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Q&A with ... nine-time Pro Bowl WR Tim Brown

Election to the Hall of Fame 'would be a huge dream'

Tim Brown won the Heisman Trophy for Notre Dame in 1987, and went on to have a stellar career in the NFL, primarily with the Raiders. He spoke with *Sporting News Today's* Ken Bradley recently about what he's doing now, Notre Dame football and his chances to make the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Q: You're involved with Community Voice Line, a free phone service for sports fans, with some other former players, Rocket Ismail, Antonio Freeman and Brian Mitchell. What is your role?

A: It's an opportunity for me to talk all the football, college or pro, even high school or whatever I want to talk about. I don't have to worry about traveling and leaving the family. Everything is just a phone call away. I knew that after watching football, I would need to be able to get it out of my system on Monday morning. I'm definitely able to do that and, you know, if you ever want to hear some more football, you always have your Monday morning quarterbacks and we'll be there for people to listen to.

Q: Talking Notre Dame football is second nature to you?

A: No doubt about it. No matter how many years you're out of the game, you can always watch the games and picture yourself back when you played Denver, when you played Miami, when you played Kansas City. I have to watch out watching some of those Notre Dame games because it gets too emotional.

Q: You were the first wide receiver to win the Heisman Trophy—and only the second to date. Are you surprised by that fact?



PAUL SAKUMA / AP

Tim Brown had 14,934 yards receiving and 1,094 catches in his 17-year career with the Raiders and Tampa Bay.

A: Understand this, I would not have won the Heisman, Desmond Howard would not have won the Heisman, as a receiver if not for the fact that we returned punts and kickoffs. That part of our game was so dangerous and it made the other team adjust their team so much that we had to be looked at as potential Heisman Trophy winners.

Q: In 2010, you're eligible for the Pro Football Hall of Fame. You were a nine-time Pro Bowler, had nine 1,000-yard receiving seasons and your 100 TD receptions is tied for sixth all-time with Steve Largent, a Hall of Famer. What are your

expectations?

A: It's a lot like the Heisman. All you can do is play and let the people vote, you know? There's really not much you can do. The difference from now and then is that I was playing, I was in the media, preparing for games and now I've been out of football for five years and all you have to think about is whether you're going to get into the Hall of Fame when you talk about your career. I'd be lying to you if I said I don't think about it. I'd like to say if I had a ballot it'd be one for the good guys. I think the way I handled my career, handled myself on and off the field, to be rewarded for that would be a huge dream. If it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen.

Q: You mean if it doesn't happen first ballot, right?

A: If it doesn't happen (on the first ballot, then we'll just sit patiently and wait until it comes. There are a whole lot of good guys coming up. You got Jerry (Rice), you got (Emmitt) Smith, Cris Carter and Shannon Sharpe out there. There are a lot of guys they can go with and from what I hear, they don't like to put two guys in at the same position or haven't done it in a while. Obviously, when you have Jerry Rice, that makes it tough. I've been telling people I return kickoffs, I'm a specialist, put me in as a specialist/wide receiver. We can do it that way.