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**Man of the Year—2003**

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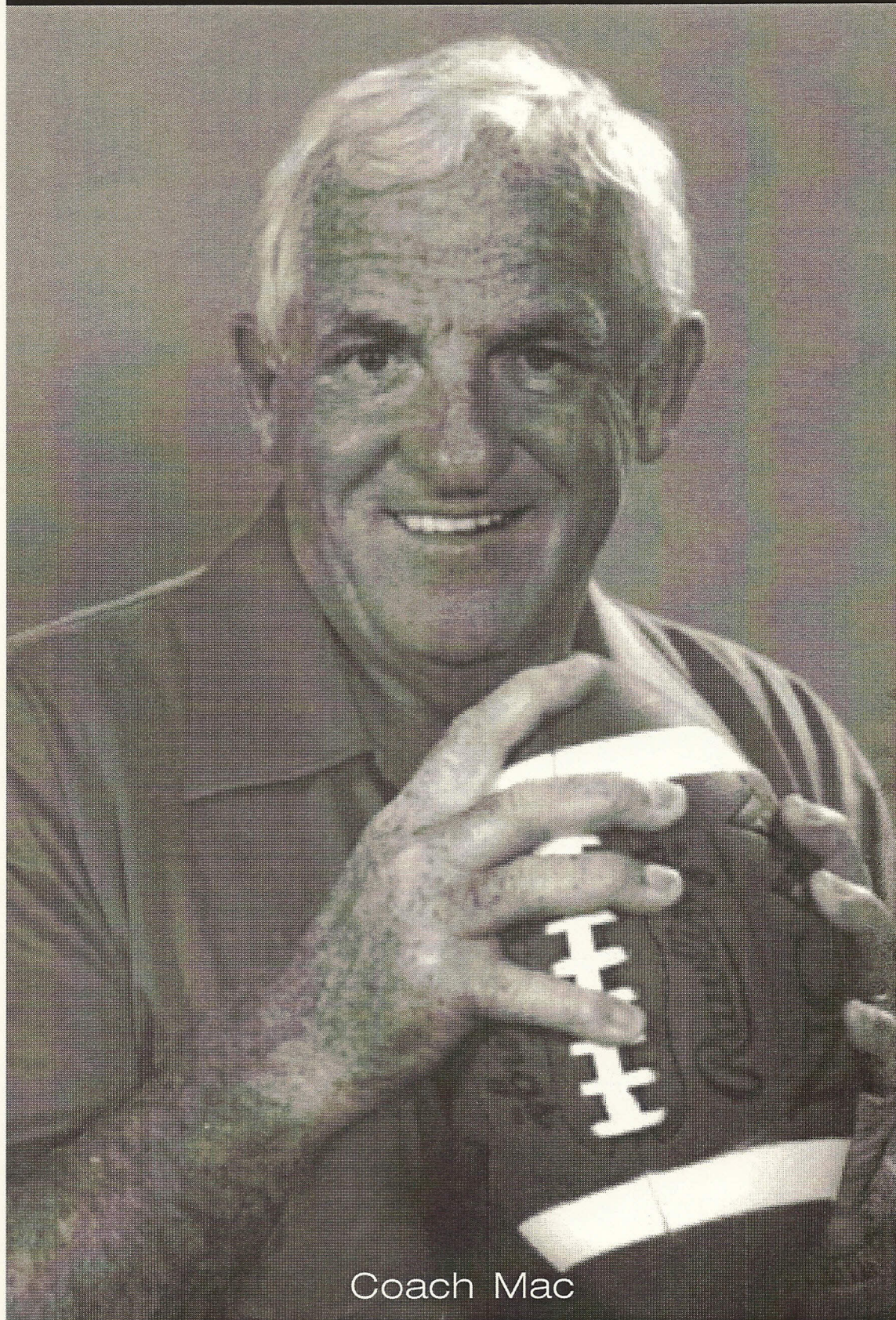
**The Gridiron Club:  
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Founded in 1932, the Gridiron Club promotes football at all levels and nurtures the ideals of citizenship, sportsmanship, leadership, and athletic and academic achievement. The club is responsible for several of the oldest nationally recognized and most tradition-rich honors in American sport, including the Bulger Lowe Award (1939), the Swede Nelson Award (1946), and the Walter Brown Award (1953). For more information, visit: [www.gridclubofgreaterboston.com](http://www.gridclubofgreaterboston.com)

**2003-2004 Officers:** Tom Burke, President; Ken Eldridge, First Vice President; George Crotty, Second Vice President; Dave O'Brien, Third Vice President; Dick Lawrence, Secretary; Paul Costello, Treasurer; Ned Cully, Historian.

