

LUTHER HAYES, USC'S TWO-TIME NCAA TRIPLE JUMP CHAMP WHO ALSO STARRED IN FOOTBALL, DIES

LOS ANGELES—Luther Hayes, who won a pair of NCAA triple jump titles in the early 1960s while at USC and also played a key role in the Trojans' 1958 football game against UCLA, died on Nov. 23 in Palos Verdes Estates, Calif., due to natural causes. He was 78.

A funeral will be held on Dec. 5 at 11 a.m. at Holman United Methodist Church, 3320 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles 90018. Visitation will be from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Dec. 4 at Green Hills Mortuary, 27501 S. Western Ave., Rancho Palos Verdes 90275.

Hayes came to USC from San Diego's Lincoln High (he previously had attended San Diego High), where he was on the football, basketball and track teams. He was All-City in football and was the 1957 state long jump champion.

The 6-3, 195-pound Hayes was a two-sport star at USC, lettering in football in 1958-59-60 and track and field in 1959-60-61.

He was a two-way end in football at Troy. His 74-yard kickoff return for a touchdown with 6:50 to play in the 1958 UCLA game (and the Trojans' ensuing two-point conversion) tied the game at 15-15, the final score. He had 14 career receptions at USC, including a team-best 9 for 179 yards with 2 TDs in 1959 when he also made 44 tackles on defense to earn All-American honorable mention and All-Conference second team honors. As a sophomore in 1958, he had 4 catches for 68 yards along with 27 tackles and an interception. An injury slowed him during his 1960 senior campaign.

He was on Trojan track teams that won the conference championship all three of his years and captured the 1961 NCAA team title (USC was the NCAA runner-up in 1960). He won the NCAA triple jump crown in 1960 and 1961, becoming the first man to win a pair of NCAA titles in the event that was then called the hop, step and jump. His 51-2 ¼ leap in 1961 was an NCAA Meet record. He also was second in the 1961 NCAA long jump (then called the broad jump). He was ranked 10th in the world in the triple jump in 1961. He also captured the conference triple jump and long jump crowns in 1960 and 1961, setting a USC record while winning the 1961 triple jump (51-9 ½); it was 27 years before another man won both of those league events in the same year.

In 1961, Hayes was selected in the 10th round of the NFL Draft by the Philadelphia Eagles and the 27th round of the AFL Draft by the San Diego Chargers. He spent the 1961 season with his hometown Chargers, their first in San Diego, where he had 14 receptions with 3 touchdowns.

After his playing career, he was a teacher in the Los Angeles City School District and coached at Crenshaw High, Cal State Northridge and Los Angeles City College, where he also was an academic counselor.

He is survived by his wife Anita, daughters Andrea Jordan and Crystal Hill and son Luther, as well as sisters Mary Jones and LaVerne Perkins and four grandchildren.