

T O M F L O R E S

H A L L O F F A M E S E M I F I N A L I S T





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"People are always giving guys credit for their Xs and Os, but being a head coach is just much more than that; it's managing people. The thing that really created closeness was that [Flores] trusted us - 'I taught you all you need to know, now go out there and play.'"

- Marcus Allen

"This honor is way, way long overdue. Flores is a guy that deserves it. He's been a competitor all his life. His accomplishments are second to none in this league. He certainly should enter the Hall of Fame this year."

- Jim Plunkett

"Tom Flores needs to be in the Hall of Fame. Great coach - one of the greatest ever. Multiple Super Bowl winner. That guy needs to be in the Hall of Fame."

- Jeff Garcia

"How could that not endear you to a head coach? As opposed to the usual, 'Get out of here, I'm in charge.' It was never anything like that. I can't emphasize this enough - I think that what [Flores] contributed as a head coach is understated."

- Todd Christensen

"It means a lot to the Raiders and knowing him personally, it'd be great for him to get in the Hall. He belongs there. He was a great quarterback, great coach and if you know Flores, he is one helluva guy. Wish him the best. If I had a vote, I'd certainly vote for him. He's what the Hall of Fame is all about."

- Jon Gruden

"I learned a lot from Coach Flores. He was the best head coach I had during my NFL career. The thing I benefitted from him the most was his approach to pregame prep. He was a master at removing stress and appeared confident all the time."

-Mike Haynes

"During the many years that Tom Flores and I were in the NFL, I came to know him as an outstanding coach and as a person who was a credit to the game that we both revere. Tom was always prepared. He was a person of high character, keen intelligence, and with a winning personality. He always honored the game, and he gained the respect from so many of us -- players, coaches, fans, etc. -- who came to know him."

- Marv Levy



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TOM FLORES, a true football pioneer and one of the most successful individuals in pro football history, is a semifinalist for the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

In pro football's modern era, few people can approach the track record of success and the overall impact that Flores has had on the game. Flores was the first person to win Super Bowl championships as a player, assistant coach and head coach, capturing two of those world championships of professional football as head coach of the Raiders. His four Super Bowl rings set a standard for excellence that has rarely been approached.

Flores' imprint on the history of the Silver and Black is deep, as he was the very first quarterback to take snaps under center as the Raiders played their inaugural game on Sept. 11, 1960, against the Houston Oilers at San Francisco's Kezar Stadium. Under new franchise General Manager and Head Coach Al Davis in 1963, Flores helped the Silver and Black to a nine-win improvement over the previous season, at the time the greatest single-season turnaround in pro football history. Flores remains among the franchise passing leaders and is one of just 20 men to play all 10 years of the American Football League, playing for the Raiders, Bills and Chiefs, with whom he captured his first Super Bowl ring as a backup quarterback on Kansas City's Super Bowl IV title team.

As an assistant coach, first with Buffalo and then as receivers coach with the Raiders under Hall of Famer John Madden, Flores tutored some of the greatest players in league history and was part of a historical run of success in the 1970s. Flores' receiving corps included Pro Football Hall of Famer Fred Biletnikoff and Cliff Branch, two of most dynamic receivers of the modern era. Flores' charges accounted for five Pro Bowl and four All-Pro selections in seven seasons as the Raiders claimed five AFC West titles (1972-76) and appeared in five-straight AFC Championship Games (1973-77). Flores earned his second Super Bowl championship with the Raiders' victory in Super Bowl XI and Biletnikoff earned Super Bowl MVP honors.

Named as successor to Madden ahead of the 1979 season, Flores further weaved his way into the fabric National Football League lore by becoming the first person to win a Super Bowl championship as a player, assistant coach and head coach. The 1980 Raiders, the first-ever Wild Card team to win a championship, reeled off an unprecedented four victories in the postsea-

1ST Latino quarterback in pro foot- ball history	1ST to win the Super Bowl as a player, asst. coach and head coach	1ST minority head coach to win the Super Bowl	1ST minority President and General Manager
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--Hall of Famers Coached by Flores--

Player	Years Played	Year Inducted
Art Shell	1979-82	1989
Gene Upshaw	1979-81	1987
Ted Hendricks	1979-83	1990
Mike Haynes	1983-87	1997
Howie Long	1981-87	2000
Dave Casper	1979-80	2002
Marcus Allen	1982-87	2003
James Lofton	1987	2003
Ray Guy	1979-86	2014
Ken Stabler	1979	2016

son, including at 27-10 win over the Eagles in Super Bowl XV, making Flores the first Latino head coach to hoist the Lombardi Trophy.

