

JOHN CHARLES

By Tom Schott

DEFENSIVE BACK

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY | LINDEN HIGH SCHOOL

AT A GLANCE

John Charles was a three-year letterwinner as a defensive back for the Boilermakers from 1964 to 1966. He was regarded for his tenacity and aggressiveness on the field and was tabbed as "the best defensive back I've ever coached" by his position coach Bernie Miller.

As a senior, Charles suffered a separated shoulder Oct. 20, underwent surgery a week later and was sidelined for the balance of the regular season. He returned to play in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 2, 1967. Despite playing in just five regular-season games, Charles earned All-America honors.

Charles picked off five interceptions over the course of his career (one as a sophomore, two as a junior and two as senior). He also was the Boilermakers' primary kickoff returner his senior season, averaging a then-school-record 24.6 yards on 11 attempts.

Charles was selected to the 1967 Senior Bowl, Chicago College All-Star Game and Coaches All-American Game.

RECORD WATCH

Fifty years later, Charles' average of 24.6 yards per kickoff return during the 1966 season ranks tied for 14th in Purdue history. Stan Brown was the first to better the mark with an average of 26.8 yards per return in 1969.

YEAR-BY-YEAR STATISTICS

INTERCEPTIONS

Year	No.	Yards	Avg.	TD
1964	1	0	0.0	0
1965	2	21	10.5	0
1966	2	20	10.0	0
Totals	5	41	8.2	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Year	Att.	Yards	Avg.	TD	Long
1964	0	0	-	0	-
1965	0	0	-	0	-
1966	11	271	24.6	0	-
Totals	11	271	24.6	0	-

1967 ROSE BOWL

Charles registered 11 tackles and was named the game's Most Valuable Player.

POST PURDUE

Charles was selected by the Boston Patriots in the first round (No. 21 overall) of the 1967 National Football League Draft. He played for the Patriots for three years and then went on to play for the Minnesota Vikings (1970) and Houston Oilers (1971-74). Charles had 16 career interceptions – including two that he returned for touchdowns – with a season best of five in 1971.

After retiring from professional football, Charles had a 33-year career in business.

Charles was inducted into the Purdue Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame in 2015.

