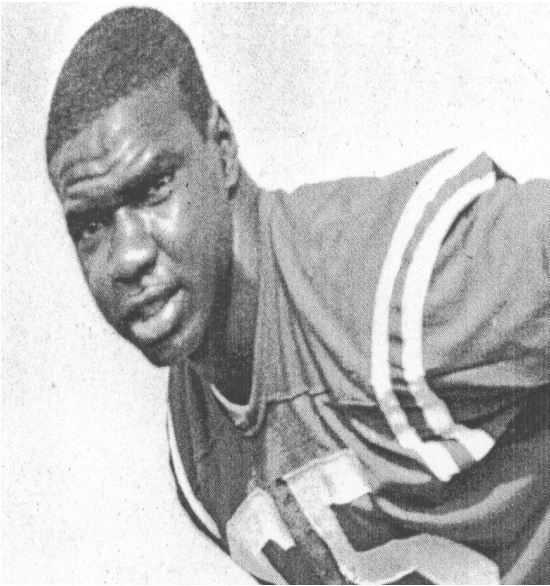


## Gerald Irons



Gerald Irons was inducted into the Hawk Hall of Fame in 1984. Gerald played defensive tackle for the Hawks. The Oakland Raiders chose him in the third round of the National Football League (NFL) draft in 1969 as linebacker.

At, 6'2" and 225 pounds, Gerald was the prototype NFL linebacker in the 1970's. Gerald started for the Raiders from 1970 until he was traded to the Cleveland Browns in 1976.

Gerald Irons played linebacker for the Silver and Black for six years. Though he was part of numerous memorable games in NFL history, his greatest thrill came long after his

playing career ended.

Gerald was drafted by the Raiders in the third round of the 1970 draft out of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Gerald played both ways back then: he was a pulling guard, a defensive end, and he played special teams. Gerald never left the field, but he owes a tremendous amount to Art Shell, who played with the Raiders from 1968 to 1982.

When he was drafted in 1968, the Raider coaches were so impressed by him that the Raiders management asked if there were more players like Art at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Art recommended me. Ron Wolf (Director of Player Personnel at the time) came and scouted me for several weeks and then he was drafted.

Gerald ended his NFL career in Cleveland in 1980. In 1980, Gerald was the recipient of the Cleveland Jaycees Distinguished Service Award given to the city's outstanding young citizen. Gerald enjoyed playing in Houston so much, I moved here.

Today, he lives in The Woodlands, Texas. It's a 27,000 acre master-plan community that is approximately one-and-a-half times the size of Manhattan Island. Currently, Gerald is Senior Vice President of Business Development for the developer. His job is to bring companies to The Woodlands and to encourage them to headquarter their operations there. Thus far, his efforts have help to encouraged over 1,200 companies to move there. This is pretty outstanding given that Woodland is a city of only 80,000 residents.

During the off-season with the Raiders, Gerald earned a MBA and law degree from the University of Chicago. In addition, he learned to speak Japanese, which has helped his business life tremendously.

He tried to prepare for life after football, though football still influences my life. In fact, he still workout twice a day. He often says, that he is in as good shape now as he was when he played. Gerald received a degree in business administration in 1969.

Gerald's NFL statistics are as follows:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Team(s)</u> | <u>Games</u> | <u>Int.</u> | <u>Total<br/>Yards</u> | <u>Avg.</u> | <u>TD</u> | <u>Fumbles</u> | <u>Total<br/>Points</u> |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1970        | Oakland        | 14           | 0           | 0                      | 0.0         | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1971        | Oakland        | 7            | 0           | 0                      | 0.0         | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1972        | Oakland        | 14           | 2           | 18                     | 9.0         | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1973        | Oakland        | 14           | 2           | 19                     | 9.5         | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1974        | Oakland        | 14           | 2           | 23                     | 11.5        | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1975        | Oakland        | 14           | 1           | 9                      | 9.0         | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1976        | Cleveland      | 14           | 1           | 1                      | 1.0         | 0         | 0              | 0                       |
| 1977        | Cleveland      | 14           | 3           | 99                     | 33.0        | 1         | 0              | 6                       |
| 1978        | Cleveland      | 14           | 2           | 9                      | 4.5         | 0         | 1              | 0                       |
| 1979        | Cleveland      | <u>16</u>    | <u>0</u>    | <u>0</u>               | <u>0.0</u>  | <u>0</u>  | <u>0</u>       | <u>0</u>                |
| Career      | Totals         | <u>135</u>   | <u>13</u>   | <u>178</u>             | <u>13.7</u> | <u>1</u>  | <u>1</u>       | <u>6</u>                |