The Silver and Black enjoyed a continued run of success in the 1980s. The 1982 Raiders posted a league-best 8-1 record in a strike-shortened season and saw Flores receive NFL Coach of the Year honors. The 1983 team posted a 12-4 record before embarking on a dominant postseason run that culminated in a 38-9 demolition of the heavily-favored Washington Redskins in Super Bowl XVIII, at the time the largest margin of victory (29 points) in Super Bowl history.

Flores' winning track record extended throughout his tenure with the Silver and Black. As an assistant coach, Oakland teams posted a staggering 75-23-2 (.760) regular-season record. As a head coach, Flores recorded an 83-53 (.610) regular-season mark and a tremendous 8-3 (.727) record in postseason contests.

Flores wasn't done blazing trails after his Raiders tenure was finished. In 1989, he joined the Seattle Seahawks, becoming the first minority President/General Manager in NFL history. He returned to the sideline as head coach of the Seahawks from 1992-94.

As head coach of the Silver and Black, Flores tutored 10 players who would go on to be enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. His players captured numerous individual honors, including MVP (Marcus Allen - 1985), Defensive Player of the Year (Lester Hayes - 1980 and Cortez Kennedy - 1992), Rookie of the Year (Marcus Allen - 1982) and Comeback Player of the Year (Jim Plunkett - 1980 and Lyle Alzado - 1982).

Among Flores' numerous accomplishments is his track record against his most distinguished peers. Flores compiled favorable marks against such coaching luminaries as Don Shula (6-1), Don Coryell (11-5), Chuck Noll (2-1), Tom Landry (2-1) and Bill Walsh (2-1). In the postseason, Flores' ledger includes victories over an impressive group that includes Noll, Dick Vermeil and Joe Gibbs.

Flores' success spanned professional football's decades of ascent, beginning in the upstart American Football League (AFL) and moving through two decades of dominance in the NFL. His imprint on the Raiders franchise is indelible and his overall impact on America's greatest game is unmistakable.

--Award-Winning Seasons Coached By Flores--

Lester Hayes, AP Defensive Player of the Year in 1980
Jim Plunkett, Comeback Player of the Year in 1980
Lyle Alzado, Comeback Player of the Year in 1982
Marcus Allen, AP Offensive Rookie of the Year in 1982
Marcus Allen, Most Valuable Player in 1985
Marcus Allen, AP Offensive Player of the Year in 1985
Cortez Kennedy, AP Defensive Player of the Year in 1992



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Tom Flores recorded a remarkable .610 winning percentage (83-53) in nine seasons as head coach of the Silver and Black, a higher regular-season winning percentage than contemporary Hall of Fame coaches Bill Walsh, Tom Landry and Chuck Noll.

Coach	Team	Winning Percentage	Record
Tom Flores	Raiders	.610	83-53
Bill Walsh	49ers	.609	92-59-1
Tom Landry	Cowboys	.607	250-162-6
Chuck Noll	Steelers	.566	193-148-1

Flores also garners an extraordinary all-time postseason winning percentage of .727. Only Vince Lombardi has a better record in the postseason (min. 10 games).

Coach	Team	Winning Percentage	Record
Vince Lombardi	Packers	.900	9-1
Tom Flores	Raiders	.727	8-3
Bill Belichick	Patriots/Browns	.718	28-11
Bill Walsh	49ers	.714	10-4
Joe Gibbs	Redskins	.708	17-7

High pressure matchups always brought out the best in Flores, proven by his record as a head coach against current Hall of Fame coaches. Of the 18 coaches in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, Flores faced seven of them during his tenure at the helm of both the Raiders and Seahawks, posting a notable 16-11 record (.593).

Coach	Record	Winning Percentage
Joe Gibbs	1-2	.333
Bud Grant	1-0	1.000
Tom Landry	2-1	.667
Marv Levy	2-5	.286
Chuck Noll	2-1	.667
Don Shula	6-1	.857
Bill Walsh	2-1	.667
Totals	16-11	.593

Additionally in Flores' two Super Bowl titles as a head coach, he defeated legendary head coaches Dick Vermeil and Joe Gibbs in Super Bowl XV and Super Bowl XVIII, respectively. Flores holds a 2-0 postseason record against Hall of Fame Coaches, defeating Chuck Noll and Gibbs.



