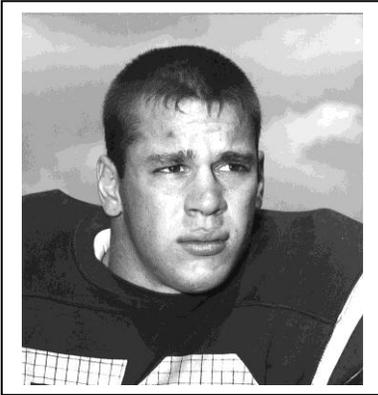


M-CLUB ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SPORTS HALL OF FAME

KEN AVERY **FOOTBALL: 1964-1966** *Inducted: April 30, 1983*



At Southern Miss there is a rich tradition of great defensive teams, teams that worked together and backed away from no one. To have a defense like that a team must have many different ingredients, but they must also have a leader, a player that when the chips are down rises to the occasion and makes the big play.

Ken Avery was that type of player for Southern Mississippi during his brilliant career from 1964 to 1966 and in the process played an important role on some of the best defenses that the school has ever had.

Avery came to Southern Miss from Miami, Florida and it didn't take long for him to prove that he would one day make big contributions. After playing with the freshman team in 1963, he won the starting job at center during the spring of 1964, and was in

the starting lineup when the season opener rolled around.

As the team's starting center, Avery was a part of a Southern Miss team that would finish the year with a 6-3 record and would average 272.3 yards per game, 166.3 yards of that on the ground. He didn't get to play as much as he might have liked on defense that season, but it was easy to see that defense was the side of the ball where his future lay.

In 1965 Avery made the switch to linebacker to team with fellow Hall of Famer Doug Satcher, giving Southern one of its best ever tandem at that position. Due to a lack of experienced personnel that season Avery still saw some duty at center and was also utilized as the team's long snapper.

The 1965 defense with Avery leading the way finished the year ranked No. 1 in the country in total defense, allowing just 161.8 yards per game, second in the nation in scoring defense, allowing only 14.1 points per game, third in the country in rushing defense, allowing 75.4 yards per game and ninth in passing defense giving up only 86.3 yards per game.

That team would go on to post a 7-2 record and record four shutouts. Only two teams scored over seven points on the Southern Miss defense that year. Avery began to attract the attention of a lot of people that season and his hard hitting, aggressive style of play made him one of the fan favorites.

Avery would led the 1966 defense to another No. 1 ranking, allowing only 163.7 yards per game, and once again they ranked in the top ten in rushing defense (4th), while allowing only 10.3 points a game to rank sixteenth.

The 1966 team would finish 6-4 and record two more shutouts and allow one opponent more than 14 points.

Although tackles were not kept in those days at Southern Miss, there is no doubt that Avery would have been the leader or among the leaders in both 1965 and 1966.

Avery was drafted by NFL's New York Giants (12th round) and the AFL's Boston Patriots (2nd round) and played several seasons of professional football. He played for the Giants in 1967-68, the Cincinnati Bengals from 1969 to 1974 and finished his career with the Kansas City Chiefs in 1975.