**Special thanks:** Ralph Leonard, Leslie and Patricia Plumb, John White, Tamie Kidess-Lucey, Dino Luccarelli, Tim Horgan, Pete Moore, Peter Colton, Gene DeFilippo, Jim Davis, Rich Krezwick, Bob Pickett, Kitty Pasqua, Jim Saccomano, Andre Tippet, Steve Young, Gail Charow, Sterling Tanner, Blake Bednarz, Stu Lisson, Paul Klaczak, Pat Sullivan, Len Tyler, Mike Hodges, Ron Ohringer.

# The Gridiron Club of Greater Boston **NFL Legends Night**



Coach Mac



Springfield College Salutes Our Alumnus,

Dick MacPherson '58



SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE

By his character and accomplishments, Dick MacPherson exemplifies the Springfield College philosophy of Humanics -- dedication of the spirit, mind, and body for leadership in service to others.

Congratulations to Dick, Gridiron Club of Greater Boston 2003 Man of the Year, from the students, faculty, staff and alumni of his alma mater.



*Dick MacPherson -*

*Recognized for "a storied coaching career marked by dedication to excellence, fairness, and integrity."*

*Doctor of Science, Honoris Causa, Maine Maritime Academy, 1992*

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The Children's Diabetes Program utilizes a multi-disciplinary team of pediatric endocrinologists and nurse practitioners, registered dietitians, certified diabetes nurse educators and certified insulin pump educators to provide comprehensive diabetes care to children and adolescents with type 1 and type 2 diabetes mellitus.

*Joslin benefits from the generosity of donors in advancing our mission. We thank Dick MacPherson for supporting Joslin and helping children and adolescents with diabetes.*

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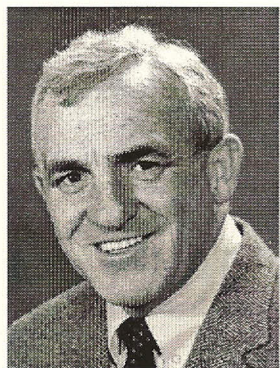
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# A Long Overdue Accolade

by Tim Horgan

One day, back in the 1970's when Dick MacPherson was the head football coach at the University of Massachusetts, he drove the 100 or so miles from Amherst to downtown Boston to attend a college football writers' luncheon, after which he drove back to the UMass campus to direct a football practice, after which he drove back to Boston for a Gridiron Club meeting, after which he drove back to Amherst by the light of the silvery moon.



"We should have given him our Man of the Year Award then and there," quipped Jack Daly, the Gridiron Club's past president and resident wit.

Better late than never, of course, and besides, Coach Mac probably would have refused to accept it then on the grounds he was only doing his duty. Perseverance and responsibility are two of Mac's favorite topics when he gives his motivational speeches throughout the country and remain two of his many virtues.

"It's easy to join a club or a team or a cause," he says. "But then you have to follow through. Too many people are inclined to let somebody else do it. When you commit to something, whatever it is, you have to persevere."

This explains why Coach Mac lasted so long in a profession that devours its young. It also explains why his teams won more than they lost. As a head coach, Mac was 45-27-1 during his seven seasons at UMass; 66-46-1 at Syracuse University, including an undefeated season (11-0) in 1987 that gave the Orangemen a berth in the Sugar Bowl where they tied Auburn, 16-16 and made Mac both the American Football Coaches Association and the Football Writers Association of America Coach of the Year.

But even this doesn't define Dick MacPherson. Anybody who knows him for five minutes will understand that he loves (1) his family (2) football (3) Old Town, Maine where he was born into a large and colorful family and still resides part of the year and (4) people in general. Not always in this order.

Anyone who knows Mac for 10 minutes will probably have seen him commit at least one act of kindness. When it came to football Coach Mac could be as hard and relentless as a Maine winter. "Your goal in football is to win," he points out. "And winning is hard. If it wasn't hard, there'd be a lot more winners."

In civilian life, however, Dick MacPherson is a teddy bear, a friendly, funny, generous man who is also a winner as testified by his vast number of friends and admirers.

Sometimes, the two MacPhersons collide. The high water mark of Mac's career came in 1991 when he was named head coach of the New England Patriots, who are regarded in Old Town ME as the Old Town Team. He resigned in 1992. The reason, according to John Ottaviani, a longtime friend and sports columnist for the Haverhill Eagle Tribune, "When the Patriots told him to fire his offensive coordinator in order to save his own job, I knew Mac was through. He was too loyal a guy to allow someone else to be a scapegoat."



Coach Mac could have gotten the Gridiron Club's Man of the Year Award then, too.

*Tim Horgan (Tufts '49) is past president of the Gridiron Club (1980-81) and founder of the Tufts Jumbo Club. He was a sports writer and columnist for the Boston Herald from 1950 until retiring in 1991. He began a long career in radio and television with Don Gillis' The Voice of Sports show on WHDH radio in the '60s. Tim received a Legacy Award from the New England Sports Museum at the Fleet Center in June. He resides in Venice, FL.*



# A Hard Working Kid from a Big Old Town Family

by Tom Burke

Bill Summers Jr. moved up from assistant to head coach of the Old Town Maine high school football team in 1949, the year after Dick MacPherson graduated. "A good football player, as I remember him, but I didn't really get to know him until much later when our paths crossed again when I was a football official."