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SUPER BOWL XV

- The Raiders concluded the 1980 season with 11-5 record, becoming the first team in NFL history to earn 16 consecutive winning seasons.
- The team finished tied for first place in the AFC West, and entered the playoffs for 11th time since 1967.
- The Raiders became the first Wild Card team to win the Super Bowl with a 27-10 victory over the Eagles in Super Bowl XV.
- Rod Martin set a Super Bowl record with three interceptions.
- Jim Plunkett hit Kenny King for an 80-yard touchdown strike that set a then-Super Bowl record.
- Plunkett was tabbed for MVP honors after completing 13-of-21 passes for 261 yards and three touchdowns.
- The Raiders defense surrendered only a fourth-quarter touchdown in the contest.

XVIII SUPER BOWL

- The Raiders earned their 18th winning season in the last 19 years in 1983, finishing the year with a record of 12-4 to mark the most wins in a season under Flores.
- The 38-9 victory over the Redskins in Super Bowl XVIII marked the largest margin of victory (29 points) in Super Bowl history at the time.
- Executing in all three phases with a touchdown on offense, defense and special teams in the first half, the Raiders held a 21-3 advantage through two quarters.
- The Raiders shifted their focus to the running game in the second half as Marcus Allen scored twice in the third quarter on a 5-yard and 74-yard run.
- Allen was named MVP after recorded 191 yards on 20 carries with two touchdowns.

"Tom Flores isn't just a great coach in our league, he's one of greatest coaches of all time."

– Al Davis following the Raiders' victory in Super Bowl XVIII



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Flores earned his first NFL coaching experience in 1971 with the Buffalo Bills, serving as an assistant coach for the season before returning to Oakland. Flores worked as an assistant for the Raiders from 1972-78 under Pro Football Hall of Fame Coach John Madden. In his 100 regular season games as an assistant coach, the Raiders posted a remarkable 75-23-2 (.760) record.

During his seven seasons as an assistant coach, Flores helped lead the Silver and Black to six playoff appearances, including five-straight AFC Championship Game (1973-77). Flores also helped lead the club to the Super Bowl XI championship.

-- Tom Flores Assistant Coach Record --

Year	Team	W	L	T	W/L%	Division Finish	Playoff Appearance
1972	Oakland	10	3	1	.769	1st	Divisional Rd.
1973	Oakland	9	4	1	.692	1st	AFC Champ. Game
1974	Oakland	12	2	0	.857	1st	AFC Champ. Game
1975	Oakland	11	3	0	.786	1st	AFC Champ. Game
1976	Oakland	13	1	0	.929	1st	Super Bowl XI
1977	Oakland	11	3	0	.786	2nd	AFC Champ. Game
1978	Oakland	9	7	0	.563	2nd	N/A

As a receivers coach with the Raiders, Flores tutored Pro Football Hall of Famer Fred Biletnikoff as well as standouts Cliff Branch, Mike Siani and Warren Wells. Flores coached Biletnikoff to Pro Bowls in 1973 and 1974 and All-Pro First Team honors in 1972. Biletnikoff also earned Super Bowl XI MVP honors under Flores' guidance. Flores coached Branch to four straight Pro Bowls from 1974-77 and three consecutive All-Pro First Team honors from 1974-76.

-- Fred Biletnikoff Pro Bowl Years Under Flores --

Year	GP	GS	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	Lg.	TD
1973	14	14	48	660	13.8	32	4
1974	14	14	42	593	14.1	46	7

-- Cliff Branch Pro Bowl Years Under Flores --

Year	GP	GS	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	Lg.	TD
1974	14	14	60	1,092	18.2	67	13
1975	14	14	51	893	17.5	53	9
1976	14	14	46	1,111	24.2	88	12
1977	13	13	33	540	16.4	43	6



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Flores was one of only 20 players to play all 10 years of the AFL. As a member of the original Oakland Raiders in 1960, Flores was the franchise's first starting quarterback. **In 1960, he led the AFL in completion percentage (54.0) and passer rating (71.8).** He remains just one of two Raiders to have led the league in completion percentage and passer rating, with Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Ken Stabler being the only other to have accomplished the feat.

