

Leo E. Lewis

Professional Football Player

Inducted July 28, 2001

Leo Lewis was born in Des Moines, Iowa, but grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota. He attended John Marshall High School, where he played football, basketball and ran track. During his senior year, Lewis was named to the First Team (All-city) in football and basketball. Lewis received a full football scholarship to Lincoln University. At Lincoln, Lewis received numerous awards which include, Associated Press All-American, Pittsburgh Courier All-American, Phillip Morris All-American, and Mid-West Athletic Association First Team. Lewis' collegiate records at Lincoln that still stand are most; rushing yards in one game (245), most rushing yards in one season (1,239), most carries in a career (623), highest career rushing average (7.15), longest run from scrimmage (95), most touchdowns in a game (4) four times, most touchdowns in a season (22), most touchdowns in a career (64), longest kick-off return (105). Lewis was drafted by the Baltimore Colts in the fourth round and the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League (CFL). He chose Winnipeg.

Lewis played eleven years for Winnipeg and was selected to the Canadian All-Pro team six times. Lewis retired in 1966, but still holds records in the CFL, kick-off total yards (5,550), average kick-off return yards (29.4), second in average yards per carry from scrimmage (6.6), top ten in rushing yards from scrimmage (8,861). The CFL inducted Lewis into their Hall of Fame in 1973, and he was selected to the 1960-1970 All-Decade Team. In 1984, he was in the first group selected for induction into the Winnipeg Hall of Fame, and in 1993, Lewis was selected from all members who ever played in the CFL, for the All-Time All Star Team. In 1998, Leo was honored by the Winnipeg Football Club with a Wall of Fame honor, by having a large size action picture displayed in the inner wall of the football stadium.

In 1968, Lewis returned to Lincoln University as a teacher and assistant football coach under Dwight T. Reed. During his 32 years as an assistant professor at Lincoln, he served as assistant football coach, head golf coach, interim athletic director, head women's basketball and NYSP program administration. Lewis formally retired after 49 years of affiliation with Lincoln in 2000.