Much later, as it turned out, was after MacPherson had spent two years at Maine Maritime Academy, four years with the Air Force during the Korean War, four years at Springfield College, and had embarked on his career in coaching. Summers became a football official, and more than once he worked games with Mac on the sideline, either as a head coach or an assistant.

"One time he came up to me at a game and said, 'what do you think the people in Old Town would think if they saw us here today?'" recalled Summers.

That's Mac for you – never forgetting from whence he came. The second youngest of 12 children of Hugh and Ludovie MacPherson, Dick was a fine high school lineman under coach Bernard McKenzie – another Coach Mac.

"When he was on defense, he had a way of seeing where the play was going. We all just got out of his way," said Ralph Leonard, a classmate who played quarterback and linebacker at Old Town, then went off to West Point while Dick headed for Maine Maritime. "His mother was the best cook in town. We all used to hang around his house and wait for her to give us doughnuts, bread and cookies. His father was a plumber. I remember him always carrying his tool box around because he didn't have his own truck."

Dick played four years of football and basketball and two of baseball at Old



RICHARD FREDERICK MacPHERSON

High School Yearbook Photo



High School Star



Reunion of Springfield's Undefeated Eleven

Town, but he never had much time for fishing in northern Maine's myriad streams, or for hunting in the woods. He was too busy working at the local First National store, washing dishes at a restaurant, or laboring in one of the paper mills. With twelve kids in the MacPherson family, everyone had to do his share.

## Maine Maritime and a Roundabout Route to Springfield

MacPherson graduated from Old Town High in 1948. He spoke at graduation on the "class will," that is, what he and his classmates bequeathed to the school's future students. MacPherson enrolled at Maine Maritime Academy in Castine. It was a good educational opportunity that came with a uniform allowance and a stipend, but pretty soon Mac realized he'd rather be a football coach than a ship captain. He left Maine Maritime and enlisted in the Air Force. Dick spent much of the Korean War working in air traffic control at a base in England. Upon his discharge, he came back to the States and enrolled at Springfield College, aided by the GI Bill.

Dick quickly became a leader in one of the most successful three-year spans in the school's history. His class of 1958 is Springfield's only one that never lost a home football game. Their three-year record was 19-4-1. MacPherson and Dick Shields were co-captains as seniors.

"Mac was a center and linebacker, and like all good captains he led by example," said Les "Porky" Plumb, the team's quarterback. "He also had a good sense of humor, and anyone who had a problem could go right to him and discuss it."

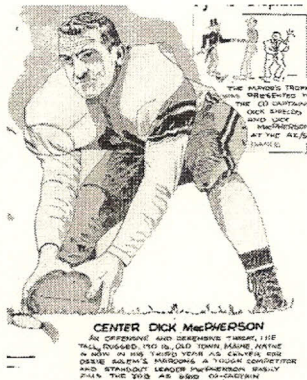
Ted Dunn was an assistant to coach Ossie Solem for MacPherson's three varsity years, and he became head coach the year after Dick graduated.

"You have to differentiate between Dick's playing ability and his leadership," said Ted, who received a Sugar Bowl watch from MacPherson after Syracuse



tied Auburn 16-16 on New Year's Day 1988. "He had come out of the service and was more mature than most of the players. He played both ways and called the signals on defense. But one story about Dick stands out in my mind – it shows you how great his intensity was.

"We were playing at Northeastern. It was a very hot day, and we broke the open huddle. Dick was our center and the center leads the way to the line. His knees just buckled under him when he was halfway to the line of scrimmage. He crawled the rest of the way on his hands and knees. That's how much desire he had



*From College Newspaper*

When he stood up in that defensive huddle, he got such high respect from the team. He gave them a lot of confidence in those years."

John Henderson, who played guard alongside MacPherson, said, "His leadership carried far beyond the gridiron. As EVP of the American Cancer Society in Ohio, I would contact Mac from time to time. He would always have a kind word and an emotional statement that would get you back on track in a management situation.

"I spent four years with the International Union Against Cancer, working in many Third World countries. My Springfield College association and playing for Mac really helped as I developed a cancer hospital in India that serves 700 patients a month."

He also recalls fondly the time when Dick invited him to be honorary coach for a Syracuse game at Ohio State. It happened to be

John Cooper's first home game as he succeeded Woody Hayes. Henderson took part in the team pre-game prayer and stood with MacPherson on the sidelines.

It was also at Springfield that MacPherson met Sandra Jean Moffitt, a young lady from Calais, Maine, not too far from Old Town. They went out on a double date at school one evening, and they've been together ever since. Their wedding was on December 28, 1958, just a day after Porky and Patricia Plumb's.



