



By John Harris Jr.  
VILLAGER Sports  
Columnist

# Why isn't Otis Taylor in the Pro Football Hall of Fame?

sive injuries" during practices and games, leaving him bedridden, non-verbal, unable to walk and dependent on a feeding tube.

If that isn't giving something back to the game, I don't know what is.

And, still, Taylor, and now, by proxy, his family, hopefully - wistfully? - await his entry into the Hall.

When will it happen? Will it ever happen? If Taylor's accomplishments on the football field and spending the final decades of his life incapacitated as a result of those efforts doesn't sway the hearts and minds of Hall of Famer voters, nothing will.

"Otis Taylor deserves to be in the Hall of Fame, and it's a shame that he's not. Otis revolutionized the position. He was the first of the great big wide receivers," said author and former USA Today and Austin American-Statesman sports reporter Michael Hurd, an authority on Black college football whose upcoming book, "Champions on the Hill," highlights the Billy Nicks era of Prairie View football when Taylor played. According to Hurd, "Everybody agrees Otis was far and away the best athlete, not just football, but the best athlete to ever come through Prairie View."

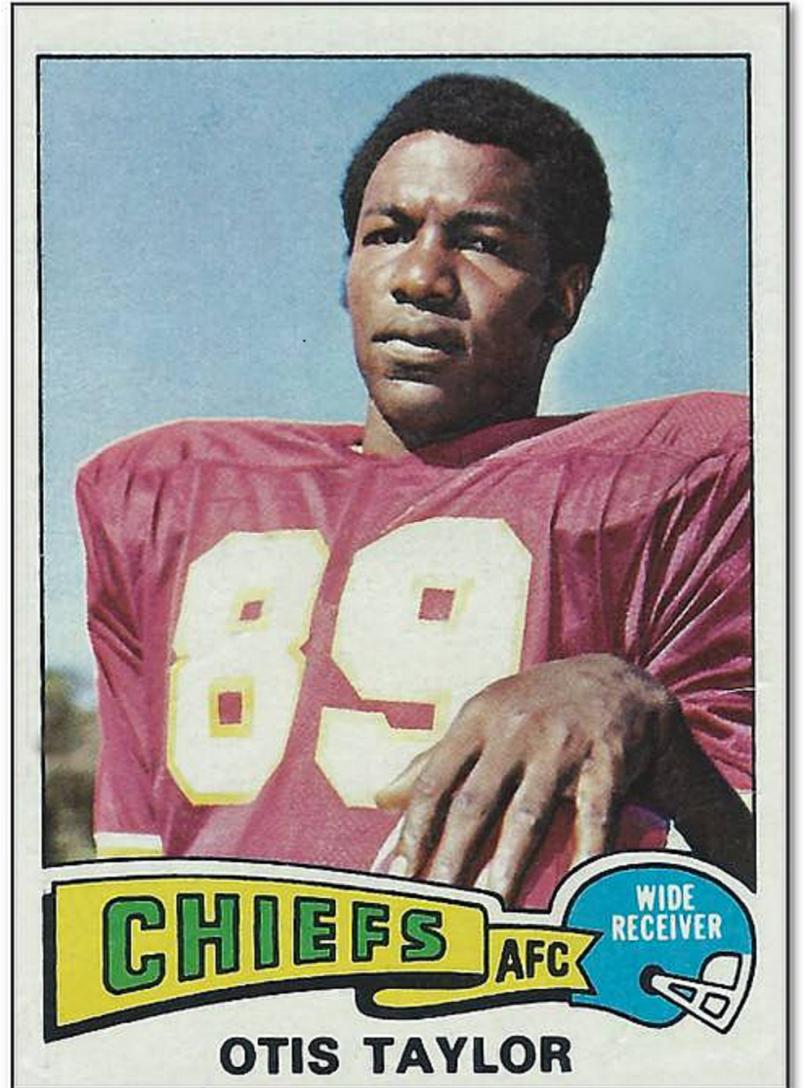
Hurd, whose 2017 book "Thursday Night Lights" told the story of

Black high school football in Texas, likened Taylor's situation to another former Texas high school standout, Cliff Branch, who, like Taylor, also grew up in Houston. Branch, a star wide receiver for the Oakland Raiders, was enshrined in the Hall of Fame a year after his death.

"My buddy Cliff had to wait," said Hurd, who grew up with Branch in Houston. "He passed away before (he got in). I'm wondering if Otis had to die to get in the Hall of Fame, which would be ridiculous."

