The numbers never told **John Elway**'s story. His overall statistics are impressive, but his true measure as a player ran straight to his heart.

It took two championships at the end of his career to certify his stature, to soften the mark of three Super Bowl losses. After 16 seasons, Elway retired as the starting quarterback with the most wins in NFL history with a 148-82-1 record. He was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in August of 2004.

A renowned scrambler, Elway led 47 winning or tying drives in the fourth quarter or overtime, more than any quarterback. "In tight situations I stop worrying about turnovers," he said.

Elway became the first quarterback to start five Super Bowls, was selected for the Pro Bowl nine times and in 1987 was voted the NFL's Most Valuable Player by the Associated Press. By taking risks as a passer, he made plays other quarterbacks couldn't.

John Elway closed his career with an MVP performance in the 1999 Super Bowl.

Elway was born in Port Angeles, Wash. Growing up, Elway participated in several sports. After moving to the Los Angeles area, Elway starred in baseball and football at High School. Batting .491 as a senior, he led his team to the city baseball championship. As a quarterback, he was a prep All-American, receiving scholarship offers from 60 colleges before choosing Stanford University.

While at Stanford Elway set Pac-10 career passing records for completions, yardage and touchdowns. Said Stanford coach Paul Wiggin: "Every team we play puts up a picture of John and says, 'That's our battle cry.' "Elway was a consensus All-American as a senior in 1982, when he passed finished second to in the Heisman Trophy voting. The Baltimore Colts made E...

John Elway

Speech Topics

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