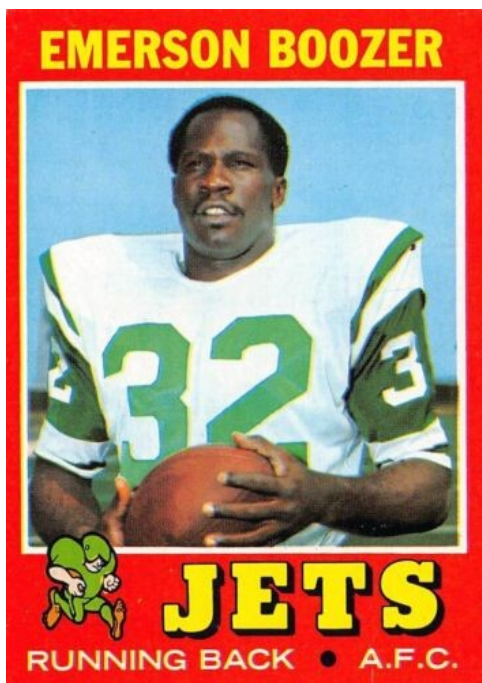


## Emerson Boozer

This article was written by Jim Marino.

Emerson Boozer played for the New York Jets for ten years. Contemporaries considered him one of the best runners and blockers in his era and a key component of the Jets' Super Bowl III championship. Boozer's football career consisted of three varsity seasons of high school football, four varsity years in college, and ten seasons in the pros. Listed at 5-11, 195, Boozer was the perfect sized quick all-purpose back. His work ethic, and grittiness enabled him to be a two-time All-Pro, and the main runner of the Jets' offense for a decade. "Boozer was widely acclaimed as the team's best running back and an offensive threat second only to Joe Namath."<sup>1</sup>



Emerson Boozer was born July 4, 1943, in Augusta, Georgia. He attended Laney High School in Augusta where he played for head coach David Dupree.<sup>2</sup> Dupree taught Boozer and all the backs to hit a tackling dummy and spin off.<sup>3</sup> Boozer developed a running style of spinning, sliding, and spinning again. Boozer said, "Tacklers didn't expect the extra

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<sup>1</sup> Wallace, William. "Football Jets Lose Boozer for 'Indefinite Period' as Halfback" *New York Times* July 24, 1968; 32.

<sup>2</sup> Gruver, Ed. *From Baltimore to Broadway*. 111.

<sup>3</sup> IBID.



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spin move.”<sup>4</sup> Boozer recalled the time as a varsity high school player he collapsed from the heat and almost died. “In high school I once blanked out and had to go through saline transfusions. The doctor said if they had waited a little longer to take me to the hospital, I would have died.”<sup>5</sup>

Boozer signed a football scholarship to attend Maryland State College (now Maryland Eastern-Shore) in 1962. A four-year letterman and halfback under legendary coach Vernon "Skip" McKain, Boozer wore number 44 as the Hawks went 18-9-1 during his tenure. He averaged 90.61 yards per game. Emerson was twice named to the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) All-American team in 1964 and 1965. Emerson amassed 22 touchdowns in his career and averaged 6.78 yards per carrier. Emerson graduated from Maryland State College in 1966 with a degree in Industrial Arts Education.<sup>6</sup> His career rushing yards total of 2,537 yards still stands as a Hawks record.<sup>7</sup>

In the last year of a separate draft by the two leagues, Boozer was drafted in the sixth round, 46th overall, by the New York Jets in the AFL and selected in the NFL Draft by the Pittsburgh Steelers in the seventh round with the 98th pick.<sup>8</sup> Jets offensive tackle, Sherman Plunkett, a Maryland State alumni, tipped off the Jets scouts about Boozer.<sup>9</sup> Emerson told the New Jersey Advance Media that he chose to play for the Jets instead of the Steelers in part because he had seen quarterback Joe Namath (Alabama) and fullback Matt Snell (Ohio State) play on television while in college.<sup>10</sup> There was more to the story.

