# For fans only

# Walters 'would've taken care of' McKey if he stayed in school

From Staff Reports

The same man who cost Derrick McKey his senior season at Alabama says he advised McKey to stay in school.

New York agent Norby Walters said he "would have taken care of" McKey if the 6-foot-9 center had remained at Alabama. Shortly after McKey announced he would do just that, Alabama officials were notified by the FBI that McKey had signed a contract with Walters in January. McKey was declared ineligible just in time to file for the NBA draft, which is Monday.

"The young man had thoughts about coming out early, but we (Walters and associate Lloyd Bloom) advised him to stay in school, mature, continue to play," explained Walters. "We felt if he had stayed In school he had a chance to be one of the very top picks in next year's draft. We felt it would have been an intelligent move

on all levels. And, in the end, he really didn't want to leave."

McKey lost his senior season, and Walters lost McKey as a client. McKey is now represented by another New York agent, Norman Blass. Walters, who is under investigation by a federal grand jury In Chicago for his dealings with college athletes, said he feels no personal guilt for McKey's ineligibility.

"I feel bad for the kid, but he did nothing wrong and I did nothing wrong," said Walters. "The hypocrisy must stop."

McKey, along with senior guard Terry Coner, received \$2,600 for signing with Walters and Bloom. Terry Bolar, who grew up near Mobile, Ala., recruited McKey and Coner for the agents.

McKey and Coner have been subposnaed to testify before the Chicago grand

Behind The Scenes

TONY'S WISH: Atlanta Falcons nose tackle Tony Casillas had one final wish for his former Oklahoma teammate Brian Bosworth prior to last week's NFL supplemental draft.

"I hope Bosworth gets picked by Russla," said Casillas, who has made his dislike for Bosworth well known. "He's always talking about Russia. He told people living in Norman (Okla.) was like living in Russia. Then he wore a T-shirt at the (1987) Orange Bowl about the communists.

"I think Russia would be the perfect

place for him to play."

Casillas did not quite get his wish. But Seattle, which won the rights to draft Bosworth, is the NFL's closest team to Russia geographically.

THE BUTTS-MEHRE MYSTERY: Tony Cushenberry, general manager of Georgla's new Butts-Mehre athletic building, has a mystery on his hands. The back wall of one of the building's two racquetball courts has been shattered, and no one will fess up.

Based on literature provided by the company that installed the glass wall, Cushenberry figures his suspect weighs at least 300 pounds and runs faster than 60 miles an hour. After all, that's supposed

to be what it should have taken to break the wall. The company is so confident in Its product that the wall is under warranty. It will not cost Georgia anything to replace it.

ALL IN THE FAMILY: The success of Georgia's tennis teams - the men were national champs and women runners-up - has been a boon to the Bulldogs' tennls camps, the first of which began this week in Athens.

Even a few familiar faces enrolled in the adult session: Sabina Wallace and Suzanne Diaz. Sabina's husband, Jeff, is the head women's coach. Suzanne's husband, Manuel, is the assistant men's coach. On top of that, Sabina and Suzanne are cousins.

#### Soundoff

### Braves leading league in finding ways to lose

The Braves, despite their around-.500 performance, are destined to finish 70-92 this year. If they are lucky.

Unlike some teams that can always find a way to win, the Braves are leading the league in creative ways to lose. If the starter does well, the rellever doesn't. The reliever (rarely) does well; it doesn't matter since the starter generally leaves him in a 7-2 hole.

Ozzle Virgil, with his 17 homers and 31 RBI, epitomizes this team. Talent, but no cohesion. Mammoth home runs with no one on, popups when the winning run can be had.

The problem: Chuck Tanner, for whom phlegmatic is too nice a description. He neither inspires nor Improves the Braves. Here is a man who has finished last for three straight years and still has a Job. Truly remarkable.

The solution: Trade Murphy for three or four players, maybe to an Americaa League team for some speed and a reliever who can throw strikes dally. Also: Ask Mike Fratello, that great motivator of men, if he'd consider a second job.

> Mark F. Weber Stone Mountain

#### Tanner like captain of the Titanic

If Chuck Tanner is a manager, then I'm an astronaut. I have always been a die-hard Braves fan, no matter what, but this is disgusting and an insult to the city of Atlanta.