*Sandra Jean*

## UMass and Cincinnati, Maryland and Denver

Dick started coaching at the college level the year after graduating from Springfield. He was a grad assistant at the University of Illinois, where he got to know Chuck Studley, who had been an Illini assistant for five years. Dick took a job coaching the UMass freshmen, and when he learned that the head job at Amherst was opening up, he called Studley. Chuck got the job and the Redmen posted a nice 7-2 record in 1960. But the University of Cincinnati called a year later and offered to double Studley's salary if he'd come and take over the Bearcat program.

Mac went along and stayed there for five years. He coached the defense. Don Nehlen coached the offense.

"We thought Mac and Nehlen were both crazy," said Brig Owens, the prize California recruit who was wooed away to Ohio by MacPherson and became an All-America quarterback. "Mac was so high energy, and Coach Studley was so serious. Mac used to preach all the time about how we had to be consistent, and if we weren't, we couldn't be consistent in life. That really stuck with me later on," continued Brig, who had a 13-year pro career, mostly with the Redskins, as a defensive back. "They made the game fun. We were the first college team to use the I formation."

Studley remarked, "I'm not sure about the I formation, although we spent a lot of time talking about it. But we were the first to use the gap defense. Cincinnati always had a tough time recruiting, going up against schools like Ohio State and Miami of Ohio. We had to be innovative, and show the kids that they'd be able to do things at Cincinnati that they couldn't do elsewhere."

### Springfield College

#### 1955 (5-2)

0 at Northeastern 7  
20 Brandeis 7  
14 at Colby 0  
27 AIC 12  
7 at Rhode Island 20  
18 New Hampshire 0  
34 Hofstra 12

#### 1956 (8-0-1)

42 at Connecticut 12  
28 Amherst 7  
26 Northeastern 0  
27 Colby 7  
20 at Brandeis 20  
32 at AIC 0  
40 Rhode Island 0  
40 at New Hampshire 14  
27 at Hofstra 7

#### 1957 (6-2)

19 Connecticut 14  
14 at Amherst 33  
20 at Northeastern 13  
0 Colby 6  
DNP Brandeis (FLU) DNP  
20 AIC 0  
14 at Rhode Island 6  
28 New Hampshire m6  
19 at Hofstra 7



MacPherson's next stop was the University of Maryland. Nehlen went off to Bowling Green, Michigan State, and ultimately to West Virginia where he faced old friend Mac a total of ten times and beat him five of them. Mac now appears annually at Nehlen's lecture series at the West Virginia school of physical education. Don says,

**Assistant Coach  
University of  
Maryland  
1966 (4-6)**

7 at Penn State 54  
34 Wake Forest 7  
7 at Syracuse 28  
21 Duke 19  
28 West Virginia 9  
14 South Carolina 2  
21 at NC State 24  
10 Clemson 14  
17 at Virginia 41  
21 at Florida State 45

"The coaching profession can't afford to lose guys like Mac. He's such a special personality. We need him in there working with young people."

Lou Saban had met MacPherson at Amherst in the early 1960's. His Boston Patriots had trained there when Mac was freshman coach.

"He's an exceptional guy. Has a personality that was very excitable. You could always count on him. He had tremendous sincerity and appetite for life. That's the kind of quality I looked for in my associate coaches."

Saban hired Mac and spent just a year at Maryland before the American Football League came calling again. He went to the Denver Broncos, and Dick went along with him to coach the linebackers.

"I spent about 53 or 54 years in the coaching business, and I always thought the greatest value in it was the ability to teach. You've got to take the selfish motives out of it if you're going to be successful as a coach. That's what you've got in Dick MacPherson. I always felt Dick had it in him to be a very successful head coach some day. I remember telling him one day — hey, it's time you moved out of being a position coach and be a coordinator."

## Taking Charge at UMass

The next stop for Mac was more than a coordinator's job. He returned to Amherst succeeding Vic Fusia as head coach, and won the Yankee Conference title in 1971. Dick followed that performance up with a superb 9-2 campaign that included a 28-7 spanking of Boston College, a 35-14 win over Cal-Davis in the Boardwalk Bowl, and another conference crown.

The seven-year MacPherson era was a great one for UMass. His teams won four Yankee Conference titles and had only one sub-.500 season. He was twice picked as New England Coach of the Year, and

in 1977, his final campaign, UMass went 8-3 and earned a spot in the NCAA Division II playoffs. They lost to Lehigh 30-23 in a first-round game at Amherst to finish out his tenure there.

Brian McNally, co-captain of UMass in 1976, recalls Mac as a strong disciplinarian, a totally no-nonsense guy who always prepared his teams extremely well.

"Mac was a coach who had already been to the pros, and that gave us tremendous confidence as a team. He was known for his great defenses, and he impressed us with the staff of assistants he put together. He was a tremendous recruiter as well, and he always seemed to attract good kids with good values."