Two other Jets claimed to have influenced Boozer to sign with the team. Snell asserted, “I talked Boozer into coming to the Jets instead of Pittsburgh. I told him, ‘as long as the money is somewhat similar, you come here. You can play right away. You’re better than any halfback we have on the field right now.’”<sup>11</sup> Coach Walt Michaels provided an insider’s view, “I wrote a personal check of \$20,000 as Boozer’s bonus. I didn’t have the money, but I called Sonny Werblin and told him

<sup>4</sup> IBID.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, Dave. “PRO FOOTBALL: Sports of The Times Doctor Inextricably Linked With the Quarterback He Kept Mobile,” *New York Times*. 17 July 2006: D8.

<sup>6</sup> “Emerson ‘Booz’ Boozer”, [https://www.umes.edu/uploadedFiles/ WEBSITES/Football/Content/emerson %20booz.pdf](https://www.umes.edu/uploadedFiles/WEBSITES/Football/Content/emerson%20booz.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> “EMERSON BOOZER FINALIST FOR BLACK COLLEGE HALL OF FAME OCT 6, 2017”. [https://easternshorehawks.com/news/2017/10/6/Emerson\\_Boozer\\_Finalist\\_for\\_Black\\_College\\_Football\\_Hall\\_of\\_Fame](https://easternshorehawks.com/news/2017/10/6/Emerson_Boozer_Finalist_for_Black_College_Football_Hall_of_Fame)

<sup>8</sup>7. IBID.

<sup>8</sup>. “Emerson Boozer, Matt Snell to enter Jets Ring of Honor on Sunday” Updated: Nov. 29, 2015 [https://www.nj.com/jets/2015/11/emerson\\_boozer\\_matt\\_snell\\_to\\_enter\\_jets\\_ring\\_of\\_ho.html](https://www.nj.com/jets/2015/11/emerson_boozer_matt_snell_to_enter_jets_ring_of_ho.html).

<sup>9</sup> Lederer, *Beyond Broadway Joe*. 148.

<sup>10</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Miller, Jeff. *Going Long*. 148.



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that if he didn't get the money into my bank account, we won't get Boozer.<sup>12</sup> On December 1, 1965, the Jets signed Boozer.

At his first pre-season camp in 1966, Boozer faced major adjustments of playing in the pros. Ewbank required all backs to be able to pass block. Snell entering his third season, taught the rookie running back how to block.<sup>13</sup> Ewbank was impressed with Boozer's approach to training. By the end of pre-season Ewbank evaluated Boozer, "He is an exciting runner, and has grown tremendously in his skills since camp opened. He doesn't yet have the proper technique for pass protection and for blocking, but he picks up knowledge quickly and will learn."<sup>14</sup> The beat writers were just as impressed with Boozer's speed and running style. Many wrote that Boozer provided the breakaway speed the New York ground game had always lacked since the first days at the Polo Grounds. Frank Litsky of the *New York Times* reported that Boozer "showed excellent balance and running ingenuity to go with his speed."<sup>15</sup>

Opening day found Boozer on the roster but behind veteran Bill Mathis. Boozer's first two pro carries occurred in the second game against the Oilers. "Another substitute who made the most of his opportunity was Emerson Boozer. On his first carry, he lost a yard. On his second, a halfback draw, he hit the line, found no hole, slid off four men, turned left end, and sprinted 39 yards for his first touchdown."<sup>16</sup> "Emerson Boozer is the exciting type of breakaway back the Jets have been looking for since their inception. But don't expect him to push Bill Mathis out of a job so quickly. Mathis provides the solid pass-blocking protection Joe Namath's knee needs," wrote Dick Young in early October.<sup>17</sup>

A week later, Boozer put his imprint on the season. In what Franck Litsky branded the Jets' "most glorious victory ever" the undefeated Jets vanquished the undefeated San Diego Chargers 17-16 in "an unbelievable finish." Boozer in for Mathis scored the winning touchdown with six minutes left in the game when he "circled left end, slipped one man on the 12, and another on the 4, circled around driving blocks by John Schmitt and Dave Herman and ran to the goal line. Strong safety, Kenny Graham hit him there, but Boozer carried Graham into the end zone. The run impressed his teammates so much

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<sup>12</sup> IBID.

