

= Al Pollard =

Alfred Lee Pollard (September 7 , 1928 ? March 3 , 2002) was a professional football fullback and halfback . After a brief stint at Loyola University , he decided to transfer to the United States Military Academy (Army) in the spring of 1949 where he played under the renowned Vince Lombardi as his backfield coach . In his 1950 season , he was Army 's statistical leader in scoring and rushing , resigned from the school after being involved in an all sports wide cribbing scandal which decimated the ranks of Army 's Sports teams . He was drafted by the New York Yanks in the 21st round of the 1951 NFL Draft , and Pollard played a total of 30 games in the NFL with the Yanks and the Philadelphia Eagles , scoring one career touchdown . In 1954 , he left the Eagles for opportunity and played in the Western Interprovincial Football Union , later known as the Canadian Football League , for the BC Lions , achieving " All Canadian " status . After retiring from football in 1957 , he pursued a number of business ventures in Canada including a beverage distributorship and a well regarded Steakhouse restaurant . He move back to Pennsylvania and became a color commentator on Eagles broadcasts , first with CBS television from 1961 ? 1964 , and then on WIP radio , where he worked with play @-@ by @-@ play man Charlie Swift from 1969 @-@ 1976 . Pollard also anchored a postgame Eagles program for WCAU @-@ TV . During his broadcasting years , he worked as a regional sales manager with a large commercial printing company and developed an ice skating and tennis court facility in Berwyn , Pa . He died of lymphoma on March 3 , 2002 .

= = Early life and high school = =

Pollard was born in Glendale , California , on September 7 , 1928 . His mother was Phyllis Pollard . He starred as a halfback at Loyola High School , where he excelled at executing T formations . In 1946 , his senior year , he scored 23 touchdowns and gained a total of 1 @,@ 772 yards from scrimmage . These achievements earned him his second consecutive " Player of the Year " award for Southern California high school football players by the Helms Athletic Foundation .

= = College = =

= = = Loyola = = =

Not heavily recruited by major colleges , Pollard decided to attend Loyola University , now known as Loyola Marymount , where high school coach William H. Sargent would be coaching . His 1947 recruiting class was known as the " Golden Boys " , and the Los Angeles Times said he was the most glamorous of them . Injuries plagued his redshirt freshman campaign , and he dropped out of Loyola on February 18 , 1949 . This decision surprised Loyola officials ; Pollard said he simply needed rest .

= = = Army = = =

Pollard transferred to the United States Military Academy on March 22 , where he played under coach Red Blaik . Vince Lombardi was their backfield coach . Due to transfer rules , Pollard was forced to sit out the 1949 season , and he enrolled at Rutherford Preparatory School to pass West Point 's entrance exam . While at Army , he was known to focus his attention mainly on football , and not care much for academics . Gil Reich , his roommate at West Point , noted that he and several other friends of Pollard frequently helped each other so as to not see anyone drop out .

In his only season on the football team (1950) , he was Army 's statistical leader in rushing , averaging 7 @.@ 3 yards per carry , and in scoring , with 83 total points . Prior to Army 's game with Penn , a scout for the latter team said Pollard was the best fullback in college football . In December , the Helms Athletic Foundation named him to their 1950 All @-@ American team , along with fellow Army cadet Dan Foldberg . He was also named to the Associated Press and United Press All @-@

East teams . The Associated Press praised his running capabilities , commenting that " any time he lugs the ball he 's liable to go all the way . "

Following the end of that season , he was one of the 90 cadets , also including coach Blaik 's son , who were forced to resign from the academy because of a cribbing scandal . The scandal was chronicled in the ESPN original film Code Breakers . According to Pollard in a 1951 interview with the Philadelphia Inquirer , the whole fiasco " broke [his] heart . " Following the scandal , he received scholarship offers from five major schools and a number of smaller ones . Pollard called Moose Krause , athletic director at Notre Dame , about transferring and playing for their football program , but was informed the Notre Dame Fighting Irish had not accepted transfers for six years . Although he was technically a sophomore , Pollard 's class had graduated and he declared himself eligible for the 1951 NFL Draft .