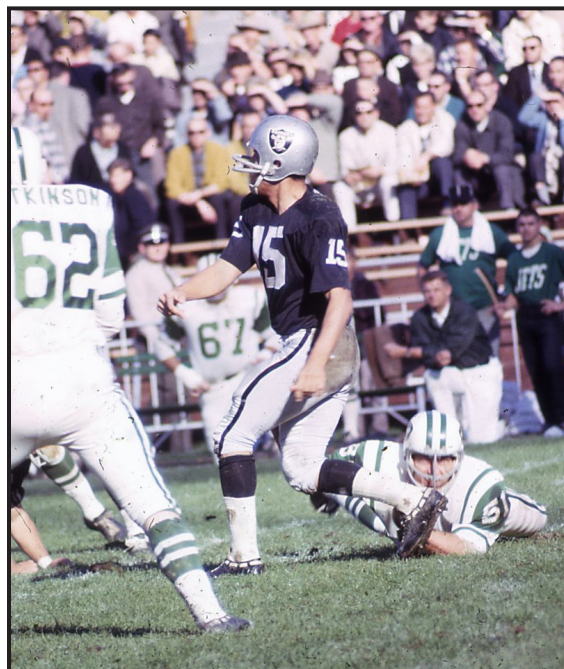
Flores was the starting quarterback (14 games played with nine starts) of the 1963 Raiders, a team that posted the biggest single-season turnaround in AFL/NFL history going from 1-13 to 10-4. He posted an 8-1 record as a starter that season, winning eight straight games to finish the season. During that season, **he set a then-AFL/NFL record with six touchdowns in one game on Dec. 22, 1963, against the Houston Oilers. That performance is still tied for the franchise record for the most touchdown passes in a game.** Flores also recorded five touchdown passes in a game the week prior (Dec. 15, 1963 vs. Denver Broncos) which is tied for the third most touchdowns in a single game in the team's history.

Flores was named to the 1966 AFL All-Star Game after passing for 2,638 yards and averaging 8.62 yards per attempt. **His yards per attempt in the 1966 season still ranks second on the Raiders single-season list.**

During Flores six years as quarterback for the Raiders, he recorded 11,635 yards, completing 810-of-1,640 attempts with 92 touchdowns against 83 interceptions for a passer rating of 70.4. Flores career touchdown passes rank fifth on the Raiders all-time list and his 11,635 passing yards ranks seventh on the clubs all-time list. **Flores also holds the franchise record for the most consecutive games with a touchdown pass at 25 contests (Dec. 8, 1968 – Nov. 15, 1970).** No other Raider has recorded a streak of at least 20 games with a touchdown pass.

Following his career with the Raiders he spent time with the Buffalo Bills before joining the Kansas City Chiefs during the 1969 season, where **he was the backup to Len Dawson on the Chiefs' Super Bowl IV Championship team.**

In total, Flores played in 106 career games with 68 starts.





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Tom Flores Youth Foundation

The Tom Flores Youth Foundation benefits the students from kindergarten to eight grade in Flores' hometown of Sanger, Calif. Through the Tom Flores Youth Foundation, the Sanger Unified School District has received nearly \$2 million over time to help foster the growth and development of students in the areas of science, art and athletics. Flores holds an honorary doctorate degree from Pepperdine University for humanitarian service.



Tom Flores High School Football Coach of the Year

Named after Flores, the Tom Flores High School Football Coach of the Week Program is designed to recognize high school football coaches who continuously demonstrate hard work and dedication to their football programs by creating successful football teams and players, both on and off the field.

Roberto Clemente Award

In 2011, Flores received the Roberto Clemente Award for Sports Excellence from the National Council of La Raza. The award is presented to an individual who is renowned in world of sports and is committed to the betterment of the Latino community.

Other Awards

2012 – Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame

2017 – National Trailblazer Award from the League of United Latin American Citizens



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TOM FLORES' CAREER COACHING STATISTICS

Year	Team	W	L	W/L %
1979	Oakland	9	7	.563
1980	Oakland	11	5	.688
1981	Oakland	7	9	.438
1982	L.A. Raiders	8	1	.889
1983	L.A. Raiders	12	4	.750
1984	L.A. Raiders	11	5	.688
1985	L.A. Raiders	12	4	.750
1986	L.A. Raiders	8	8	.500
1987	L.A. Raiders	5	10	.333
1992	Seattle	2	14	.125
1993	Seattle	6	10	.375
1994	Seattle	6	10	.375
Totals		97	87	.527

POSTSEASON

1980	Oakland	4	0	1.000
1982	L.A. Raiders	1	1	.500
1983	L.A. Raiders	3	0	1.000
1984	L.A. Raiders	0	1	.000
1985	L.A. Raiders	0	1	.000
Totals		8	3	.727

AFC WEST TITLES

As Head Coach

- 1982
- 1983
- 1985

As an Assistant Coach

- 1972
- 1973
- 1974
- 1975
- 1976

PLAYOFF APPEARANCES

As Head Coach

- 1980
- 1982
- 1983
- 1984
- 1985

As an Assistant Coach

- 1973
- 1974
- 1975
- 1976
- 1977

As a Player

- 1969

SUPER BOWL TITLES

- Super Bowl IV (as a player)
- Super Bowl XI (as an assistant coach)
- Super Bowl XV (as a head coach)
- Super Bowl XVIII (as a head coach)