<sup>13</sup> "The Life And Career Of Matt Snell (Story)" [Poch de la Rosa](https://www.profootballhistory.com/matt-snell/) September 1, 2022, <https://www.profootballhistory.com/matt-snell/>.

<sup>14</sup> Kremenko, Barney. "It Looks Like a Go-Go For the Jets", *The Sporting News*, September 10, 1966, 43.

<sup>15</sup> Litsky, Franck "Jets, Clicking On All Cylinders, Show Bills Imaginative Attack." *New York Times* August 29, 1966, 37.

<sup>16</sup> Litsky, Franck "Namath Throws Five Touchdown Passes as Jets Turn Back Oilers, 52-13." *New York Times* September 19, 1966, 58.

<sup>17</sup> Young, Dick. "Young Ideas", *The Sporting News*. October 1, 1966, 14



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that they gave him the game ball.”<sup>18</sup> The Jets owned the best record in the AFL after Week Six.

Ewbank gave Boozer his first start against the Dolphins on November 20. He ran for 64 yards, a touchdown, and had “an uncommon ability to slide off when an opening in the line closes and try another hole.”<sup>19</sup> Boozer also scored on a 96-yard second half kickoff return, as he “continued to captivate the customers with his slashing style of running.”<sup>20</sup> The Jets knocked the Patriots out of first place in the last game of the season enabling the Bills to win a repeat division title. Boozer achieved his first 100-yard game rushing for 117 yards and one touchdown on 23 carries in that game. Litsky noted that “All season they had trouble moving on the ground. Not until recent weeks, when Boozer replaced Bill Mathis at halfback, had the ground game loomed as a threat.”<sup>21</sup> Arthur Daley wrote, “The late-season development of the tricky Emerson Boozer as a runner added variety and sharpness to the Jet attack.”<sup>22</sup> The 1966 season ended with Boozer’s selection to the All-Rookie team selected by the pre-eminent African-American newspaper, *The Pittsburgh Courier*.<sup>23</sup> He also played in his first AFL Pro Bowl game.

At the start of the next season, Boozer was recognized as a spectacular runner, but, as *Sports Illustrated* pointed out, he “needs to improve his blocking on runs and pass protection.”<sup>24</sup> Boozer continued in the pre-season to focus on blocking, both pass protection and run blocking. Ewbank said, “He never saw a player work as hard as Boozer to change and elevate his game.”<sup>25</sup>

Ewbank established Boozer as the opening day starting halfback. Boozer held onto the status for the next seven years. In the early weeks of the season *The Sporting News* declared, “The Jets second-year halfback with the amazing balance appears to be the league’s most exciting runner at this point.”<sup>26</sup> The only thing bothering Boozer was a bad case of bunions which left his feet hurting all week. He ignored the pain as the Jets beat the undefeated Oakland Raiders in New York; the Raiders only loss of the season. *Sports Illustrated* avowed that the Jets, “beat Oakland, the toughest defensive team in the league,

<sup>18</sup> Litsky, Frank “Record 63,497 See Jets Save Lead.” *New York Times*, October 9, 1966, S1.

<sup>19</sup> “Jets Give Boozer Starting Role at Halfback and Bench Mathis” *New York Times*. November 17, 1966, 62.

<sup>20</sup> Litsky, Frank “96-Yard Run Aids in 30-13 Victory.” *New York Times* November 21, 1966, 64.

<sup>21</sup> Litsky, Frank “Namath Excels.” *New York Times* December 18, 1966, S1.

