

BRUNO BANDUCCI

Full Name: Bruno Banducci
Position: G
Height: 5'1"
Weight: 216
College: Stanford
Born: November 11, 1920, Tsingnano, Italy
Deceased: September 15, 1985, Sonoma, CA

Statistics:

RECEIVING			
	Receptions	Yards	Touchdowns
1952 San Francisco 49ers	1	-4	0
Total	1	-4	0

PUNT RETURNS			
	Returns	Yards	Touchdowns
1947 San Francisco 49ers	1	19	0
Total	1	19	0

KICK RETURNS			
	Returns	Yards	Touchdowns
1947 San Francisco 49ers	1	27	0
1951 San Francisco 49ers	1	3	0
Total	2	30	0

FUMBLES				
	Fumbles	Recovered	Yards	Touchdowns
1952 San Francisco 49ers	0	2	0	0
1954 San Francisco 49ers	0	2	0	0
Total	0	4	0	0

Biography:

If not for an injury, a bust of Bruno Banducci could very well be found in Canton. Despite missing nearly two years in the prime of his career, some may argue that his bust belongs there still.

A 5-11, 215 lb guard, Banducci was a vital part of Clark Shaughnessy's "Wow Boys" at Stanford. Along with Frankie Albert and Norm Standlee, these were some of the best teams ever seen at the school, winning the 1941 Rose Bowl.

Selected by the Philadelphia Eagles in the 6th round of the 1943 draft, Banducci quickly moved into the starting lineup. He earned 2nd team All-NFL in 1945. With the formation of the All-America Football Conference in 1946, Banducci jumped at the chance to return to northern California. Signing with the San Francisco 49ers, he joined his college teammates Albert and Standlee. With his NFL seasoning, Banducci

established himself as a top lineman in the new league, earning 1st team All-AAFC in 1946. 49er head coach Buck Shaw stated "Banducci is one of the best blocking guards, both in close line and down field, that I have ever seen". Banducci repeated as 1st team All-AAFC in 1947. However, his fortune faded the following year. He was injured at the beginning of the season, played sparingly the rest of the season, and had off-season surgery. He was only able to start in two games in 1949, the final year of the AAFC.

The Cleveland Browns were clearly the class of the AAFC, winning all four championships. The 49ers finished second to the Browns in the Western Division each season. The team was gaining on the Browns at the end. A healthy Banducci might have narrowed the gap even more that final season. The 49ers were a very explosive offensive team. With the passing of Frankie Albert, catching of Alyn Beals, running of Joe Perry, Norm Standlee, John Strzykalski and Len Eshmont, and a strong line led by Bruno Banducci, the team was a force in the AAFC and were ready for the NFL. It took a while, but Banducci returned to his all star form in 1951. He made several 1st and 2nd All-NFL teams his remaining four years. In his final season, 1954, he made everyone's All-NFL team and was selected to his only Pro Bowl. The 49ers stumbled in their first season in the NFL, finishing at 3-9. This was the 49ers only losing season during Banducci's career. In 1955, Banducci jumped to the Canadian Football League, playing one season with the Toronto Argonauts. He returned to the NFL and the Eagles as a line coach in 1958.

The 49ers of Banducci's days had the misfortune of playing behind some of the greatest teams of any era. The Browns simply dominated football for the better part of ten years. The champion Detroit Lions of 1952 and 1953, like the Browns in the AAFC, just happened to be in the same division as the 49ers. As a result, the 49ers quality of play and the skill of the players are often overlooked. Bruno Banducci is certainly one of those players. If not for an injury, the fortunes of the player and perhaps a team might have been different.