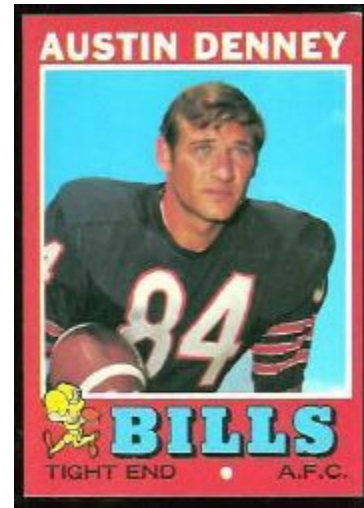


AUSTIN DENNEY

Birth: Jan. 2, 1944
Nashville
Davidson County
Tennessee, USA
Death: Jan. 20, 2009
Knoxville
Knox County
Tennessee, USA



Professional Football Player. He played at the tight end position for five seasons (1967 to 1971) in the National Football League with the Chicago Bears and Buffalo Bills. He played collegiate football at the University of Tennessee, where he achieved both All-American and All-SEC recognition in 1966. He was a member of the Vols team that defeated Syracuse 18-12 in the Gator Bowl in 1966 and scored a touchdown in that game. In 50 career NFL games, Denney had 71 receptions for 764 yards with 3 touchdowns. (bio by: C.S.)

AUSTIN DENNEY

By Bryan Mullen

The Tennessean: 23 January 2008, TN

KNOXVILLE – Former Tennessee All-America tight end **Austin Denney** wasn't an athlete whose vocal leadership made him the center of attention.



But the manner in which he conducted himself in competition spoke loudly about his ability to lead and inspire.

“He had an easy-going disposition and he enjoyed competing,” Joe Allen, who coached Denney in basketball and football at Donelson High in the early 1960s, said upon learning of Denney’s death.

Denney, 65, died Tuesday in Knoxville after a brief illness, UT said in a release. He is credited for setting the modern standard for UT’s tight end position because of his speed and versatility. He was an All-America in 1966 when he caught a school-record seven touchdowns. He finished his UY career with 35 catches for 470 yards and nine touchdowns, before going on to play four years in the NFL with the Chicago Bears (three) and Buffalo Bills (one).

“When I arrived at UT in the spring of 1966 as receivers coach, Austin was the first player to introduce himself to me and welcome me to the team,” former Volunteers

Coach Bill Battle said. "He was a great player at UT and combined excellent size, speed and physical ability with positive attitude and leadership. He was truly a pleasure to coach."

Denney was one of the finest high school athletes in Nashville history. He was selected to All-Nashville Interscholastic League teams in football, baseball, and basketball, and helped his team to two state tournaments on the hardwood. For the 1961-62 school year, he was named Nashville's athlete of the year. Denney was inducted into the Metro Sports Hall of Fame in April.

"He was a competitor and a natural athlete- big and strong with good hands," Allen said.

Survivors include his **wife, Margaret**, a Nashville native who was Miss Tennessee in 1962, a son and a daughter. The family is receiving friends from 1-3 p.m. Saturday at Mountain View United Methodist Church, followed by a memorial service.

MATTINGLY: IN MEMORIAM FOR DENNEY

By Tom Mattingly

Originally published 05:37 a.m., January 23, 2009

Updated 05:37 a.m., January 23, 2009



UT Sports Information

Austin Denney scores the first touchdown in the 1966 Alabama game.

The legends of Tennessee football are getting away from us.

The record book shows that Austin Denney, who died Jan. 20, 18 days after his 65th birthday, still holds the Tennessee record for touchdowns by a tight end in a season (7). Those seven touchdown catches allowed Denney to lead the team in scoring that season.

A native of Nashville who played at 6-2, 227, and lettered in 1965 and 1966, Denney spent the 1964 season at fullback, moving to tight end in 1965. Give whoever made that decision a gold star.

The tight ends of future years, Ken DeLong, Sonny Leach, Tommy West, Reggie Harper, Nate Middlebrooks, and even Jason Witten, to name just a few, have flirted with Denney's single-season record, but have fired and fallen back. DeLong did manage to tie Denney's career record of 9 TD grabs by a tight end, but Ken did it in three seasons, Denny in two.

The record book, as is often the case, doesn't tell the entire story.

"The death of Austin Denney leaves a glaring gap in the Tennessee football family," former News Sentinel sports editor Marvin West said today. "Watching Austin as a blocker, receiver, and strong runner after the catch shaped my first opinion of what a tight end was supposed to be."

While his individual stats, 35 catches for 470 yards in 1965 and 1966, 21 for 264 the latter season, may not seem impressive by today's standards, Denny was among a number of players Doug Dickey inherited on his arrival in Knoxville who made significant contributions to bringing the Vols back to the nation's elite.

Consider the sophomore class Dickey had to build on. There were, among others, Denney, Johnny Mills, Paul Naumoff, Mack Gentry, Derrick Weatherford, Bobby Morel, Art Galiffa, Dewey Warren, Harold Stancell, Jerry Smith, Tom Fisher, Ron Widby, and Doug Archibald. Over the next three years, they would be an integral part of Tennessee football. The class might have been small in numbers, but it was big in terms of impact.

Coaches always talk about players "buying in" to a new coaching staff. It's apparent this group did.

Denney, who wore No. 84, was a co-captain with classmate Naumoff his senior season and was one of four Vols to earn All-America honors, three from this group (Widby, Naumoff, and Denney), the other being 1964 recruit Bob Johnson. Only twice in Vol history, 1939 and 1966, have four Vols been named All-America in the same season.

