

## Commentary

# What a bust?! Wilson still not hall of famer

What exactly will it take to see Ralph C. Wilson's likeness displayed at the Pro Football Hall of Fame among those of other worthy contributors?

I'm guessing an act of God.

The word came down from the Hall of Fame Selection Committee two weeks ago, amid the mass chaos that is the Super Bowl, that the Class of 2007 will include Thurman Thomas, Bruce Matthews, Michael Irvin, Gene Hickerson, Charlie Sanders and Roger Wehrli. I'm not going to debate the candidacy of any of those men. They all possess hall of fame qualifications. But Wilson's name didn't even make it to the list of finalists this year and that's hogwash.

Along with former Kansas City Chiefs owner, the late Lamar Hunt, Wilson was instrumental in the creation of the American Football League and has been a voice for the small-market teams in a league more and more favoring the big cities. Hunt is deservedly a Hall of Famer, but Wilson's name should sit side by side with Hunt's among the annals of football greats.

There is no denying Wilson's importance to Western New York — without the Bills, the economy of Western New York would be far worse than it already is — but it's his contributions to the game and NFL as a whole

that make him Hall of Fame worthy. Hopefully, 2008 will be Wilson's year.

• The Buffalo Sabres line of Derek Roy, Maxim Afinogenov and Thomas Vanek is once again proving to be the best in the league.

In the past three games, Vanek has scored four goals, while Afinogenov has one. The duo accounted for all three goals in last Wednesday's 3-2 win over Ottawa and has helped take the scoring pressure off of co-captains Chris Drury and Daniel Briere.

• Let's all hope Brian Moorman doesn't ever have to run a fake punt during the Pro Bowl again.

Although the 6-foot, 175-pound punter can take a mean hit, like the one Redskins' safety Sean Taylor leveled on him Saturday, and bounce back up, Moorman is too valuable to the Bills to get injured in a meaningless exhibition. His leg gives the Bills' defense excellent field position in every game and the six-year veteran has been the most consistent performer over the past few years. If Buffalo loses him to injury, trouble is sure to follow.

• Town of Tonawanda heavyweight boxer "Baby" Joe Mesi is one week away from taking a significant step in his comeback and here's to Mesi climbing back into the rankings by the end of the year.

Mesi faces his first 10-round fight since getting injured in a 2004 win over Vassiliy Jirov when he takes on George "Terminator" Linberger Feb. 22. The comeback from multiple brain bleeds has been slow for the former No. 1 contender, but a decisive win in a televised bout — the fight will air on Versus — can draw attention back to Buffalo's "third franchise."

• The Western New York Varsity Hockey Federation playoffs are underway and that means some of the best high school hockey in the state happening all around us. With five-time defending state Catholic school champion St. Joe's, as well as defending

NYS Division I champion Williamsville North in the mix, some of the best teams in New York are fighting it out for supremacy. So check out the games and watch the stars of tomorrow.

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## Wallden

(Continued from page 18)

on Saturday to St. Francis. East shrunk the deficit to two with a minute remaining in the fourth quarter but St. Francis' Chris Hoak (21 points) sank a floating baseline jumper to extend the Red Raider lead to four.

"It was a good well-played game," said Belote. "They missed very few shots. The three-pointer kind of killed us even though made five. If we could have made more late, they wouldn't have packed it in on Wallden."

Wallden finished with 24 points,

18 in the first half, grabbed 18 rebounds and blocked eight shots.

Andreozzi added 11 points and eight rebounds. Heim scored nine to go with five assists.

East (10-7, 7-3) hosts Lake Shore on Wednesday then travels to Amherst on Thursday. Both games are at 7:30 p.m. East closes out its regular season on Feb. 20 hosting Bishop Timon-St. Jude.

The East JV had better luck against St. Francis, winning 57-55.

### Amherst Central

Playing three games in four nights last week was no problem for the Tigers, who improved to 9-1 in ECIC Division II and 12-5 overall.

Amherst won at Tonawanda, 65-29, in a non-leaguer on Feb. 6 then followed up with back-to-back league wins over West Seneca East, 73-45, and Iroquois, 73-50, Thursday and Friday, respectively.

"Playing three games in four nights is pretty tough," said Amherst coach Mike Chatelle. "I was worried about Friday especially playing back to back league games, but I was pleased with the way we finished."

Amherst was in control of each of the three games. The Tigers built a 40-10 first half lead on Tonawanda, outscored West Seneca East, 27-7, in the fourth to open a 46-38 advantage, and were up 38-23 at halftime and 56-41

after three quarters over Iroquois.

Cordell Freeman and Chris France were the team's main scorers.

Freeman had 24 of his 28 points against Tonawanda in the first half. Freeman and France scored 15 of Amherst's 27 fourth quarter points, including the first five points off steals against West Seneca East. France finished with a career-high 28 points and five steals, Freeman had a double-double (28 points, 12 rebounds) against the Trojans. The duo also combined for six three's and 46 points against Iroquois (France 23 points, four threes; Freeman 21 points, two threes).

Viron Hale had six points and five rebounds against West Seneca East and did a great job of creating a lot of second shots against Iroquois, finishing with 11 rebounds and three points.

Amherst shot nine 43 percent (23 of 65) and made nine threes against Iroquois. Will Gowen (14 points) hit two three's and grabbed five rebounds. Andre Hakeem added eight points. Sam Schepart also hit a three.

The Tigers have already clinched a tie for the ECIC Division II title but can win it outright with a home win over Lake Shore. The game was held Tuesday before The Bee went to press. Win or lose, Amherst closes out its regular season on Thursday against Williamsville East.



Williamsville South's Mark Coppola attempts a layup in fourth quarter action. South is 8-3 in ECIC Division II. East is 7-3.

Photo by Joe Eberle  
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### Fireman's Bowling

Team	Wins	Losses
Harris Hill	99	55
North Bailey	94.5	59.5
Ellicott Creek	92	62
Swormville	86	68
Main-Transit B	82	72
North Amherst	77	77
Snyder	73	81
Main-Transit A	72	82
Main-Transit C	72	82
East Amherst	62.5	91.5
Getzville	60	94
Egbertsville	54	100

### 200 Games/550 Sets

J. Abbarno 237, 231, 213 — 681; S. Mitchum 251, 229 — 672; D. Hutchinson 256, 212 — 656; N. Frase 226, 221 — 641; J. Daniels 216, 215 — 626; M. Gaiser 235, 202 — 621; S. Saxer 234, 210 — 621; A. Yambor 213, 202 — 609; J. Rusin 257, W. Bieger 236 — 559; J. Burandt 232 — 563; P. Schara 226; B. Krebs 224; M. Lowe 223; D. Linde 215 — 552; M. Bandelian 213 — 588; M. Nolte 211; G. Soehner 209; AJ Shisler 205, 204 — 580; M. Lytle 205, 203 — 553; M. Stafford 202; P. Kranz 200; secret score winner 156, Scott Will, Paul Kranz

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