title Emmitt's senior year, he was able to polish off his career with 8,804 yards and 106 touchdowns. Emmitt is still considered one of the top All-Time Offensive Players in high school football.

After Emmitt's high school career ended, he was faced with a decision of where to continue his career. He passed up Auburn and Nebraska and decided to stay at home and attend the University of Florida. He quickly jumped into the national scene, rushing for more than 100 yards in his second game as a Gator. The following week against Alabama, Emmitt moved into the starting lineup and set a Gator record with 224 rushing yards in a 23-14 victory. At the end of his first season, Emmitt had rushed for 1,341 yards, a Florida record, and led the SEC. The next year Emmitt was plagued by a knee injury and had to sit out two games, but still led the Gators with 998 yards rushing and nine touchdowns. After fully recovering from his injury he was 100 percent his junior year and set new Florida records with 1,599 rushing yards and tied a school record with 14 rushing touchdowns. At the end of his three years at Florida he had scored 37 touchdowns, had 23 100-yard rushing games, was a NCAA All-American and still holds 58 school records. Emmitt did not stay his senior year, instead made himself eligible for the NFL draft.

Emmitt was drafted by the Cowboys in the first round of the 1990 draft. Coach Jimmy Johnson was looking to rebuild after a 1-15 season and felt that Emmitt could be the cornerstone of the Cowboy's offense. Over the next twelve years Emmitt was able to lead the Cowboys to three Super Bowl Championships, lead the NFL in rushing four times, was the league MVP in 1993, MVP of Super Bowl XXVII and made eight Pro Bowl appearances. In addition, Emmitt was the first player in NFL history to rush for over 1,000 yards in 11 consecutive seasons and on October 27, 2002 he surpassed Walter Payton's All-Time Leading Rushing Record of 16,726 yards and became the NFL's All-Time Leading Rusher. On September 19, 2005 Emmitt was added to the Cowboys Ring of Honor along with his former teammates Troy Aikman and Michael Irvin.

After twelve seasons with the Cowboys, Emmitt finished his career with the Arizona Cardinals playing the 2003 and 2004 seasons.

Fulfilling a vow to his mother that he would graduate from college after leaving school early to become Dallas' first-round draft selection in 1990, Emmitt returned to the University of Florida each NFL off-season to earn his Bachelor's degree in Public Recreation in 1996. His mother always told Emmitt that "football could end at any time, but your education will last a lifetime." He continues to support higher education and is currently sponsoring 19 underserved kids' college education.

Today Emmitt lives with his wife Pat in Dallas, Texas with their four children. The son of Mary and Emmitt Smith Jr., Emmitt has two sisters, Marsha and Connie, and three brothers, Erik, Emil and Emory.