

Steve Mariucci

Steve Mariucci grew up in Iron Mountain, Michigan (Upper Peninsula - U.P.). He earned All-U.P. honors in Basketball and Football at Iron Mountain High School. After high school, he attended Northern Michigan University in Marquette, leading the Wild Cats to the Division II National Championship in 1975. A three-time All-America quarterback at NMU, Mariucci finished eighth in the Heisman Trophy balloting in 1976.

Coaching Career

Mariucci began his coaching career at his alma mater, Northern Michigan University, (1978-79), then Cal State Fullerton (1980-82) and Louisville (1983-84). His first professional position was as a receivers coach for the USFL's Orlando Renegades in 1985. Later that fall, he also had a brief stint with the Los Angeles Rams as quality control coach. He joined the USC staff in 1986, then moved to the coaching staff at California in 1987. In 1990-91, he was promoted to the Golden Bears' Offensive Coordinator. Mariucci served as quarterbacks coach for the Green Bay Packers (1992-1995), during the early years of Brett Favre's NFL career. After four years as quarterback coach for the Green Bay Packers, Mariucci returned to Cal as Head Coach in 1996 where the team finished 6-6, including a trip to the Aloha Bowl.

Following his success with the Golden Bears, Mariucci was considered a leading candidate for several NFL coaching positions, and was hired to coach the San Francisco 49ers, then one of the top teams in the league.

Mariucci's 1997 team went 13-3 during the regular season, earning home-field advantage in the NFC. After defeating the Minnesota Vikings in the Divisional Playoffs, San Francisco hosted the Green Bay Packers in the NFC Championship Game, but lost 23-10 in a muddy, rainy contest at Candlestick Park. In 1998, the 49ers posted a 12-4 record and returned to the playoffs as a wild card team, but lost 20-18 in the divisional round to the eventual NFC champion Atlanta Falcons. In 2001, the 49ers returned to the playoffs again after a 12-4 season, once again to be eliminated by the Packers.

Mariucci's final season in San Francisco was 2002. The 49ers won the NFC West with a 10-6 record and beat the New York Giants in a controversial wild-card game, posting the second-biggest comeback playoff victory in NFL history. However, they were beaten 31-6 by the eventual Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the divisional round. As San Francisco's coach, he compiled a 60-43 (.583) record, while his teams earned playoff berths four times. Mariucci spent the next three seasons (2003-2005) as the Detroit Lions' Head Coach, trying to revive the struggling franchise. Detroit was his last NFL coaching stint.

Mariucci is one of thirteen head coaches since the AFL-NFL Merger in 1970 to lead his team to a division title in his first season. Mariucci also established an NFL mark for consecutive wins by a rookie head coach with an 11-game winning streak.

Since leaving coaching, Mariucci has been working with NFL Network as a commentator on the NFL Game Day show. Steve Mariucci is without a doubt one of the most famous athletes to come from the U.P. He continues to give back to his home-town community in many ways, such as the building of The Izzo-Mariucci Fitness Center in Iron Mountain. This project was made possible by Mariucci and his former high school and college friend, Tom Izzo, Head Basketball Coach at Michigan State University.

The U.P. Football All-Star Game is proud and honored to have Steve Mariucci to be the Keynote Speaker at the All-Star Banquet, to be held on Thursday, June 26, 2008. For the first time in 57 years, the U.P. will see a high school football all-star classic, and Steve Mariucci is the perfect person to welcome the event into the new era.