**Head Coach  
University of Massachusetts**

**1971 (4-4-1)**

13 at Maine 0  
7 Dartmouth 31  
21 at BU 47  
3 Rhode Island 31  
3 Connecticut 3  
24 Vermont 15  
38 Holy Cross 27  
38 New Hampshire 20  
0 at BC 35

**1972 (9-2)**

37 Maine 0  
28 at Harvard 19  
33 at Vermont 14  
44 BU 15  
42 at Rhode Island 7  
49 Connecticut 16  
15 at Bucknell 28  
16 at Holy Cross 28  
42 New Hampshire 7  
28 BC 7  
Boardwalk Bowl  
35 UCal-Davis 14

**1973 (6-5)**

21 Villanova 20  
20 Maine 0  
7 at Harvard 24  
25 at Rutgers 22  
20 at BU 6  
35 Rhode Island 41  
6 at Connecticut 28  
27 Vermont 7  
28 New Hampshire 7  
14 at BC 59

**1974 (5-6)**

13 at Villanova 17  
42 at Maine 0  
14 at Dartmouth 0  
14 Vermont 25  
21 BU 14  
17 at Rhode Island 7  
at Connecticut 10  
34 at Colgate 12  
30 at Holy Cross 290  
27 New Hampshire 17  
8 BC 70

**1975 (8-2)**

10 Maine 0  
7 Dartmouth 3  
34 Northeastern 14  
21 BU 0  
23 Rhode Island 7  
29 at Connecticut 14  
16 at Western Illinois 13  
45 Holy Cross 13  
11 at New Hampshire 14  
14 at BC 24

**1976 (5-5)**

28 Toledo 14  
24 at Maine 3  
13 at Harvard 24  
33 at BU 6  
14 at Rhode Island 7  
6 Connecticut 28  
7 at Rutgers 24  
21 at Holy Cross 14  
0 New Hampshire 23  
0 BC 35

**1977 (8-3)**

10 at Army 34  
28 Maine 0  
17 at Harvard 0  
54 Youngstown State 13  
41 BU 16  
37 Rhode Island 6  
10 at Connecticut 0  
28 Holy Cross 6  
19 at New Hampshire 6  
7 at BC 34  
NCAA Div III Playoff  
23 Lehigh 30



A decorative border surrounds the text, consisting of a repeating pattern of footballs and the letter 'S' in a stylized font.

CONGRATULATIONS

COACH MAC

2003 Gridiron Club  
Man of the Year

*Best Wishes,  
Paul Pasqualoni and the  
Syracuse University  
Football Staff*



**Assistant Coach  
Denver Broncos**

**1967 (3-11, 4th AFL West)**

26 Boston Patriots 21  
0 at Oakland 51  
21 at Miami 35  
24 NY Jets 38  
6 at Houston 10  
16 Buffalo 17  
21 San Diego 38  
9 Kansas City 52  
17 Oakland 21  
21 at Buffalo 20  
20 at San Diego 24  
33 at NY Jets 24

**1968 (5-9, 4th AFL West)**

24 at Cincinnati 10  
2 at Kansas City 34  
17 Boston Patriots 20  
10 Cincinnati 7  
21 at NY Jets 13  
24 at San Diego 55  
21 Miami 14  
35 at Boston Patriots 14  
7 Oakland 43  
17 at Houston 38  
34 Buffalo 32  
23 San Diego 47  
27 at Oakland 33  
7 Kansas City 30

**1969 (5-8-1, 4th AFL West)**

35 Boston Patriots 7  
21 NY Jets 19  
28 at Buffalo 41  
13 Kansas City 26  
14 Oakland 24  
30 at Cincinnati 23  
21 at Houston 24  
13 San Diego 0  
10 at Oakland 41  
20 Houston 20  
24 at San Diego 45  
17 at Kansas City 31  
24 at Miami 27  
27 Cincinnati 16

**1970 (5-8-1, 4th AFL West)**

25 at Buffalo 10  
16 Pittsburgh 13  
26 Kansas City 13  
23 at Oakland 35  
24 Atlanta 10  
14 at San Francisco 19  
3 Washington 19  
21 at San Diego 24  
19 Oakland 24  
31 at New Orleans 6  
21 at Houston 31  
0 at Kansas City 16  
17 San Diego 17  
13 Cleveland 27

**Assistant Coach  
University of Cincinnati**

**1961 (3-7)**

16 Dayton 12  
0 at Boston College 23  
13 at Wichita State 21  
12 Xavier 17  
6 Air Force 8  
7 Houston 13  
21 North Texas State 9  
0 Tulsa 19  
3 Miami (Ohio) 7  
19 Detroit 13

**1962 (2-8)**

13 Dayton 0  
6 Indiana 26  
25 Wichita State 15  
8 at North Texas 14  
20 Richmond 21  
18 Tulsa 24  
14 at Detroit 15  
16 Miami (Ohio) 38  
6 Xavier 7  
14 at Houston 42

