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FEATURED

Former UGA football great Andy Johnson dies

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Born Oct. 18, 1952 in Athens, Johnson was an All-American quarterback on an Athens High team that was state champion in Class AAA. He also was all-region in basketball and baseball, as well as a sprinter on the track team. Johnson was drafted by the Atlanta Braves as a shortstop but decided to continue his education at the University of Georgia on a football scholarship.

Johnson was the starting quarterback on the Bulldog freshman squad in 1970, setting the total offense record of 1,078 yards in five games.

In 1972, his sophomore season, Johnson became the varsity's starting signal caller and led the Bulldogs to an 11-1 campaign which included a 7-3 victory over North Carolina in the Gator Bowl. During that season, Johnson set the SEC sophomore rushing record and was second in the conference in rushing. He set the SEC record for touchdowns scored rushing by a sophomore with 13. Football News named him the nation's most outstanding sophomore player and the Jacksonville Journal awarded him the SEC's outstanding sophomore player trophy.

Johnson was plagued by injuries throughout his junior season but still managed to be the Bulldogs' third leading rusher and second-leading passer in the 7-4 season.

In his senior season, Johnson was second on the team in rushing, led the team in passing, and commanded the Bulldogs to a 7-4-1 record with a 17-16 victory over Maryland in the Peach Bowl. After his three-year tenure was complete, Johnson captured the SEC record for the most yards rushing by a quarterback with 1,799.

While at Georgia, Johnson also competed on the Bulldogs baseball team for three years, compiling a .281 career average.

Johnson was drafted in the fifth round by the New England Patriots of the NFL. Johnson played for the Patriots for nine seasons before signing with the Boston Breakers of the USFL in 1983. He was inducted into the State of Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1996.

He is survived by his wife Charlotte (Chot) and children, Kristy, Brent and Brooke.

Visitation is scheduled for Saturday from 3-5 p.m. at Bernstein Funeral Home in Athens. A graveside service will be held Sunday at 3:30 p.m. at the Oconee Hill Cemetery in Athens.

