

Renfro's induction into Hall makes Sunday sweeter

□ The all-time Cowboy defensive back will be inducted in August.

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — For Mel Renfro, the road to the Pro Football Hall of Fame was long and rough. Three times, he'd been a finalist only to be passed by.

"The first year I had great anticipation and anxiety and nothing happened," he said. "The second year, I said, 'This is a shoo-in and it didn't happen. The third year, I kind of relaxed and said, 'What will be, will be.'"

The fourth year, he made it. He got the telephone call early Saturday morning. He'd already been awake for some time.

"I didn't sleep very well the night before," he said from his home Sunday, just a couple of hours before his old team, the Dallas Cowboys, played in another Super Bowl. "I got up early and walked around a little bit. It was just kind of an eerie feeling."

Renfro was one of the all-time great defensive backs in Cowboys history. He made it to the Pro Bowl in each of his first 10 seasons after a standout track and football career at the University of Oregon. He had 52 career interceptions in the NFL and more than 3,000 yards in kick returns.

He couldn't figure out why he was continually passed over for the Hall of Fame.

"I kept seeing guys go in that I had played with and had played against and their credentials did

n't match mine," he said. But there was no bitterness when the call finally came. "I can't explain the excitement once it finally happened," Renfro said. "It was kind of like all the adrenalin for every game I ever played in and everything I'd ever done in my life."

Renfro thinks he knows why it has taken so long for him to be selected. Since he left pro football, he has struggled personally and professionally. He said he's had a dozen or more businesses, many of which failed. His last, a barbecue restaurant, closed last year.

"I often thought if I had taken the money I'd used in business and just put it in a savings account, I could live off the interest the rest of my life," he said. Personally, he also was unsettled. "All I can say is that I wandered in the desert with no focus or vision for a long time, for 12 or 13 years," he said.

The change came, he said, year and a half ago, when he gave up drinking and gave himself totally to an inner-city ministry.

"My message is reconciliation, racial and denominational, young and old," he said.

He believes it was God's will that he had to wait for this great honor until he was ready to understand and appreciate it as a gift.

"I had to get rid of some things in my life," he said, "my love for drinking beer, my anger, my dislike for some people in my past. I had to repent and forgive."

Ohio college Letterman adds flavor to CBS radio

□ The Youngstown State lineman was killed outside his home.

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio (AP) — Jermaine Hopkins, a lineman on the Youngstown State's football team, was killed early Sunday in a drive-by shooting outside his home, police said.

Hopkins, 21, was shot twice while standing outside his home. Police said a car with three males drove by and at least one of the men began shooting.

One suspect, whose name had not been released, was in custody, police said.

The shooting might have been related to a fight at a sorority dance on campus Saturday night, the school said.

A fight broke out during the dance and university police then ended the dance. Police said Hopkins had been trying to break up the fight.

Hopkins, a defensive lineman from Miami, was a two-year starter for the Penguins. He set a school record in 1994, his junior season, with 15 sacks.

"Our society must find ways to stem the flow of violence that often interrupts and tragically ends the aspirations and promise of so many of our youth," said Les Cochran, the university's president. "The uni-

Letterman adds flavor to CBS radio

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP) — Even though another network televised the Super Bowl, CBS' David Letterman got into the action on the radio halftime show.

Letterman came up with a "Top Ten Good Things About Listening to the Super Bowl on the Radio" list for CBS' halftime radio show. The game was telecast on NBC.

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2. Hearing a groin pull is less painful than seeing one.

1. You never know when the announcer's giving you the finger — like this.

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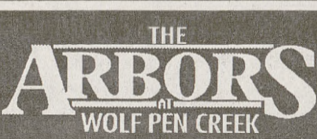
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