<sup>22</sup> Daley, Arthur. “Sports of The Times: With Either Foot” *New York Times*, Dec 20, 1966, 63.

<sup>23</sup> “Emerson Boozer Finalist For Black College Hall Of Fame.” October 6, 2017.

[https://easternshorehawks.com/news/2017/10/6/Emerson\\_Boozer\\_Finalist\\_for\\_Black\\_College\\_Football\\_Hall\\_of\\_Fame](https://easternshorehawks.com/news/2017/10/6/Emerson_Boozer_Finalist_for_Black_College_Football_Hall_of_Fame)

<sup>24</sup> SI Staff, “Pro Football Preview”. *Sports Illustrated*. September 18, 1967, 84.

<sup>25</sup> Lederer, Bob. *Beyond Broadway Joe*. 152.

<sup>26</sup> Felser, Larry, “Around the AFL”. *The Sporting News*. September 16, 1967, 7.



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with their own defense—particularly the rush line and the linebackers—and with a solid running game built around the power and speed of halfback Emerson Boozer, who can hardly walk for most of the week but can hardly be stopped on game day.”<sup>27</sup>

By Week Eight Boozer led the league with thirteen touchdowns in just seven games. In a game against Denver, Emerson had his first three-touchdown game. Murry Janoff wrote, “He breaks tackles, rams defenders, squeezes extra yardage...”<sup>28</sup> The all-purpose back contributed in the passing attack as he developed the skills necessary to get open. Namath noticed it, “Boozer is really something. He actually broke a pattern because he saw an opening. I saw him go and let him have the ball.” The stellar season came to an end with a devastating right knee injury in the Kansas City game. Dr. James A. Nicholas, who operated on Namath’s knees, performed “his most difficult knee operation” on Emerson Boozer in 1967.<sup>29</sup> The run game collapsed and the Jets fell out of first, losing four of the next six games.

Boozer faced two challenges in 1968, recovery from the injury, and a telegram from the U.S. Army. Boozer, a National Guardsman, was called up to the U.S. Army on July 15.<sup>30</sup> The Army discharged Boozer a month later on August 15 because he failed to complete basic training due to the four hours a day of physical therapy for his right knee. He missed all but one pre-season game and regular practices since July.<sup>31</sup>

The surgery and Boozer’s meticulous therapy resulted in his return to a premier runner. Another factor was Dr. Nicholas’ prescription. He confined Boozer to first and third quarter play. Boozer recalled, “[The knee] was strong enough to do what I had to do. The coaching staff did a great job in bringing me back slowly. I only played an average of two, two-and-a-half quarters the whole season until the playoffs. The playoffs, I had to go the distance.”<sup>32</sup>

Sports experts were divided on Boozer’s return and the impact on the Jets season. Berry Stainbeck picked the Jets to win the AFL East because “Boozer and Snell give the Jets

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<sup>27</sup> Shrake, Edward. “The Plays Go For The New Joe.” *Sports Illustrated*, October 16, 1967, 34.

<sup>28</sup> Janoff, Murry. “Ouch! Those Bunions Spur Jets’ Boozer”. *The Sporting News*, October 21, 1967, 33.

<sup>29</sup> Anderson, Dave. “Sports of The Times: Doctor Inextricably Linked With the Quarterback He Kept Mobile.” *New York Times* July 17, 2006, D8.

<sup>30</sup> Wallace, William. “Football Jets Lose Boozer for 'Indefinite Period' as Halfback Is Called-Up” *New York Times* July 24, 1968, 32.

<sup>31</sup> Army Discharges Boozer, Jet Star.” *New York Times*, August 16, 1968. 23.

<sup>32</sup> Cosentino, Dom. “Super Bowl 2014: Why former Jets great Emerson Boozer chose the AFL over the NFL” January 26, 2014.  
[https://www.nj.com/jets/2014/01/super\\_bowl\\_2014\\_why\\_jets\\_great\\_emerson\\_boozer\\_chose\\_the\\_nfl\\_over\\_the\\_nfl.html](https://www.nj.com/jets/2014/01/super_bowl_2014_why_jets_great_emerson_boozer_chose_the_nfl_over_the_nfl.html).