TOM FLORES' CAREER PLAYING STATISTICS

Year	Team	GP	GS	PASSING										RUSHING					
				Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	Pct.	Yds./Att.	TD	INT	Lg.	Sk./Lst.	Rtng.	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	Lg.	TD	
1960	Oakland	14	13	252	136	1,738	54.0	6.9	12	12	61	-	71.8	19	123	6.5	31	3	
1961	Oakland	14	14	366	190	2,176	51.9	5.9	15	19	85	-	62.1	23	36	1.6	13	1	
1963	Oakland	14	9	247	113	2,101	45.7	8.5	20	13	93	-	80.7	12	2	0.2	7	0	
1964	Oakland	14	7	200	98	1,389	49.0	6.9	7	14	77	-	54.4	11	64	5.8	27	0	
1965	Oakland	14	11	269	122	1,593	45.4	5.9	14	11	69	-	64.9	11	32	2.9	15	0	
1966	Oakland	14	10	306	151	2,638	49.3	8.6	24	14	78	-	86.2	5	50	10	27	1	
1967	Buffalo	14	3	64	22	260	34.4	4.1	0	8	59	-	8.1	0	0	-	-	0	
1968	Buffalo	1	1	5	3	15	60.0	3.0	0	1	12	-	25.0	0	0	-	-	0	
1969	Buf./KC	7	0	6	3	49	50.0	8.2	1	0	33	1/11	117.4	1	0	0	0	0	
Totals		106	68	1,715	838	11,959	48.9	7.0	93	92	93	1/11	67.6	82	307	3.7	31	5	



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Hispanic pioneer Tom Flores still waiting for spot in Canton

By Paul Gutierrez
ESPN.com

ALAMEDA, Calif. -- The family story is nearing its 100th birthday now, but to Tom Flores, the Oakland Raiders' two-time Super Bowl-winning coach, it never gets old.

Not when it's such a point of pride for Flores and his familia.

Flores' father, Tom Sr., was 12 years old in 1919, one of seven children whose family worked in the hills of the pueblo of Dynamite in the Mexican state of Durango. There, they mined for materials to make explosives -- when they were not ducking for cover with marauders claiming loyalty to Pancho Villa ransacking the village.

"They didn't fight them off, but they had to avoid them," Flores said of his forebears. "My dad and his brothers had to lay on the floor as the bullets came flying through the windows. My grandma and my dad's two sisters went down the hill and hid because they were afraid of the bandits."

Nearly a century later, many think Flores has been robbed of his place in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Flores, known as "The Iceman" as a player for his cool demeanor, was the first Latino quarterback in pro football history, the first QB in Raiders franchise history when the AFL began in 1960.

And until 2007, when Tom Brady tied him, Flores held the record for most touchdown passes in consecutive games with 11 in 1963 (Ben Roethlisberger passed them with 12 TDs in 2014).

"I wasn't a great quarterback, but I was one of the better ones," said Flores, the fifth-leading passer in AFL history with 11,959



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yards, despite missing all of the 1962 season with tuberculosis. "I was one of the few to play all 10 years in the AFL." Traded to the Buffalo Bills with Art Powell in 1967 for Dar-yle Lamonica and Glenn Bass, Flores ended up with the Kansas City Chiefs as Len Dawson's backup for the Super Bowl IV champs in 1969. That's when Flores won his first Super Bowl ring.

But Flores truly made his bones as a coach. He was the Raiders' receivers coach in the press box when he noticed the Baltimore Colts showing a certain defensive tendency in a 1977 playoff game and called down to John Madden what would become the "Ghost to the Post" play. Flores added a second ring on Madden's Super Bowl XI-winning staff.

Promoted by Al Davis to replace Madden in 1979, Flores coached the Raiders to Super Bowl victories after the 1980 and 1983 seasons, the former making him the first minority coach to win a title -- 26 years before Tony Dungy, who was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2016. Rings Nos. 3 and 4 made Flores the first person in NFL history to win Super Bowl championships as a player, an assistant and head coach (Mike Ditka would join him later).

"People are always giving guys credit for their X's and O's," Marcus Allen told NFL Network in 2006. "But being a head coach is just much more than that; it's managing people. The thing that really created closeness was that he trusted us -- 'I taught you all you need to know, now go out there and play.' "

"How could that not endear you to a head coach?" the late Todd Christensen added in the same show. "As opposed to the usual, 'Get out of here, I'm in charge.' It was never anything like that. I can't emphasize this enough -- I think that what he contributed as a head coach is understated."

