

MARTIN RUBY

Full Name: Martin Owen Ruby
Position: T
Height: 6'4"
Weight: 249
College: Texas A&M
Born: June 9, 1922, Lubbock, TX
Deceased: January 3, 2002, Salmon Arm, Canada

Statistics:

RECEIVING			
	Receptions	Yards	Touchdowns
1946 Brooklyn Dodgers	1	3	0
Total	1	3	0

INTERCEPTIONS			
	Interceptions	Yards	Touchdowns
1949 New York Yankees	1	19	1
Total	1	19	1

FUMBLES				
	Fumbles	Recovered	Yards	Touchdowns
1950 New York Yanks	0	2	0	0
Total	0	2	0	0

Biography:

Martin Ruby played a large role in the All-America Football Conference. As a 6-4 and 250 pound tackle, he was physically large for the time. More significantly, his signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers announced to all that the new league was serious about finding a ball and playing some games. Ruby, along with Glenn Dobbs, Jr., Bill Daley, and Jack Russell were the first players signed by the AAFC. All were stars in college. Individually and collectively, the signing of these players helped bring to life the All-America Football Conference.

Born in Lubbock Texas in 1922, Ruby would soon find a home on the football fields of Texas. Even by Texas standards, he was large. Texas A&M was beginning to enjoy national success when Ruby arrived on campus in 1939. He would help continue it. The Aggies earned a Cotton Bowl invitation following the 1940 season, beating Fordham 13-12. Following the 1941 season, Ruby was named the outstanding lineman of the Southwest Conference. His team again received an invitation to the Cotton Bowl, losing to Alabama 29-21. Ruby was sworn into the service at halftime and entered the Army Air Force. He attained the rank of captain and was awarded a Presidential Citation and two battle stars. He still found some time for football. Texas A&M had not beaten Texas since 1939. That is bitter for any Aggie. Playing for the Randolph Field Ramblers, Ruby got one more chance to beat Texas as well play in one more Cotton Bowl. Randolph Field tied Texas in the 1944 Cotton Bowl. He played one final year of military football with the Hawaiian Flyers in

1945. Ruby was invited to play in several college all-star games, including the 1946 College All-Star game against the Cleveland Rams, the 1945 NFL Champions. The All-Stars defeated the Rams 16-0. Ruby finished second to Elroy Hirsch in voting for the most valuable player of the game, but he was named the most valuable lineman.

Ruby was selected by the Chicago Bears in the 5th round of the 1942 draft. He did not play professional until after the war. Passing on the Bears and the NFL, Ruby chose to sign with the Brooklyn Dodgers as one of the first players in the new league. Signing players of the quality of Ruby, Dobbs, Daley and Russell gave the AAFC a quick shot of legitimacy. The NFL may have even worried for the first time. Ruby lived up to the high expectations by earning 1st team All-AAFC in his first season in 1946. He went on to earn various All-AAFC team honors each of the league's four years. Despite individual success, Ruby and the Dodgers saw few wins. Brooklyn never won more than 3 games. In 1949, the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Yankees merged. The Yankees had been a solid team and considered Ruby to be the gem of the merger. This new team provided Ruby with his first professional team success. The Yankees-Dodgers finished third at 8-4, and earned a playoff game against the San Francisco 49ers. Unfortunately, the 49ers ended the season with a 21-7 defeat.

The AAFC folded after the 1949 season. The Cleveland Browns, 49ers, and Baltimore Colts moved into the NFL for the 1950 season. The remainder of the AAFC players entered the NFL through a draft. Ruby signed with New York Bulldogs. The Bulldogs soon became the Yankees and Ruby was again playing for the New York Yankees. He played only one year for the Yankees and the NFL and headed north. Ruby jumped to the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the Canadian Football League. At first, Ruby was a feared player in Canada through reputation. He quickly became a feared player through performance. After several unfortunate encounters, one opponent ended up grumbling, "I guess we gotta learn to live with him". His excellent play north of the border resulted in his induction into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1974.

Since 1950, the NFL can truly consider itself blessed by the games and championships of the Cleveland Browns, Baltimore Colts (with a few early bumps) and the San Francisco 49ers. The players and performances of those teams have enhanced the NFL as much or more than any other teams. The life of the AAFC is a very significant happening. The NFL would not be the same without the competition that this upstart league provided from 1946-49, or without the teams and players that merged. The signings of Martin Ruby and his friends were the first steps on the path that the AAFC took to change professional football.