Author and Austin resident Michael MacCambridge, a lifetime Kansas City Chiefs fan who lived in the same apartment complex with Taylor when he played for the Chiefs, provided some perspective into Taylor's Hall of Fame absence. Taylor amassed 410 receptions for 7,306 yards and 57 touchdown catches. You could present an excellent argument that Lynn Swann was deemed a Hall of Famer with only 336 receptions for 5,462 yards (averaging 16.3 yards per catch) and 51 touchdown catches, and you'd be right. After all, Taylor averaged 17.8 yards per catch and scored a touchdown every 7.2 times he caught the ball (a remarkable statistic).

"The Hall of Fame is an interesting situation because it's impossible to put numbers from the



Otis Taylor of the Kansas City Chiefs in 1975. /Topps Card

60s and 70s in context," MacCambridge said. "My theory is (Hall of Fame voters) were going to let in one influential wide receiver from the 60s whose numbers didn't really add up. They wound up voting in Bob Hayes (in 2009). Once Hayes got voted in made it less likely that Otis was going to get in."

"In 1971, Otis was named AFC offensive player of the year," said MacCambridge, whose

book, " '69 Chiefs: A Team, a Season and the Birth of Modern Kansas City," chronicled the Chiefs' 1969 Super Bowl championship season. "Think about how rare it is that a wide receiver gets that honor. And then think about how rare it is that a wide receiver gets that honor in 1971 at a time when there's relatively less passing going on."

"For all that the Kansas City Chiefs got

credit for - (coach) Hank Stram's variety show - and all the different things they were doing with man-in-motion and the tight I-formation, the one difference-maker, the one game-breaker they had was the Big O. One of the best cases for Otis Taylor being in the Hall of Fame is that he changed the game."

Contact Villager sports columnist John Harris Jr. at [jdharisjr@yahoo.com](mailto:jdharisjr@yahoo.com).

## U.S. inflation eases but stays high, putting Fed in tough spot

By ASSOCIATED PRESS



(AP) - U.S. consumer price increases eased slightly from January to February but still pointed to an elevated inflation rate that is posing a challenge for the Federal Reserve at a delicate moment for the financial system.

The government said Tuesday that prices increased 0.4% last month, just below January's 0.5% rise. Yet excluding volatile food and energy costs, so-called core prices rose 0.5% in February, slightly above January's 0.4% gain. The Fed pays particular attention to the core measure as a gauge of underlying inflation pressures.

Even though prices

are rising much faster than the Fed wants, some economists expect the central bank to suspend its year-long streak of interest rate hikes when it meets next week. With the collapse of two large banks since Friday fueling anxiety about other regional banks, the Fed, for now, may focus more on boosting confidence in the financial system than on its long-term drive to tame inflation.

That is a sharp shift from just a week ago, when Chair Jerome Powell suggested to a Senate committee that if inflation didn't cool, the Fed could raise its benchmark interest rate by a

substantial half-point at its meeting March 21-22. When the Fed raises its key rate, it typically leads to higher rates on mortgages, auto loans, credit cards and many business loans.

When measured against prices a year ago, inflation has been easing for eight months. In February, consumer prices climbed 6% from 12 months earlier, down from January's 6.4% year-over-year increase and well below a recent peak of 9.1% in June. Yet it remains far above the Fed's 2% annual inflation target. Core prices in February rose 5.5% from 12 months ago, down slightly from 5.6% in January.

## Students to med schools: Teach about healthcare segregation

by Defender News Service



Getty Images

(HEALTH) - A group of students at New York City's Mount Sinai Icahn School of Medicine are calling out segregation in health care and its impact on Black patients.

After investigating the racial divide in insurance coverage and how it can determine the quality of care a person receives, the group is advocating for more education about the issue in medical schools.

But they're not waiting on the schools to teach this information.

In an article recently published in the American Medical

Association's Journal of Ethics, the team details their efforts to develop the curriculum themselves.

"The primary goal of advocacy to teach segregated care is always desegregation, so curricular inclusion efforts are needed to educate students about the inequitable systems they are entering and to provide them with tools to advocate against such systems," the authors wrote.

In New York State, where the students attend Mount Sinai, "segregated care also manifests as health insurance

inequities."

There, nonelderly Black adults are more likely to be enrolled in Medicaid than their white counterparts. But still, not every Black adult can access that coverage.

Due to eligibility restrictions, Black Americans are restricted from public insurance at nearly two times the rates of white Americans. Being undocumented, earning less than 50% of the federal poverty level, or not having dependent children are a few requirements that leave some people out.