And this from Howie Long: "Tom was the perfect fit."

Flores was a combined 69-31 (.690) from 1980 to 1985, including the postseason, and was the 1982 NFL Coach of the Year.

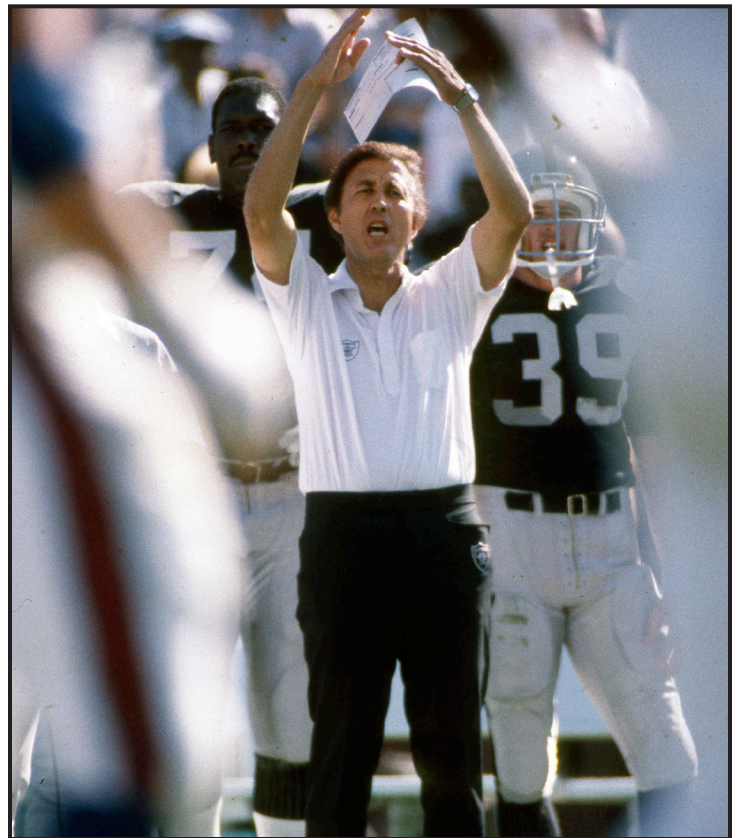
"Tom Flores isn't just a great coach in our league," Davis said after the Raiders thumped defending champion Washington 38-9 in Super Bowl XVIII, "he's one of the great coaches of all time."

Flores' record against Don Coryell, the architect of the "Air Coryell" passing game, was 11-5. With the Raiders, Flores went 6-0 against Don Shula, the winningest coach in NFL history.

Perhaps the way Flores' coaching career ended, rather than the pioneering manner in which he broke so many barriers, is what has kept him from sporting a gold jacket.

The Raiders went a combined 13-18 in 1986 and strike-shortened 1987 and, fearing burnout, Flores resigned. He did re-surface as the first Latino president and general manager in league history with the Seahawks in 1989 and returned to the sidelines in Seattle three years later. After going 14-34 in three seasons, he was fired.

Or maybe the domineering personality of Davis turns off voters who believe the former iconoclast owner was the Raiders' true coach, even if Madden dealt with the same perception, and was inducted in 2006.





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Flores spoke of his relationship with Davis and the game plan with Sports Illustrated in 1984.

"Sometimes he doesn't even want to see it," Flores said. "He says, 'I want to be surprised.' But we do discuss general concepts -- this tackle doesn't match up well, we can work on this cornerback. And the overall Raiders' concept is his. He just wants me to coach the hell out of it. I always have the last word on game-to-game strategy. I'd be lying if I said I wouldn't like to be a household name, like Al is. But I figure if I keep winning, sooner or later someone's gonna say, 'Hey, Flores must be doing a hell of a job.'"

That Flores is, for the ninth time, among the now-102 Modern-era nominees for the Pro Football Hall of Fame Class of 2019 is commendable, though he has yet to make it to the semifinal list, which is 25 deep. A momentum seems to be growing; the Raiders honored the 81-year-old Flores with a Hispanic Heritage Game halftime ceremony that included an artist painting a portrait and video tribute on Sept. 30. He, Jimmy Johnson and George Seifert are the only eligible coaches with two Super Bowl titles not in the HOF.

"I'm trying to keep my emotions low-key because that's the kind of person I am," Flores said. "But down deep inside, it grinds on me because I haven't even made the first cut yet in all the nine times. I see some of the people that have and gone further and, you know, I'm envious of them. I don't degrade their situation; I'm just envious that they've gone that far. And I think I've done as much, if not more, than some of them, but I'm looking at it through my eyes."



