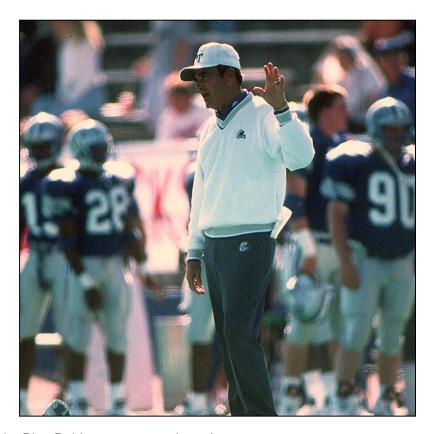
# Donnelly to be enshrined into College Football Hall of Fame

## MT alum spent 20 seasons at helm of football program

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Former Middle Tennessee football head coach James "Boots" Donnelly was announced as a member of the College Football Hall of Fame on Thursday. He becomes the first College Football Hall of Famer in school history.

Donnelly started his head coaching career at Austin Peay, taking a program that had never won a football championship to an Ohio Valley Conference title in his first season on the job. After two seasons and a 14-7 record, he left APSU for his alma mater where he would



spend the next 20 years leading the Blue Raiders to unprecedented success.

Donnelly led MT to nine top 20 regular-season finishes and seven NCAA I-AA playoff appearances, guiding Middle Tennessee to a 31-game home winning streak from 1987-93. He won or shared the Ohio Valley Conference title five times, was named the OVC Coach of the Year four times, and is the only coach in OVC history to win a conference title at two different schools.

The Nashville native was named the 1989 NFF Middle Tennessee Chapter's Outstanding Contribution to Amateur Football Award winner and is a member of the organization's board of directors, instrumental in fundraising for scholarships. Donnelly currently serves as the CEO of the Backfield in Motion organization, which combines academics and athletics to inspire inner city boys to reach their maximum potential.

A defensive back at MT from 1962-64, Donnelly led the Raiders to a conference championship and a Grantland Rice Bowl win in 1964. He later served as athletics director for three years at his alma mater, playing an integral role in moving Middle Tennessee to the FBS level. He is a member of the Blue Raider and the Tennessee Sports halls of fame.

The NFF launched its Divisional Hall of Fame program in 1996 during its annual enshrinement festival. A total of 144 players and coaches, counting this year's class, have been inducted from the divisional ranks, including Terry Bradshaw (Louisiana Tech), Walter Payton (Jackson State), John Randle (Texas A&M - Kingsville), Jerry Rice (Mississippi Valley State), and coach Eddie Robinson (Grambling State).

Including the recently announced 2013 Football Bowl Subdivision class and this class of divisional honorees, only 934 players and 205 coaches, have been inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame from the nearly 4.92 million who have played or coached the game over the past 144 years. In other words, only two one-hundredths of one percent (.0002) of the individuals who have played the game have been deemed worthy of this distinction. This year's divisional class brings the number of schools represented with at least one College Football Hall of Famer to 296.

The 2013 Divisional College Football Hall of Fame Class will be honored this summer in Atlanta, Ga., during the Enshrinement ceremonies in August.

### 2013 DIVISIONAL COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME CLASS

#### **PLAYERS:**

- Shelby Jordan Washington University in St. Louis
- · Joe Micchia Westminster College [Pa.]
- Art Shell University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- Jeff Wittman Ithaca College [N.Y.]

### **COACHES:**

- · Frank Cignetti West Virginia University
- · James "Boots" Donnelly Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State University
- Jess Dow Southern Connecticut State University

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