

Jack Butler

Jack Butler joined the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1951 as a free agent out of St. Bonaventure. Over the next nine NFL seasons, he established himself as one of the game's most effective cornerbacks. He ranked as the NFL's second all-time leading interceptor when he retired following the 1959 season.

Butler, noted as a great tackler as well, illustrated his unique knack for the football beginning in his rookie campaign when he registered five interceptions. The following season he led the Steelers for the first of five times when he picked off seven passes. He had nine interceptions a season later in 1953 that included a record-tying four interceptions in a game against the Washington Redskins. One season later, he added four more interceptions to his career total, two of which he returned for touchdowns which stood as an NFL record at the time.

Yet, despite the fact he recorded 25 interceptions in his first four seasons, personal accolades eluded Butler. It wasn't until later in his career that he received his just due. Oddly, his first of four Pro Bowl nods came following the 1955 season, the only year of his career in which he failed to intercept a pass although he had two steals in his Pro Bowl debut. In his sixth season in 1956, he was selected as a second-team All-NFL choice. Then, in 1957 he claimed his first and only interception title when he picked off a career-best 10 passes to share the league lead in that category. He was named first-team All-NFL. He added nine more interceptions in 1958 and had two interceptions in 1959 and was voted to the first-team All-NFL squad in each of those seasons.

Butler suffered a severe leg injury in a game against the Philadelphia Eagles late in the 1959 season when he became tangled up with Eagles' tight end Pete Retzlaff away from the play. Unfortunately, the injury forced him into retirement. But, it was not before he left his mark on the game. In 103 games, Butler intercepted 52 passes which he returned for 827 yards, and had four pick-sixes. He also had four touchdown receptions and returned one fumble recovery for a score. Butler was named to the NFL's All-Decade Team of the 1950s.

Jack Butler

Cornerback – 6-1, 200 – St. Bonaventure

1951-59 Pittsburgh Steelers (nine playing seasons)

Biographical Background

Full Name: John Bradshaw Butler

Birthdate: November 12, 1927

Birthplace: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

High School: Mount Carmel (Niagara Falls, Canada)

Pro Career: 9 seasons, 103 games

Acquired: Signed as a rookie free agent by the Pittsburgh Steelers

Career Statistics

Year	Team	G	Interceptions				
			No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	
1951	Pittsburgh	12	5	142	28.4	1	
1952	Pittsburgh	12	7	168	24.0	0	
1953	Pittsburgh	12	9	147	16.3	1	
1954	Pittsburgh	12	4	75	18.8	2	
1955	Pittsburgh	12	0	0	0.0	0	
1956	Pittsburgh	12	6	113	18.8	0	
1957	Pittsburgh	12	10	85	8.5	0	
1958	Pittsburgh	12	9	81	9.0	0	
1959	Pittsburgh	7	2	16	8.0	0	
Career Total			103	52	827	15.9	4

Additional Career Statistics: Receiving: 7-102, 4 TD;
Punt Returns: 3-17; Fumble Recovery for TD: 1

All-League Teams

All-NFL: 1957 (AP, UPI, NEA, NY) • 1958 (AP, UPI, NEA, NY) • 1959 (AP, UPI, NEA, NY)

All-NFL Second Team: 1956 (AP, NEA)

All-Eastern Conference: 1956 (SN) • 1957 (SN) • 1958 (SN) • 1959 (SN)

Pro Bowls

(4) – 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959

In the NFL Record Book *(at time of his retirement following 1959 season)*

- [Tied for 1st] Most Interceptions Returned for Touchdown, Season – **2** (1954)
- [Tied for 1st] Most Interceptions, Game – **4** (at Washington, Dec. 13, 1953)
- [Tied for 2nd] Most Interceptions, Career – **52**

Team Records

Steelers records held by Butler

(Records through the 1959 season, Butler's final season with Pittsburgh)

- [1st] Most Interceptions, Career – **52**
- [1st] Most Interception Return Yardage, Career – **827**
- [1st] Most Interceptions Returned for Touchdown, Career – **4**
- [1st] Most Interceptions, Game – **4** (at Washington, Dec. 13, 1953)
- [Tied for 1st] Most Interceptions Returned for Touchdown, Season – **2** (1954)
- [Tied for 1st] Most Interceptions, Season – **10** (1957)
- [2nd] Most Interceptions, Season – **9** (1953, 1958)

League/Team Statistical Titles

NFL Statistical Championships

Interception Titles: 1957

Team Statistical Championships

Interception Titles: 1952, 1953, 1956, 1957, 1958

Awards and Honors

- 1950s All-Decade Team

Year-by-Year Team Records

1951	Pittsburgh Steelers	4-7-1	(4th)	1956	Pittsburgh Steelers.....	5-7-0	(5th)
1952	Pittsburgh Steelers	5-7-0	(4th)	1957	Pittsburgh Steelers.....	6-6-0	(3rd)
1953	Pittsburgh Steelers	6-6-0	(4th)	1958	Pittsburgh Steelers.....	7-4-1	(3rd)
1954	Pittsburgh Steelers	5-7-0	(4th)	1959	Pittsburgh Steelers.....	6-5-1	(4th)
1955	Pittsburgh Steelers	4-8-0	(6th)				

(Division Finish in Parentheses)

Media Guide Excerpts

1959 Pittsburgh Steelers Media Guide biography

DOES NOT INCLUDE BUTLER'S FINAL SEASON IN PITTSBURGH (1959)

Butler, Jack

Halfback

Ninth Year

Height 6:01 Weight 200

St. Bonaventure University

Easily one of the best football players in the National League . . . a top defensive back . . . picked on every all-league team and selected for the All-Pro game for the past four years . . . has played some offensive end . . . was not drafted by pros . . . came as a "sleeper". . . never played high school ball . . . tough, deadly tackler . . . is a player's player . . . married and lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.