**1963 (6-4)**

28 Drake 0  
0 at Army 22  
35 Xavier 22  
21 at Tulsa 15  
35 Detroit 0  
6 at Indiana 20  
35 Dayton 8

39 North Texas 7  
20 at Wichita State 23  
19 Miami (Ohio) 21

**1964 (8-2)**

20 Dayton 10  
19 Detroit 0  
35 Xavier 6  
0 at Boston College 10  
28 Tulsa 23  
15 George Washington 17  
27 at North Texas 6  
19 at Wichita State 7  
28 Miami (Ohio) 14  
20 at Houston 6

**1965 (5-5)**

28 Dayton 0  
6 at Houston 21  
16 Wichita State 6  
3 Xavier 14  
13 at George Washington 3  
7 at Tulsa 49  
24 North Texas 28  
21 at Kansas State 14  
41 South Dakota 0  
7 Miami (Ohio) 37

MacPherson was always wound up and jittery in the time leading up to a kickoff, even, rumor has it, to the point where he'd slip off somewhere and indulge in a cigarette to calm his nerves. There was one notable exception, recalls former student manager John Hendry, who's been chief statistician for the Patriots for over two decades now.

"It was in 1977, our defensive back Todd Holt was excused from pre-game warm-ups and arrived late to the locker room to get taped right before the game. He had become a father that morning. The team gave him a standing ovation when he walked in. That was the most relaxed I had ever seen Mac before a game."

Peter Colton, a Hyde Park native and backup quarterback at UMass, especially appreciated MacPherson's fatherly concern for all of his players. "He took a lot of us under his wing. Recently when my daughter was applying to Syracuse, he made calls to his friends there and did everything he could to help her get in."



*Mac and Marty Schottenheimer  
at Cleveland*

### Three Years in the Pro Ranks, Another Head Collegiate Position at Syracuse, and Winding Up His Great Career Back in the NFL

After the 1977 season, Mac accepted Sam Rutigliano's invitation to join the Cleveland Browns' staff as linebacker coach. Sam had been the New England Patriots' offensive coordinator. In Cleveland he assembled a crackerjack staff that included Marty Schottenheimer, Jim Shofner, Rich Kotite, John Petercuskie, Len Fontes, and Rod Humenuik.

The Browns were the Cardiac Kids in those days. They had, among other players, Greg Pruitt, Charley Hall, Bill Cowher, Calvin Hill, Lyle Alzado, Brian Sipe, and Clay Matthews. In 1980 the Browns won the American Football Conference crown with a record of 11-6. They dropped a heartbreaking playoff to Oakland, 14-12, in sub-freezing weather after an interception on the Raiders' seven yard line killed the Browns' final drive in the closing minutes.

But the prospect of being the boss beckoned MacPherson once again, so shortly after the NFL playoffs he was off to rebuild a Syracuse program that had enjoyed only three winning seasons in the previous ten years. Things were beginning to look up by 1983, when the Orangemen took a 3-1 record into Lincoln, Nebraska to face the top ranked Cornhuskers. They



### Assistant Coach Cleveland Browns

#### 1978 (8-8)

24 San Francisco 17  
13 Cincinnati 10  
24 at Atlanta 16  
9 at Pittsburgh 16(OT)  
13 Houston 16  
24 at New Orleans 16  
14 Pittsburgh 34  
3 at Kansas City 17  
41 Buffalo 10  
10 at Houston 14  
7 Denver 19  
45 at Baltimore 24  
30 Los Angeles Rams 19  
24 at Seattle 47  
37 NY Jets 34 (OT)  
16 at Cincinnati 48

#### 1979 (9-7)

25 at NY Jets 22 (OT)  
27 at Kansas City 24  
13 Baltimore 10  
26 Dallas 7  
10 at Houston 31  
35 Pittsburgh 31  
9 Washington 13  
28 Cincinnati 27  
38 at St. Louis Cardinals 20  
24 at Philadelphia 19  
24 at Seattle 29  
30 at Miami 24 (OT)  
30 at Pittsburgh 33 (TO)  
14 Houston 7  
14 at Oakland 19  
12 at Cincinnati 16

#### 1980 (11-6), (AFC Central Champs)

17 at New England 34  
7 Houston 16  
20 Kansas City 13  
34 at Tampa Bay 27  
16 at Denver 19  
27 at Seattle 3  
28 Green Bay 21  
27 Pittsburgh 26  
27 Chicago 21  
28 at Baltimore 27  
13 at Pittsburgh 16  
31 Cincinnati 7  
17 at Houston 14  
17 NY Jets 14  
23 at Minnesota 28  
27 at Cincinnati 24  
Playoffs:  
12 Oakland 14

### Head Coach Syracuse University

#### 1981 (4-6-1)

27 Rutgers 29  
19 at Temple 31  
14 at Illinois 17  
21 Indiana 7  
17 at Maryland 17  
16 Penn State 41  
10 at Pittsburgh 23  
47 Colgate 24  
23 at Navy 35  
27 Boston College 17  
27 West Virginia 24

