

DON KLOSTERMAN

Mr Don Klosterman passed away on June 7, 2000 in Los Angeles at the age of 70. Klosterman was an outstanding passing quarterback at Loyola University of Los Angeles, before a professional football career that was capped off by many years as a top executive in the NFL.

Klosterman was born in Le Mars, Iowa; the 12th of 15 children. After his father's farm was foreclosed on in 1938, the family moved to California, settling in Compton, south of Los Angeles. After a brilliant prep career, Klosterman opted to attend Loyola, which played major college football into the 1950s. Klosterman had a notable collegiate career that was capped off in the 1951 season when he received All-America mention after leading the nation in passing, including setting one game NCAA records for passes thrown (63), passes completed (33), and yards gained (373) in a loss to Florida. As the leading passer for 1951, Klosterman completed 54.6% of his passes for 1,582 yards and 19 touchdowns in nine games, and was called "The Duke of Del Rey."

Klosterman was drafted by the Cleveland Browns in the third round in 1952, but his professional career was characterized by the misfortune of being stuck behind such great NFL quarterbacks as Otto Graham at Cleveland, and then Bob Waterfield and Norm Van Brocklin with the Los Angeles Rams. In 1953 after two games Klosterman left the Rams and joined the Calgary Stampeders of the Canadian Football League. He played there until a serious skiing accident in 1957 left him hospitalized for a year and ended his playing career.

In 1959 Klosterman was hired as a player recruiter for the Los Angeles Chargers of the new American Football League. By 1966 he had become general manager of the Houston Oilers, and in 1970 he held the same position with the Super Bowl champion Baltimore Colts. Brought to the Los Angeles Rams in 1972, Klosterman served as executive vice president and general manager of that team until the early 1980s. In 1983 he began a two-year term as president of the United States Football Leagues' Los Angeles Express, and his most notable deal was the signing of Steve Young to a \$40 million contract.