



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Super Bowl Champion owner Edward J. DeBartolo Jr. to be inducted into Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame**

TAMPA (April 15, 2008) – Edward J. DeBartolo, Jr., the five-time Super Bowl champion owner of the San Francisco 49ers, will be inducted into the Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame (BASHOF) on Monday, April 21.

DeBartolo is the first non-athlete or coach to be elected into BASHOF under a new “Distinguished Achievement” category added to include off-field candidates who have made “an extraordinary impact on the sports history of the Bay Area.” A special panel of 22 community leaders, past enshrines, broadcasters and sports editors selected DeBartolo.

DeBartolo built the 49ers into one of the most respected franchises in professional sports. Under his 23-year ownership and management of the 49ers, the team won 12 division titles, five conference championships and a NFL-record five Super Bowls – SB XVI (1981), Super Bowl XIX ('84), Super Bowl XXIII ('88), Super Bowl XXIV ('89) and SB XXIX ('94). He hired Bill Walsh as head coach in 1979 and under the Hall of Fame coach's direction the 49ers revolutionized football with the development of the “West Coast Offense.”

In the Bay Area and across the country, DeBartolo has been a champion of charitable causes. The 49ers Academy was established in Palo Alto during his leadership and he has been recognized with national awards from organizations such as the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Salvation Army and the CYO.

“This is a great honor for me,” DeBartolo said. “I love San Francisco as much as I love the game of football and it means such a great deal to me to be inducted into the Bay Area Hall of Fame. I was so fortunate to have had such great players, coaches and staff during my time with the 49ers and truly cherish all those wonderful relationships.”

Regarded as the ultimate “players' owner,” DeBartolo formed a special bond with his players that still exists today. He spared no expense to provide the best environment for winning and his first-class formula helped develop legendary players Joe Montana, Jerry Rice, Steve Young and Ronnie Lott.

"Mr. DeBartolo was the most passionate and generous owner in professional sports, but he demanded perfection and we delivered for him. He treated us like family, from the star player to the equipment manager," said Rice, the NFL's all-time career leader in receptions and touchdowns. "When you think of San Francisco you think of the San Francisco 49ers and Mr. DeBartolo's legacy. He will go down in history as one of the greatest owners in sports and deserves to one day be in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Hopefully this is a small step that leads to Canton."

In 2006, DeBartolo founded DeBartolo Sports & Entertainment (DSE), a full-service sports and entertainment agency. DSE represents athletes and talent, consults corporations in sports marketing, offers event hospitality and provides developmental programs for amateur athletes and coaches through DeBartolo Sports University.

"I have experienced so many great things from sports, that this is my way of giving back," he said. "I want to help make kids' dreams come true and provide support and guidance for them to exceed their goals on and off the field well beyond their playing careers."

Joining DeBartolo in the BASHOF Class of 2008 are 49ers three-time Super Bowl champion running back Roger Craig, who played for DeBartolo, Raiders punter Ray Guy, University of San Francisco standout Burl Toler and record-breaking swimmer Rick DeMont. They will be honored at BASHOF's annual banquet on April 21 at the Westin-St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

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