Indeed, can you write the definitive book on the NFL without mentioning Flores?

Dick Enberg waxed poetic as the cameras zoomed in on Flores in the closing minutes of Super Bowl XV on Jan. 25, 1981.

"You have to be happy for that man," Enberg said on the NBC broadcast. "Talk about Cinderella stories -- Chicano, worked at 6, 7 years old in the fields, became a fine athlete, on to Pacific, had a fine pro career and now, maybe the most important moment in his life."

Flores' father came to central California to work in the fields and met Nellie Padilla, who was born near Fresno, though her family was from Jalisco, Mexico. They would marry and have two boys. Tom Jr. was the baby, born on March 21, 1937, as the family lived on the "Courtney" family ranch for which they worked in the Fresno county town of Del Rey.

"The house was almost a shack, which wasn't much housing, but still it was a place to sleep and live and work," Flores said. "My dad followed the crops when the season was over there."



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But when World War II began, the Flores family moved into a “real” house outside of Sanger, “with real floors, indoor plumbing, mainly because [my father] and my grandfather sharecropped the farm.

“The people that lived there before were Japanese and they were put in internment camps. So [we] were able to take over and live there throughout the war and did well farming. Everything was cash in those days. And then when the war was over, they had to move out because the owner had promised the Japanese, ‘When this is over, you can come back.’

“And he honored his commitment. What an honorable thing.”

Flores, who was 4 years old when his family moved into the “real house,” was in the fourth grade when they moved to Sanger and he was already, as Enberg noted, doing his part.

“I remember growing up working, playing and sleeping in the fields,” Flores said. “Because that’s what you did when you’re 1, and 2 and 3 years old -- you go with your parents while they work, and you pretend to work, and then you eat and you run around the fields and then you take a nap under the vines and then you get up and you pretend to work again and you pick maybe a half a tray of grapes and then you go home at night and do it all again the next day.”

When he was older, though, it was all work and some play. The work ethic he got from his parents, who also operated a tienda, a family store, seemingly all hours of the day, seven days a week, all while Tom Sr. became a U.S. citizen. The athletic skill came naturally and surprisingly. Flores and his older brother, Bob, did not discover football until junior high school -- the family knew next to nothing of the game, as they did not have a television -- and then starred at Sanger High (the football stadium there is named after him) before playing his college ball at Pacific.



Both Tom Sr. and Nellie lived into the 21st century, “So they were able to go on this journey with me,” Flores said. “They were fans, but they were quiet fans.”

In 2017, the League of United Latin American Citizens honored Flores with the National Trailblazer Award for his “advocacy for Latino representation” in the NFL and a Lifetime Service Award for his “support for comprehensive immigration reform and work for inclusion and diversity in government,” while Flores, along with Plunkett, is seen as having made the Raiders popular in Mexico.. There, they’re known as Los Malosos , the Bad Boys.

“Anytime a Hispanic is doing well, I feel like we always pull for each other,” said Eddy Piñeiro, the Raiders’ Nicaraguan/Cuban kicker, who is on injured reserve. “I always pull for any Latino -- Mexican, Nicaragüense, Cuban, Puerto Rican -- I always pull for anybody. It’s hard. It’s hard to make it when you’re Hispanic.”

It was at the LULAC awards where Flores told the story of Pancho Villa’s raiders having a lasting effect on an Oakland Raiders icon, and the sense of orgullo, pride or self-worth, that enveloped him from generations ago.

“It gives me a feeling of pride, in a way, because they survived,” said Flores, whose family story has been passed down from him and his wife of 57 years, Barbara, to their children, Mark, Scott and Kim, all of whom are in their 50s. Five grandchildren can also expect to hear the tales of the Flores familia surviving Pancho Villa’s bandits. “Gives me a feeling of gratitude because they came to California.”

Now if only Flores can get to Canton.



T O M F L O R E S

H A L L O F F A M E S E M I F I N A L I S T



Tom Flores Deserves Hall of Fame Call

By Jerry Knaak
Raiders.com

Tom Flores has four Super Bowl rings. Four. And he is not a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. George Seifert and Jimmy Johnson are the only other coaches with two Super Bowl wins who have not been inducted. Flores compiled an 83-53 regular season record as head coach of the Oakland/Los Angeles Raiders from 1979 – 1987. He went 8-3 in the postseason.

Often comparison with contemporaries becomes a standard by which candidacy is measured. John Madden, Flores' predecessor, went 103-32, won one Super Bowl and he is a member. Marv Levy, who coached 17 years with the Chiefs and the Bills, made four Super Bowl appearances, but never won one, is a member. Bud Grant, who won an NFL title in 1969, but never won a Super Bowl, is a member.