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the best running game in the East.”<sup>33</sup> *The New York Daily News* Larry Fox speculated even higher predicting that the Jets could win a championship, but a lot depends on Boozer and Namath.<sup>34</sup> Larry Felser, still concerned, picked the Jets to finish second in the AFL East.<sup>35</sup>

Boozer started the opening game against the Chiefs on the same field he was injured the previous year. In the 20-19 victory, Boozer had the most carries and rushing yards by either team. Bob Oates of *The Sporting News* wrote, “The best runners in the country are Gayle Sayers, Leroy Kelly, and Emerson Boozer.”<sup>36</sup> Former Jets owner Sonny Werblin, after watching Boozer in a late October game asserted, “There’s the best runner in pro football.”<sup>37</sup>

Boozer did not back off from the number one priority, blocking. By his third season he had his priorities straight, "For me, that's blocking, catching the ball and running, in about that order. A good block is as satisfying to me as an 80- or 90-yard run. I mean, guys will compliment you today and tomorrow and next week if you keep the enemy away from Joe's knees."<sup>38</sup> It didn't take long for newly acquired Jets teammate left guard Bob Talamini to consider them the best blocking running back duo in the American Football League.<sup>39</sup> Dave Herman explained Boozer's blocking more vividly, “He takes the romance out of the blitz.”<sup>40</sup> The highest accolades came from Weeb Ewbank who demanded the superlative blocking, “Boozer was perhaps the best I have ever seen leading the runner as a blocker.”<sup>41</sup> Despite the limited playing time Boozer earned Pro-Bowl recognition. Boozer was at full capacity for the playoffs.

He played all four quarters in the championship game against Oakland at Shea Stadium. Boozer contributed 51 yards on eleven carriers (a 4.64 average), and an eleven-yard reception. He also provided solid blocking for Snell and Namath. The victory brought Boozer to the Super Bowl. In that game he had 10 carries for 19 yards, but the role and purpose were different for Boozer.

He pointed out the difference for the Super Bowl, "We felt a sense of pride having reached the game and a duty to respond to the challenge because we were representing a

<sup>33</sup> Gruver, Ed. *From Baltimore To Broadway*. 49.

<sup>34</sup> IBID.

<sup>35</sup> Felser, Larry. “Bethard Proving Big Oiler Bargain” *The Sporting News*, September 11, 1968, 42.

<sup>36</sup> Oates, Bob. “The NFL West”, *The Sporting News*, October 12, 1968, 40.

<sup>37</sup> Durso, Joe. “Werblin Just Another Jet Fan, Now.” *New York Times*. October 28, 1968, 60.

<sup>38</sup> SI Staff, “Weeb Ewbank’s Mother Hens.” *Sports Illustrated*, November 10, 1969, 26.

<sup>39</sup> “The Life And Career Of Matt Snell (Story)” [Poch de la Rosa](https://www.profootballhistory.com/matt-snell/) September 1, 2022,

<https://www.profootballhistory.com/matt-snell/>.

<sup>40</sup> Lederer, Bob, *Beyond Broadway Joe*. 149.

<sup>41</sup> IBID, 152.



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league. That was huge. We were representing a league and all of its ownerships and players. We were playing for respect. We came from the same schools, and the coaches came from the same bucket as well. So what made us weaker than those guys [in the NFL]? I never could understand that. I think that was the driving force behind most of the clubs in the AFL,” recalled Booser.<sup>42</sup>

Booser remembered the pact Snell and he made, “We knew the game plan emphasized the run. We each promised to break our butt blocking for the other.”<sup>43</sup> It became “My job that day was to block for [quarterback] Joe Namath and [fullback] Matt Snell,” Booser said afterwards.<sup>44</sup> Ewbank recalled, “I’ll always remember the way Emerson blocked for Snell in the Super Bowl. Emerson was the lead man clearing the way for Matt. I don’t think it mattered to him. All he wanted was to get the championship.”<sup>45</sup>