#### 1982 (2-9)

31 at Rutgers 8  
18 Temple 23  
10 Illinois 47  
10 at Indiana 17  
3 Maryland 26  
7 at Penn State 28  
0 Pittsburgh 14  
49 Colgate 15  
18 Navy 20  
13 at Boston College 20  
0 at West Virginia 26

#### 1983 (6-5)

6 at Temple 17  
22 Kent State 10  
35 Northwestern 0  
17 Rutgers 13  
7 at Nebraska 63  
13 Maryland 34  
6 Penn State 17  
10 at Pittsburgh 13  
14 at Navy 7  
21 Boston College 10  
27 West Virginia 16

#### 1984 (6-5)

23 at Maryland 7  
13 at Northwestern 12  
0 Rutgers 19  
17 Nebraska 9  
0 at Florida 16  
10 at West Virginia 20  
3 at Penn State 21  
27 Army 16  
13 Pittsburgh 7  
29 Navy 0  
16 at Boston College 24

#### 1985 (7-5)

3 at Mississippi State 30  
34 Kent State 0  
14 at Virginia Tech 24  
48 Louisville 0  
20 Penn State 24  
29 Temple 14  
12 at Pittsburgh 0  
24 at Navy 20  
41 Boston College 21  
31 at Rutgers 14  
10 West Virginia 13  
Cherry Bowl  
18 Maryland 35

#### 1986 (5-6)

17 Mississippi State 24  
28 at Army 33  
17 Virginia Tech 26  
10 Rutgers 16  
41 Missouri 9  
3 at Penn State 42  
27 at Temple 24  
24 Pittsburgh 20  
31 Navy 22  
9 at Boston College 27  
34 at West Virginia 23

#### 1987 (11-0-1) (4TH)

25 Maryland 11  
20 at Rutgers 3  
24 Miami (OH) 10  
35 at Virginia Tech 21  
24 at Missouri 13  
48 Penn State 21  
52 Colgate 6  
24 at Pittsburgh 10  
34 at Navy 10  
45 Boston College 17  
32 West Virginia 31  
Sugar Bowl  
16 Auburn 16

#### 1988 (10-2) (12th)

31 Temple 21  
9 at Ohio State 26  
35 Virginia Tech 0  
20 Maryland 9  
34 Rutgers 20  
24 at Penn State 10  
38 at East Carolina 14  
49 Navy 21  
45 at Boston College 20  
9 at West Virginia 31  
24 Pittsburgh 7  
Hall of Fame Bowl  
23 vs. LSU 10

#### 1989 (8-4)

43 at Temple 3  
10 Army 7  
23 at Pittsburgh 30  
10 Florida State 41  
12 Penn State 34  
49 at Rutgers 28  
18 East Carolina 16  
23 Boston College 11  
38 at Navy 17  
14 West Virginia 24  
Coca-Cola Bowl, Tokyo  
24 vs. Louisville 13  
Peach Bowl  
19 Georgia 18

#### 1990 (7-4-2) (21st)

Kickoff Classic  
16 USC 34  
19 Temple 9  
23 Michigan State 23  
20 Pittsburgh 20  
49 at Vanderbilt 49-14  
21 at Penn State 27  
42 Rutgers 0  
26 at Army 14  
35 at Boston College 6  
24 Tulane 26  
31 at West Virginia 7  
7 at Miami (FL) 33  
Aloha Bowl  
28 Arizona 0

were whipped soundly, 63-7, and then lost three straight.

Most historians of Syracuse football point to the rematch the following year as the turning point in the MacPherson regime. The Orange knocked off Nebraska, once again top ranked, by a score of 17-9. But according to Tim Green, they'd turned the corner the previous year after the embarrassing loss to Nebraska and subsequent slump.

"We beat West Virginia and Boston College in our last two games the year we lost to Nebraska. They were both ranked in the Top 20 at the time, so I thought that was the watershed for us. We had set the groundwork, and by the time we played Nebraska my junior year, I had a great feeling about the game."

Green was twice named All-America as a defensive tackle under MacPherson. He was a local kid who grew up in Liverpool, NY and was recruited by all the big names in the college game – Earl Bruce, Jerry Faust, Joe Paterno all came to the Green home.

"But Mac was the most impressive of all of them. I believed that he could turn the program around, just as he said he would. He's a very gregarious guy, but he's also a walking earthquake. He's got such a forceful, imposing presence and powerful personality. As a player, you never doubted that football was a very serious business.

"In a world of dominant wills, he superseded everybody," continues Tim, now an attorney and network football broadcaster.

Todd Norley was Green's roommate. He quarterbacked the team in the Nebraska upset, and he agrees that while the wins against BC and West Virginia the previous year re-established Syracuse as a credible Eastern power, the Nebraska triumph thrust them back onto the national stage.