Flores entered the American Football League as a free agent in July of 1960 when he signed with the fledgling Oakland Raiders shortly before the start of the team's inaugural training camp at Santa Cruz High School. The former College of the Pacific quarterback, who had kicked around California's central valley playing semi-pro ball, tried to catch on in the Canadian Football League and with the National Football League's Washington Redskins. But an injured shoulder waylaid his professional football aspirations. After getting a call from the then-Oakland Seniors in April of 1960, Flores took the next few months to rehab his shoulder and get ready to play and signed with the team in July.

On September 11, 1960, Flores became the first starting quarterback in Raiders history, and the first Latino starting quarterback in pro football history, as Oakland fell to the Houston Oilers, 37-22, at Kezar Stadium in San Francisco. Flores' first touchdown pass as a professional was a 13-yarder to running back Tony Teresa that came in the second quarter. It was the first of 93 career TD passes.

From 1960-61, and 1963-66, Flores saw action in 84 games with 64 starts and completed 810 of 1,640 pass attempts for 11,635 yards and 92 scores. He still ranks seventh all time in passing yards in franchise history. The Fresno, Calif.,-native missed the 1962 season with a bout of tuberculosis.

After Flores' first Pro Bowl selection in 1966, he was sent to Buffalo in the deal that brought quarterback Daryle Lamonica to Oakland in April of 1967. After playing more than two seasons with the Bills, Flores finished his playing career with the Kansas City Chiefs and was a member of the Chiefs' Super Bowl IV Championship team.



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He got into coaching as quarterbacks coach with the Bills in 1971, and later joined the Raiders coaching staff as receivers coach in 1972. He won his second Super Bowl ring as an assistant with the Raiders in Super Bowl XI after the 1976 season. In 1977, Flores coined the phrase "Ghost to the Post," while communicating with the sideline during the Raiders 1977 AFC Divisional Playoff win over the Colts in Baltimore. When Hall of Fame Head Coach John Madden retired after the 1978 campaign, Flores was promoted to head coach in 1979 at age 42.

During his tenure, Flores was a steadying hand through two work stoppages (1982 and 1987), the Raiders' move to Los Angeles (1982), and led the Silver and Black to five playoff appearances and two Super Bowl titles.

After guiding the team to a 9-7 record in 1979, Flores weathered the storm of losing starting quarterback Dan Pastorini to a broken leg in Week 5 of the 1980 season and installing former Heisman Trophy winner Jim Plunkett at the controls of the offense. The team earned an 11-5 record and a Wild Card playoff berth.

The Raiders went on to become the first Wild Card team to win a Super Bowl as the Silver and Black defeated the Philadelphia Eagles 27-10 in Super Bowl XV. Flores became the first Latino head coach to win a Super Bowl, and quarterback Jim Plunkett became the first Latino starting quarterback to ever win one and was named the game's Most Valuable Player.

In 1982, the team moved to Los Angeles and before they could play their first home game, a work stoppage halted the season. When play resumed, the Raiders hosted the San Diego Chargers on Monday Night Football and overcame a 24-0 halftime deficit to win 28-24 in one of the greatest comebacks in franchise history.

In 1983, Flores led the Raiders to a 12-4 record and the AFC West title. The Silver and Black won their second Super Bowl title in four years with a 38-9 win over the defending champion-Washington Redskins in Super Bowl XVIII.



After retiring from coaching in 1987, and a year with the Raiders' organization, Flores became the first Latino team president in pro football history when he became team president and general manager of the Seattle Seahawks in 1989. He coached the Seahawks from 1992 - 94. He joined the Raiders radio broadcast as a color commentator and analyst in 1997 and served in that capacity until 2017.

His overall regular season coaching record stands at 97-87. Eleven members of the Hall of Fame played under Flores, 10 with the Raiders and another with the Seahawks.

In 2011, he earned the Roberto Clemente Award for Sports Excellence from the National Council of La Raza. In 2012, Flores was named to the Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame. In 2017, Flores was awarded the National Trailblazer Award from the League of United Latin American Citizens.

It has been said that one of the measures of Hall of Fame worthiness is if you can't tell the story of pro football without that individual. You cannot tell the story of pro football without Tom Flores. Borges echoed that sentiment in 2015. His accomplishments as a head coach alone qualify him. But, when you add it all together - his trailblazing playing career, four Super Bowl rings, front office executive, and accomplished analyst - Tom Flores no doubt belongs in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.