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Niners to retire Steve Young's No. 8
By: Greg Beacham, AP Sports Writer

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The San Francisco 49ers will retire Hall of Fame quarterback Steve Young's No. 8 jersey in a halftime ceremony during their game against New England on Oct. 5.

Young is a two-time league MVP who led San Francisco to its fifth NFL title in the 1995 Super Bowl, winning the game's MVP award with a record six touchdown passes. He spent parts of 13 seasons with the 49ers, finishing his NFL career with 33,124 yards passing and 232 TD passes.

"It's a tremendous honor, there's no question about it," Young said in a phone interview. "For all the things we've enjoyed, and all the accolades, this might be the best thing of all."

After claiming the 49ers' starting job from Joe Montana in 1991, Young was selected to seven consecutive Pro Bowls while compiling a 96.8 career passer rating, the highest in NFL history. He was enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2005.

Young will be the 11th player to have his number retired by the 49ers, joining fellow quarterbacks Montana and John Brodie. Safety Ronnie Lott was the most recent player added to the list in 2003.

"Steve Young is an important part of the 49ers' history and tradition," 49ers owner John York said Thursday. "He combined talent, character and a tremendous work ethic to become an incomparable performer and champion on the field. He was a model professional, and he influenced many of the younger players with his dedication."

Former 49ers owner Eddie DeBartolo, York's deposed brother-in-law and the driving force behind San Francisco's five title teams, also might attend the ceremony, Young said.

"When you play week in and week out, you really play for the emblem, for the 49er (insignia)," Young said. "When I played, it was part of Eddie's reference to a family or the 49er way. There's something very personal about that."

Jerry Rice, Young's favorite target and the most prolific receiver in NFL history, hasn't had his No. 80 retired yet by the 49ers, but no players have worn it - not even new receiver Isaac Bruce, who switched to No. 88 in San Francisco after wearing No. 80 for 14 seasons with the Rams. Rice's jersey is likely to be officially retired shortly after he's added to the Hall of Fame.

"I don't think you need to worry about someone wearing No. 80 in the future," said Young, who also hopes to see Rice at next weekend's ceremony.

