

Eldridge Dickey, BTW Houston great, named to Black College Football Hall of Fame

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Former PVIL quarterback Eldridge Dickey (Houston Washington) has been selected for induction to the Black College Football Hall of Fame. The Hall's third class was announced Friday and enshrinement ceremonies are set for February 18 in Atlanta.

Dickey was a gifted all-state performer for the Eagles and then starred at Tennessee State University (then Tennessee A&I) under legendary head coach John Merritt from 1964 until 1967. Merritt nicknamed Dickey "The Lords Prayer" saying the quarterback was the answer to the program's desire to become a winner. With Dickey at quarterback, they did just that, putting together a 33-3-1 record from 1965 to 1967.

Dickey became a three-time black college All-America and in 1966 led the Tigers to the program's first-ever undefeated, untied season (10-0) – they were 9-0-1 the previous season – as well as their first black college national championship. For his career, Dickey threw for 6,523 yards and 67 touchdowns.

Merritt would joke that Dickey could "throw right handed and left handed; why, he can even throw around corners."

Unfortunately, Dickey would have a star-crossed and brief pro football career. In 1968, the Oakland Raiders made him the first-ever African American quarterback taken in the first round of a pro draft. He was chosen with the 25th overall selection, ahead of Alabama's Ken Stabler, who the Raiders took in the second round.

However, Dickey was moved to wide receiver, a common practice among pro teams during that era for black quarterbacks. He played with the Raiders for two seasons (1968 and 1971), appearing in 18 games and finishing his career with only five catches for 112 yards and one touchdown. He never threw a pass in a regular season game.

Dickey, who became a minister, passed away after suffering a stroke on May 22, 2000.

For more information on the 2012 Black College Football Hall of Fame go to:
<http://www.blackcollegefootballhof.org/index.htm>.