The next season, Booser played thirteen games and rushed for the most yards of his first four seasons, compiling 604. He captured his second hundred-yard-rushing game against Cincinnati. The season ended on a sour note as the Jets lost 13-6 to the Chiefs in the first round of the playoffs. The 1970 season was a tough year. Booser entered the 1970 pre-season unsigned. Signing before the opener, he was ready to play against the Cleveland Browns. Booser scored the Jets first ever Monday Night Football game touchdown on a five-yard run in the second quarter. Despite a 31-21, defeat Booser produced 96 total yards and two touchdowns.

Snell was hurt and missed eleven games. New York’s ground game fell upon Booser’s shoulders. Booser missed four games in the middle of the season with bruised ribs. Namath broke his hand and missed the last nine games. The Jets tumbled to 4-12. The next year was no better as Namath started only three games. Booser for his first time started all fourteen games.

In the 1972 opener against the Buffalo Bills, Booser entered an elite Jets’ club when he became the fourth Jets/Titans player to score three touchdowns in a game. The others were Art Powell, Don Maynard, and Billy Joe. Later in the season, Booser did it a second time and third time both against the Boston Patriots, becoming the only New York player

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<sup>42</sup> Rhoden, William. “Sports Of The Times: When the Final Game Really Meant Something.” *New York Times*, February 6, 2010, D2. and Cosentino, Dom. “Super Bowl 2014: Why former Jets great Emerson Booser chose the AFL over the NFL.”

<sup>43</sup> Miller, Jeff. *Going Long*. 299.

<sup>44</sup> Klingaman, Mike. “Catching Up With Emerson Booser, ex-Maryland State and Jets running back.” *Baltimore Sun* October 30, 2014. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/sports/bs-sp-catching-up-booser-20141030-story.html>.

<sup>45</sup> Eskenazi, Gerald. “Jets’ Booser Quits, Takes TV Position: Booser Quits the Jets, Will Take TV Position”. *New York Times*, July 2, 1976, 38.



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to do it three times in one season. The tandem of Boozier and John Riggins became the Jets best running duo in franchise history in 1972, and going into the ninth week Boozier lead the league with 11 touchdowns. The team and the media now called him, "...one of the best Jet blockers."<sup>46</sup> Boozier said, "A lot of people don't realize that the offensive system we have here calls for the fullback to run the ball most of the time."<sup>47</sup> During the season, Boozier taped a morning sports show for a small station, WLIB, which was broadcast between 5 and 8 a.m.<sup>48</sup> He and his wife Enez had their first child, Keava, a girl, on November 13. By the end of the 1972 season Boozier was the Jets career touchdown leader with 45.

The next season he held out with several other players for \$100,000. Ewbank fined and suspended Boozier as a holdout.<sup>49</sup> During the negotiations Boozier even suggested a new official statistic the NFL should record, "Some system should be worked out whereby records for key blocks are kept, not by the coaches, but by a statistician. They have all-pro quarterback, all-pro tackles, and the likes. Why not an official all-pro blocker."<sup>50</sup> Boozier agreed to terms and signed August 31, 1973.

Boozier, now 30, adjusted his game. "With his signature breakaway speed gone he had to reinvent himself and he became a great blocker and specialized in goal line scoring," wrote William Rhoden.<sup>51</sup> Boozier had his best single game against the Philadelphia Eagles when he ran for a career high of 160 yards and two touchdowns. It was his finest season with 961 total yards, including 831 yards rushing with six touchdowns. In 1974, Boozier honored the NFL players strike by joining the picket line. Luckily the strike did not impact the regular season and Boozier played in 13 games and rushed for 563 yards.