Denney caught TD passes against Army and Houston in 1965 and was a dominating player the next year. Opposing teams had to account for his presence in the middle of the field, with no one relishing the thought of meeting him head-on. In parlance of the day, he was a "load."

In 1966, he had two touchdown receptions against Auburn and one against Alabama. Late in the Alabama game, the Vols trailing 11-10, he brought Vol fans to their feet, catching a halfback pass from Charley Fulton that brought the Vols deep into Tide territory.

The Vols played some pretty good football in those days, days some people unwittingly consider the "Dark Ages" of Tennessee football. The game may look different today, but, as you watch Denney, Mills, Warren, Widby, and the others play, the game was not only exciting, but well-played.

The memories of Austin's time at Tennessee come quickly for all who saw him in an orange shirt.

"I remember him as an outstanding player, a strong captain, and a good man," West said.

Austin Denney (Jan. 2, 1944 – Jan. 20, 2009)

Requiescat in pace.

Tom Mattingly is the author of "The Tennessee Football Vault: The Story of the Tennessee Volunteers, 1891-2006" (2006), to be published in second edition in 2009, and "Tennessee Football: The Peyton Manning Years" (1998). He may be reached at tjmsh@comcast.net. His News Sentinel blog is called "The Vol Historian."

Austin Denney dead at age 65

By [UT reports](#)

Posted Jan 22, 2009

Austin Denney, who set the modern standard for Tennessee's tight end position with a combination of versatility, speed and fight, **died Tuesday in his hometown of Knoxville after a brief illness. He was 65.**

Denney earned All-America honors for the 1966 Vols, hauling in a school-record seven touchdowns among his 21 overall catches that season for 264 yards. He finished his career with 35 catches for 470 yards and nine touchdowns before embarking on a four-year NFL career.



"When I arrived at UT in the spring of 1966 as receivers coach, Austin was the first player to introduce himself to me and welcome me to the team," former UT head coach Bill Battle said Thursday. Battle was in his first season under head coach Doug Dickey that year, coaching the receivers and tight ends.

"He was a great player at UT and combined excellent size, speed and physical ability with positive attitude and leadership. He was truly a pleasure to coach. My heart goes out to Austin's family and friends in his passing."

Denney wasn't always a tight end.

Denney moved from fullback to the line his junior year partly because of his 6-foot-2, 227-pound body, establishing the position as another offensive threat for the Vols. By the end of his senior year in 1966, the co-captain was All-SEC and All-America. His seven touchdowns were even more impressive, setting a school receiving record that stood until 1990 and helping the big man lead the team in scoring. Denney caught nine TDs in his

career to set another UT receiving mark at the time and one that still stands for the tight end position.

The Nashville native then played three seasons for the Chicago Bears (1967-69) and one for the Buffalo Bills (1970), finishing his NFL playing days with 71 catches, 764 receiving yards and three touchdowns in 49 career games. His best season statistically was 1968, when he caught 23 passes for 247 yards and a pair of scores.

Denney was born Jan. 2, 1944, and attended Donelson High School. He is survived by his **wife of 44 years, the former Margaret Petty**, a Nashville beauty who was Miss Tennessee in 1962. He also is survived by his daughter, Meg Sinclair of Indianapolis; son, Austin Denney III, and wife, Tina; sister and brother-in-law, Marine and Hernando Ortega; sister, Naomi Finley; and several grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by **his parents, Austin Denney Sr. and Mamie Carney Denney**; and a son, Austin Patrick.

The family is receiving friends Saturday from 1-3 p.m. at Mountain View United Methodist Church, followed by a memorial service. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Mountain View United Methodist Church, 3200 Maryville Pike, Knoxville, TN, 37920. Arrangements are by Knoxville's Berry Funeral Home on Chapman Highway.

Austin Denny, TE - Nashville (Lettered 1965, 66 [Capt.]) All-America - 1966; All-SEC - 1966.

VOLS MOURN LOSS OF AUSTIN DENNEY

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*See Chapter 5 (Austin Denney Sr. and Mamie Carney) at:

<http://www.ajlambert.com>

DONELSON HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1961 CELEBRATES 45 YEARS

The News Herald, 18 January 2007, pg. 8

When 65 Donelson High School Class of 1961 schoolmates gathered to remember the past they had a blast. The weekend event started with a cookout at Rick and Hilda Hibbett's home in Donelson – a relaxing time to catch up or get reacquainted, down some burgers, “dawgs” and liquid refreshment around a bonfire and be entertained by the ugliest cheerleaders ever seen. Mike Davis, Gary Gentry and Ron Sharpe wore custom-made uniforms in the school's maroon and white colors to do some lousy leg kicks, shake their pompoms and lead the group in old DHS cheers and singing their alma mater: Attendees enjoyed a bus trip the next day to the Jack Daniel Distillery in Lynchburg and a dinner dance at Brentwood County Club that evening, dedicated to the memory of deceased classmates Bobby Bates, Bonnie Bohner, Wayne Boner, Billie Cecil, Gene

Davis, Jerry Dixon, Linda Eakes, Jeanette Helton, Oliver Henderson, Judy Huggins, Carolyn Mayes, Jim McClendon, Jimmy Meade, Ronnie Moore, Miriam Neil, Claudia Nicks, Jerry Nicks, Donald Petty, Jackson Pratt, Joe Rediken, Jerry Sneed, Bobby Startup, Larry Sullivan and Joyce Turpin.



Austin Denney and Margaret Ann Petty –
Former UT All-American and Miss Tennessee.