"Mac and his coaches put together a great game plan for Nebraska. Especially the defensive scheme. It appeared that we always knew what they were going to do. After a while, they looked like they couldn't even get a first down."

Syracuse went to five bowl games in ten years under MacPherson. The best year was 1987, with its 11-0 regular season mark. It



was only the second unbeaten season in Syracuse history. The Orangemen preserved their unbeaten skein in the season's last game when they scored in the final seconds, then added a two-point conversion to beat West Virginia 32-31.

A possible national championship eluded Syracuse in the Sugar Bowl that year when Auburn kicked a last-second field goal to tie the game, 16-16. SU fans subsequently mailed Auburn coach Pat Dye 2,000 ties. Some Auburn folks shipped MacPherson a box of sour grapes after he'd opined unfavorably about Dye's less-than-gutsy strategy.

Paul Pasqualoni remembers the 1987 West Virginia contest well. He was a first-year linebacker coach, and he wasn't feeling too chipper late in the fourth quarter. With less than four minutes to play, Syracuse had scored to take the lead. They kicked off, and three plays later West Virginia's stellar quarterback Major Harris had driven the Mountaineers to a TD of their own.

"I remember Mac walking down the sideline toward me after they scored. I wasn't expecting to hear what he said. It was, 'I'm glad they scored right away and didn't run out the clock. Now we can come back and score and win. And that's just what we did.'

"Dick was just great to coach for. He was full of energy, always positive, upbeat, and personable. He was the same every day. You never had to worry about him being up one day or down the next," said Pasqualoni, who got Mac's strong endorsement and succeeded him as SU head coach.

Intense as he was in pursuit of victory, MacPherson could also cut through the tension with levity. One day his old friend and rival Bob Casciola was doing a Big East TV broadcast of Syracuse-Rutgers. Just before halftime, SU scored on a TD pass to the tight end, who somehow found himself totally alone in the end zone corner for an embarrassingly easy six points. Trotting off the field, Mac encountered sideline reporter Mike Tirico, who asked him about the TD pass. Mac turned, pointed toward the press box, and deadpanned, "Bob Casciola gave me that play just last night."

MacPherson's peers in the American Football Coaches Association named him their Coach of the Year for 1987. He's won many other honors along the way – Hall of Fame inductions for the State of Maine, Springfield College, and Greater Syracuse, and honorary degrees from Springfield, Maine Maritime, and the University of New England.



#### Head Coach New England Patriots

##### 1991 (6-10)

16 at Indianapolis 7  
0 Cleveland 20  
6 at Pittsburgh 20  
24 Houston 20  
10 at Phoenix 24  
10 Miami 20  
26 Minnesota 23  
6 Denver 9  
17 at Buffalo 22  
20 at Miami 30  
21 at NY Jets 28  
3 at Denver 20  
23 Indianapolis 17  
6 at NY Jets 3  
7 at Cincinnati 29

##### 1992 (2-14)

0 at LA Rams 14  
6 Seattle 10  
7 Buffalo 41  
21 at NY Jets 30  
12 San Francisco 24  
17 at Miami 38  
17 Cleveland 19  
7 at Buffalo 16  
14 New Orleans 31  
37 at Indianapolis 34  
24 NY Jets 3  
0 at Atlanta 34  
0 Indianapolis 6  
20 at Kansas City 27  
10 at Cincinnati 20

The final stop on MacPherson's coaching itinerary was back in Massachusetts once again. He took over the Patriots, a team that had been 1-15 in 1990, and melded them into a very competitive 6-10 outfit for 1991.

"We were playing tremendous. We were in every single game," enthuses Fred Smerlas, who finished out a 14-year career playing for MacPherson. "He took a team that was absolutely crap, and he had new players coming in every day. We beat three playoff teams and could easily have been 10-6 that year.

"Mac was a football machine. He had such energy. He was very smart and very tough. One game after we scored touchdown he head-butted me on the sidelines, and I had my helmet on. But he was not just a football guy. He was a people guy. I was in my 13th year, and I had been hurt, but he said he had an open mind and to come on down. That two years with Mac were the most enjoyable of my football life – and I played for San Francisco, Buffalo, and the Giants."

Dick's final year with the Pats was a downer. The record was 2-14, the talent level was minimal at best, and the team's ownership was unsteady. Who knows what he would have done in Foxboro with a solid roster, a steady stream of draftees, a decent budget, and a few more years?

Mac did Big East TV for a while and now handles the commentary for Syracuse football radio. Life after football has been wonderful for the MacPherson family – Dick, Sandra, daughter Janet and Maureen, and the four grandkids. They summer in Maine, spend the fall in Syracuse, and the winter in Florida. He also gets out onto the links during his travels. They've taken him and Sandra as far afield as Scotland and Ireland with coaching pals like Spike Dykes and LaVelle Edwards and their wives. Mr. Edwards reported recently that Dick is making progress, and "Can halfway hit a golf ball now."