

© 2007 Investor's Business Daily, Inc. IBD Archives are available as a value added service for IBD subscribers. You may download material from investors.com (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal, non-commercial use. For further information, go to www.investors.com/terms/. For reprint permission, go to www.investors.com/terms/reprints.asp or call 310-448-6714.

INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY®

www.investors.com

Article Title: "When NFL's Art Monk Caught, People Looked "

Author: MICHAEL RICHMAN

Date: 8/6/2007

Section: Leaders & Success

He was a quiet leader who played games in total silence.

Trash talking and showboating were antithetical to his approach, for he embodied professionalism and carried himself with dignity on the field.

Art Monk's goal was simple: Let his achievements do the talking.

Did they ever.

Monk was one of the premier wide receivers in National Football League history. In 16 seasons, his first 14 with the Washington Redskins, he caught 940 passes for 12,721 yards and 68 touchdowns. His reception total was a record that fell to a host of receivers.

He set all-time NFL marks for most catches in a season (106) and most consecutive games with receptions (183), both of which have been broken, and owns many Redskins receiving records.

Monk, a key player on three Redskins NFL title teams, has been a finalist for induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame seven times.

As Monk saw it, his silence was golden. "I've had guys say stuff to me and look me right in the eye and try to intimidate me," he said during his playing days. "But I just go back to the huddle and say, 'I'm going to catch this one, and after I catch it maybe I can run over him.' I found that I excel more in those situations than when someone doesn't say anything to me."

While making his mark on the NFL, Monk handled his work in yeoman fashion. There was nothing fancy about his pass-catching skills, for he was more substance than style. His trademark pass pattern was the dodge route, a short, precise pattern over the middle.

At 6 feet 3 inches, 210 pounds, Monk possessed the size, power and toughness to execute the pattern, maneuvering through traffic and fending off linebackers and other defenders. Many times he gained big yardage after the catch.

His timing on patterns was impeccable; he was often where the quarterback expected him to be. This statistic exemplifies his value: Of his 91 catches in 1985, 62 went for first downs. Of his 32 third-down catches, 31 went for first downs.

Monk, a consummate team player, did anything it took to win games. Late in a 56-17 rout of Atlanta in 1991, he caught a pass near the sideline for a first down. He could have stepped out of bounds, but plowed forward for a few extra yards.

The next day, Redskins special teams coach Wayne Sevier repeatedly showed a film of the play to his unit. "Here's a guy going to the Hall of Fame," Sevier told his players. "Watch what he does here."

Monk drove himself hard to improve his strength and conditioning through a rigorous workout plan. It consisted of weightlifting, wind sprints, distance running and racquetball. He often ran grueling sprints on a 45-degree, 15-yard hill, in one workout running 25 times uphill with straight leg pumps, then 25 times backward, then 25 times in a stutter step. He added six 220-meter sprints and six 110-meter sprints to his repertoire. He also ran with a weight belt.

Terry Metcalf, a Redskins running back in 1981, Monk's second year in the NFL, inspired him. "(Metcalf) was a fanatic with training and staying in shape," Monk said.

Monk's businesslike approach to football influenced other players.

"Monk was huge for a wide receiver. He could run, he had great hands, he was very physical, he had the talent, and he had the work ethic," former Redskins tight end Don Warren told IBD. "I kind of molded myself a little after him, just watching the way he worked out. We spent many summers running sprints on the track. He's one of the hardest workers."

Joe Theismann, who passed to Monk during Washington's NFL title run of 1982 - before injuries kept the receiver out of the Super Bowl - told IBD: "Art is as tough as any player I've ever played with and had every attribute you'd want to look for. If you were putting together a football team and fashioned it after a bunch of Art Monks, you'd win a lot of football games."

Similar to his game-time demeanor, Monk was reserved off the field and rarely spoke to teammates. When he did, everyone shut up in what coach Joe Gibbs described as an "E.F. Hutton moment."

Case in point: In 1990, the 6-5 Redskins appeared adrift, with playoff hopes flickering. Monk took it upon himself to call a players-only meeting in which he softly but succinctly explained that it was time for everyone to get serious about football and to raise their level of play a notch. One Redskin called it "a little bit of a butt-chewing in Art's way."

Monk's words reverberated. The Redskins won four of their last five games, made the playoffs and went on to win the next season's Super Bowl. Monk was credited with pointing the team in a direction that led to an NFL championship.

"That night Art decided to become a general," said Bobby Mitchell, the Redskins' assistant general manager at the time. "That was the greatest thing that ever happened to us. Man, we took off."

Monk's self-discipline and drive to succeed stemmed from his youth in White Plains, N.Y. His parents taught him the virtues of perseverance. "My parents always told us, 'Nothing in life is free,' " he said. "Whatever it is you want, you have to knuckle down and work for it."

Monk loved to play sports, and football interested him the most, in particular catching balls. He played in the streets, in the snow, in backyards, wherever there was a game. He came to admire such dominant pro receivers as Charley Taylor, Otis Taylor and Paul Warfield.

In addition to starring in football in high school, Monk excelled in track and improved his agility and speed. Such skills were valuable at Syracuse University, where he set school receiving records with 102

catches for 1,644 yards and rushed for more than 1,000 yards. He never missed a game or practice in four seasons with the Orange.

The Redskins drafted Monk in the first round in 1980 and positioned him as a receiver.

"He was a fabulous athlete, a very smart young guy," Bobby Beathard, the Redskins' general manager at the time, told IBD. "He was a good worker, he had speed, he was smooth, great hands, he was a guy who loved to play pro football. I don't think **Art Monk** was a really hard guy to figure out or scout."

From the start, Monk knew he wanted nothing less than to be the best. He caught a team-high 58 passes in 1980 and earned unanimous All-Rookie honors. At the same time, he was drawing comparisons to Charley Taylor, a big, physical Redskins receiver in the '60s and '70s who's now in the Hall of Fame.

"People talked a lot about me following in his footsteps when I got here, and that . was an honor," Monk told IBD. "But I didn't want to pattern myself after anybody. I had my own style and my own way of doing things. But he was an idol, and I looked up to him growing up."

© 2007 Investor's Business Daily, Inc. All rights reserved. All materials contained on this site are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of Investor's Business Daily, Inc. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content. For reprint permission, go to www.investors.com/terms/reprints.asp or call 310-448-6714.