= = Professional career = =

= = = National Football League = = =

Paul Myerberg of USA Today named Pollard the fifth best player from Army to play in the NFL . Pollard was selected by the New York Yanks as the eighth pick in the 21st round of the 1951 NFL Draft and 251st overall . In his third practice with New York , Pollard tore a ligament . He played six games with the Yanks , where he rushed for two yards and received 18 . In addition , he returned three punts and five kickoffs for 34 and 134 yards , respectively . The Yanks , who offered him a salary of \$ 7 @, @ 000 , waived him in November , and he was signed to the Philadelphia Eagles for \$ 100 .

Finishing the last six games of the 1951 season , he carried the ball 24 times and in the process gained 119 yards . He also recovered two fumbles , returned 15 punts for 114 yards , and returned 14 kickoffs for 326 yards . Pollard 's best season statistically was in 1952 , when , in 12 games , he rushed for 186 yards and his sole touchdown in the NFL , received eight passes for 59 yards , recovered three fumbles , and returned 28 kickoffs for 528 yards . In 1953 he played in 12 games which saw him rush for 44 yards and receive for 33 , recover three fumbles , gain 106 yards in 20 punt returns , and gain 150 yards in 13 kickoff returns .

Pollard was at the center of a small brawl with the San Francisco 49ers in their game on September 28 , 1953 . The brawl erupted in the fourth quarter , when San Francisco 's Charley Powell squared off against Pollard . The Eagles ended up losing 31 @-@ 21 , and Pollard received no disciplinary action , although Powell was ejected .

= = = Western Interprovincial Football Union = = =

In September 1954 , he heard his minutes would be slashed , and after the second exhibition game , Pollard retired from the Eagles . As he was under contract , Pollard was threatened with legal action from General Manager Vince McNally . He avoided the legal tangle by never officially signing with another team again , thus voiding the reserve clause on his contract . Pollard explained his rationale in a 1954 interview with the Philadelphia Inquirer : " I just got fed up ... I knew they wouldn 't give me much of a chance to play ... I carried the ball only 23 times in 12 games last year , so something had to be wrong . "

When considering joining the Western Interprovincial Football Union (now Canadian Football League) , Pollard reported being given a good deal of propaganda to turn him away . He was picked up by the British Columbia Lions of the WIFU , with whom he played for until 1956 . Pollard then played a single season for the Calgary Stampeders in 1957 . He did not see much action with the Stampeders and ended his career due to health problems .

= = Later life and broadcasting career = =

While in Canada , Pollard opened a beverage store and a restaurant . He became sports director of CKLG radio station in Vancouver . After moving back to Pennsylvania , Pollard was a color commentator on broadcasts of Eagles games for WIP radio and worked with Charlie Swift , the play @-@ by @-@ play man , from 1969 to 1976 . The former anchored a postgame Eagles program for WCAU @-@ TV and occasionally commented for CBS television . His voice and knowledge of sports was praised by Eagles publicist Jim Gallagher .

Between 1976 until the mid @-@ 1980s , upon retiring from broadcasting , Pollard owned and managed an ice skating rink and tennis court facility in Valley Forge , Pennsylvania . He also was regional sales manager for a large commercial web printing company and participated in organizations such as Eagles Alumni . In addition , he chaired the committee which ran the Liberty Bowl .

= = Death = =

On March 2 , 2002 , Pollard died at his home in Devon , Pennsylvania , at the age of 73 . The stated cause of death was lymphoma . Patricia , his wife of 47 years ; children John , Kurt (1962 ? 2007) , and Melissa Mozer ; and eight grandchildren survived him in death . He was buried on March 7 at SS . Peter and Paul Cemetery in Marple Township , Pennsylvania .