

BUDDY YOUNG

Claude "Buddy" Young was both one of the smallest and one of the biggest men in pro football history. Game programs said he was 5'4-1/2", but that was only measured on the outside.

Born in Chicago, January 5, 1926, into a fatherless family of nine children, Buddy grew up as a self-professed "smart punk." When his Englewood High School coach refused to let him play because he was too small, he switched to rival Phillips High and returned to score four TDs against Englewood. Still, the time at Englewood wasn't wasted for there he met his future wife.

At the University of Illinois, he tied Red Grange's school touchdown record while earning All-American recognition. After time spent in the Navy, he returned to lead the Illini to a 1947 Rose Bowl victory. Because he was married and needed the money, he left school to sign with the New York Yankees of the All-America Football Conference in 1947.

One of the first blacks to play pro football (after the "unofficial" ban from 1934 to 1945), Buddy experienced the humiliations of prejudice. When the Yankees first played in Baltimore, racists showed up at the stadium in blackface. But he always insisted that the worst prejudice he encountered was against his size.

Few believed that anyone so short and weighing only 172 pounds could last long with the pros, but Buddy had a track star's speed, waterbug elusiveness, and courage. Those added up to much more than any missing size.

Although the teams he played for were seldom in championship contention, Buddy kept them dangerous with his long runs. He could go all the way from scrimmage, with a pass, or after fielding a kick.

In 1953, when he joined the Colts, Buddy didn't know quite what to expect after his experience in Baltimore in '47. With his sense of humor and sparkling personality, he needn't have worried. Before the season ended, he was voted the Colts' most popular player by the fans. It was a landslide. When he hung up his cleats in 1956, the Colts retired his number 22. In 1966, Buddy joined the NFL staff as administrative assistant to the commissioner. At his death in 1983, he was Director of Player Relations for the league.

Year	Team	Lg	GM	RUSHING				PASS RECEIVING			
				ATT	Yds	Avg	TD	No	Yds	Avg	TD
1947	New York	AAC	14	116	712	6.1	3	27	303	11.2	2
1948	New York	AAC	12	70	245	3.5	1	21	259	12.3	4
1949	Bkn-New York	AAC	12	76	495	6.5	5	12	171	14.3	2
1950	New York	Yanks NFL	12	76	334	4.6	1	20	302	15.1	1
1951	New York	Yanks NFL	12	46	165	3.6	1	31	508	16.4	3
1952	Dallas	NFL	12	71	243	3.4	3	22	269	12.2	2
1953	Baltimore	NFL	10	40	135	3.4	0	12	201	16.8	3
1954	Baltimore	NFL	10	70	311	4.4	2	15	272	18.1	3
1955	Baltimore	NFL	11	32	87	2.7	1	19	426	22.4	1
9 years			105	597	2727	4.6	17	179	2711	15.1	21

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Year	Team	Lg	PUNT RET				KICKOFF RET				SCOR	
			No	Yds	Avg	TD	No	Yds	Avg	TD	PTS	
1947	New York	AAC	8	127	15.9	1	12	332	27.7	1	42	
1948	New York	AAC	2	11	5.5	0	12	303	25.3	0	30	
1949	Bkn-New York	AAC	9	171	19.0	0	11	316	28.7	1	48	
1950	New York	Yanks NFL	9	54	6.0	0	20	536	26.8	0	12	
1951	New York	Yanks NFL	12	231	19.3	1	14	427	30.5	1	36	
1952	Dallas	NFL	6	35	5.8	0	23	643	28.0	0	30	
1953	Baltimore	NFL	6	9	1.5	0	11	378	34.4	1	24	
1954	Baltimore	NFL	16	60	4.3	0	13	308	23.7	0	30	
1955	Baltimore	NFL	1	0	0.0	0	9	222	24.7	0	12	
9 years			67	698	10.4	2	125	3465	27.7	4	264	