In 1975, after a shoulder separation Boozier was listed as the number two halfback, the first time since his rookie season and played in only nine games. He announced his retirement on July 1, 1976, at Rose's Restaurant surrounded by more than 100 newsmen, former teammates, television personalities, camera technicians and photographers.<sup>52</sup> At the time Emerson was the twenty-second runner to amass over 5,000 yards rushing in a pro career, and was the Jets' career leader in yardage and rushing touchdowns.<sup>53</sup> Boozier's

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<sup>46</sup> Harvin, Al. "Jets' Boozier Sums Up: His Points Don't Count", *New York Times*, November 11, 1972, 41.

<sup>47</sup> IBID.

<sup>48</sup> Young, Dick. "Young Ideas." *The Sporting News*, December 2, 1972, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Harvin, Al. "Boozier, Hill Suspended: Jets Suspend, Fine Boozier and Hill", *The New York Times*, August 11, 1973, 13.

<sup>50</sup> IBID.

<sup>51</sup> Rhoden, William. "Sports Of The Times: When the Final Game Really Meant Something." *The New York Times*, February 6, 2010, D2.

<sup>52</sup> Eskenazi, Gerald. "Jets' Boozier Quits, Takes TV Position: Boozier Quits the Jets, Will Take TV Position." *New York Times*, July 2, 1976, 38.

<sup>53</sup> IBID.





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sixty-four touchdowns are still the most in the Titans/Jets franchise history for a running back. This was at a time when the teams played only 14 games in a season, so in that context his statistics are quite impressive.

Walt Michaels offered Boozer an assistant coach's position for the running backs. Boozer balanced that offer against his future as a CBS football announcer. Boozer said, "I've always wanted to be in TV and now that I am it would be difficult to turn around and leave."<sup>54</sup>

He went into broadcasting, invested in a tool-and-dye machine shop, owned a bar/restaurant, and worked in the parks department in Huntington Station, on Long Island, where he lived with his wife. Boozer became Director of Recreation for the Town of Huntington, and was inducted into Suffolk County Hall of Fame in 1996. Boozer became a member of the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1991, and was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2010. He also participated in the Project Excel mentoring program at Walt Whitman High School in Huntington.<sup>55</sup> The Jets placed him in their ring of honor in 2015. Boozer earned induction to the Black College Football Hall of Fame as a member in 2019. He is listed in the top 20 of many New York Jets top 100 players lists in franchise history.

Boozer performance left an impression on coaches, teammates, and reporters. Paul Zimmerman, in 1997, compared a young Barry Sanders to Boozer, "Sanders reminds me of Emerson Boozer in '66, his rookie year with the New York Jets. He was another freak runner, a pinball, bouncing off tacklers in a dazzling progression."<sup>56</sup> Boozer summed up his career saying, "As a young man who started on the playing fields of Augusta, Georgia, and winds up on the playing field of Shea Stadium—which I don't think is a good field—is a long way to come. I remember only the runs and the blocks that contributed to a victory. I had to work hour after hour, day after day, I could not rest on the last block I gave for Riggins, or Snell, or Joe. When I retire, I don't want to be remembered for my yardage or how I played football. I just want to be remembered as Boozer – the man himself, the quality of the man."<sup>57</sup> Friends and relatives of Emerson Boozer gathered at his Huntington home July 4, 2023, to celebrate the 80th birthday of the former New York Jets running back.

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<sup>54</sup> Anderson Dave. "Of Nets, Mets, Jets and Others" *New York Times*, January 22, 1977, 25.

<sup>55</sup> Rhoden, William. "SPORTS OF THE TIMES: When the Final Game Really Meant Something" *The New York Times*, February 6, 2010, D2.

<sup>56</sup> Zimmerman, Paul. "Lion King Barry Sanders Is Running Circles Around NFL Defenses." *Sports Illustrated*, December 8, 1997, 94.

<sup>57</sup> Anderson, Dave. "The Knee, The Initial Step." *The New York Times*, December 1, 1974, 257.