

Randy Gradishar Named Senior Finalist For Pro Football Hall Of Fame



Former Ohio State linebacker Randy Gradishar inched one step closer to receiving a bust in Canton on Wednesday, as he was named one of three Senior Finalists for induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame Class of 2024. He joins former Chicago Bears defensive tackle Steve McMichael and New York Titans/Oakland Raiders wide receiver Art Powell as the three players who will be enshrined if they receive 80% of votes from a January meeting.

This is the fourth time Gradishar has been named a Hall of Fame finalist. He was selected as a Modern-Era finalist in 2003 and 2008, then as a Seniors candidate for the Centennial State in 2020.

Gradishar, 71, experienced a decorated career at Ohio State (1971-1973), becoming a three-time starter and earning two All-American selections. His best season in the Scarlet and Gray came in 1973, where he finished sixth in the Heisman Trophy ballot as a senior after leading his defense to four shutouts and relinquishing just 64 points all season. These accolades allowed the Buckeyes' linebacker to be inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1998.

Gradishar was then drafted with the 14th overall pick in the 1974 NFL Draft by the Denver Broncos, an organization he would go on to play for across 10 seasons. The former Buckeye earned seven Pro-Bowl selections while leading the patented "Orange Crush" Denver defense, and became the franchise's all-time leader in tackles with 2,049. He also registered 19.5 sacks, 20 interceptions, 13 fumble recoveries and four defensive touchdowns throughout his career, and earned the NFL Defensive Player of the Year Award in 1978.

If selected, Gradishar will become the 11th Buckeye to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame, joining Chris Carter, Sid Gillman, Lou Groza, Dante Lavelli, Dick LeBeau, Orlando Pace, Jim Parker, Ed Sabol, Paul Warfield and Bill Willis. He also would be the fourth Ohio State player to be selected by both the College and Pro Football Hall of Fames, joining Pace, Parker and Willis.