Not the team, the manager ... With the worldty gains Ted Turner has amassed, you would think that he was of reasonable intelligence, but if he has the slightest thought that Tanner will ever bring a pennant to Atlanta, then his IQ is so small that it will never register.

Show me another major league team that doesn't have a regular lineup and you'll see another "Mickey Mouse" club. If you're good enough to play in the majors, then you're good enough to play every day, no matter who's pitching.

I can see benching a player when he is 0-for-25, but this computer baseball doesn't work in real-life everyday ball games.

This season started great, and just when we thought we would prove everybody wrong and not finish on the bottom, Mr. Tanner benches the whole team except Murphy and Hubbard ... and

he says this is not platooning.

Optimism is fine, but you have to have some realism also to balance it all out.

If Chuck Tanner had been the captain of the Titanic, he would have had the passengers holding hands, singing "Row, row row your boat," as the ship sank.

Watching the Braves used to be so enjoyable. but now you wind up cutting the TV off with your blood pressure out of sight because of some senseless moves Tanner makes. This is America's favorite pastime . . . if you want to die young.

Wake up ... and do something before this season is so far gone that the fans will never come back. Bring back Joe Torre, who at least had some common sense.

Mariene Smith Greenville, S.C.

#### Examining Murphy as a right fielder

The time has come to re-evaluate Murphy's move to right field.

1. It is obvious Murphy is still grieving over the departure of his buddy, Bob Horner.

2. He still can't play caroms off the fence. 3. He can't judge his distance on fly balls.

About the only thing he has left is his great arm. 4. Somebody should take Murphy out behind

the bleachers and teach him where the stike zone ls. Too often he swings at a ball that bounces up to the plate two feet outside.

So much for Murphy. Now take a close look at the rest of the team. I may be wrong, but I've noticed a closer-knit bunch of players since Horner went to the land of rice and sake. Everybody seems looser and relaxed; even Tanner is making better and more daring decisions.

When it became certain that Horner would not be back, it seemed like a cloud of doom was lifted for the team.

If they continue to hover around the .500 mark, there is no reason they don't have a good shot at winning their division.

John W. Grigsby Marietta

To voice your opinion on any sports subject, write to SOUNDOFF, Journal-Constitution Sports, P.O. Box 4689, Atlanta, Ga. 30302, or call our Sports Hotline - 526-5050. Include your name and address. We reserve the right to edit all letters and comments.

## Whatever happened to ...



KIM SIMON/Special

Former Georgia hurdler and track coach Spec at Lake Herrick in Athens. He says he was the Towns, an Olympic gold medalist in 1936, fishes first hurdler to stress speed as well as technique.

## l'owns figures he could've competed successfully against today's hurolers

By Thomas O'Toole Staff Writer

ATHENS - Spec Towns may marvel at the ability of today's track stars, the sophistication of their running surfaces and the size of their appearance fees. But when it comes to the question of competing with them, the former Olympic champion from Georgia is anything but intimidated.

"I would have been right with this crowd," said Towns, who won the gold medal in the 110-meter hurdles at the 1936 Olympics. "I think I would have done well. I was the first sprinter-type hurdler to come along. I had run a 9.7-second 100 and had long legs."

Before Towns helped spark a revolution, hurdlers tended to be long-legged technicians whose primary goal was to clear the barrier. Speed was considered a bonus.

According to Towns, technique was stressed more in his day because of the way hurdles were made. The base was shaped like a "T," which meant the hurdles would not topple if they were hit by the hurdler. Instead, athletes' feet would get tangled in

Today's hurdles have an L-shaped base. If they are hit, they collapse backwards, allowing the hurdler to keep running.

"Those old hurdles would wrap around you," he said. "I got to where I could go over the hurdle and knock a dime off the top with the seat of my pants without knocking the hurdle over."

Hurdles were not Towns' only obstacle. The tracks, unlike today's chemical concoctions, were cinder. Starting blocks were practically nonexistent. The runners dug holes in the cinders to give their

feet support. And there was no money, like the appearance fees and trust funds available to today's athletes. Towns said he does not believe they should be paid.

"If they want pro track, they should have pro

Closeup: Spec Towns

Age: 73.

Birthpiace: Fitzgerald, Ga.

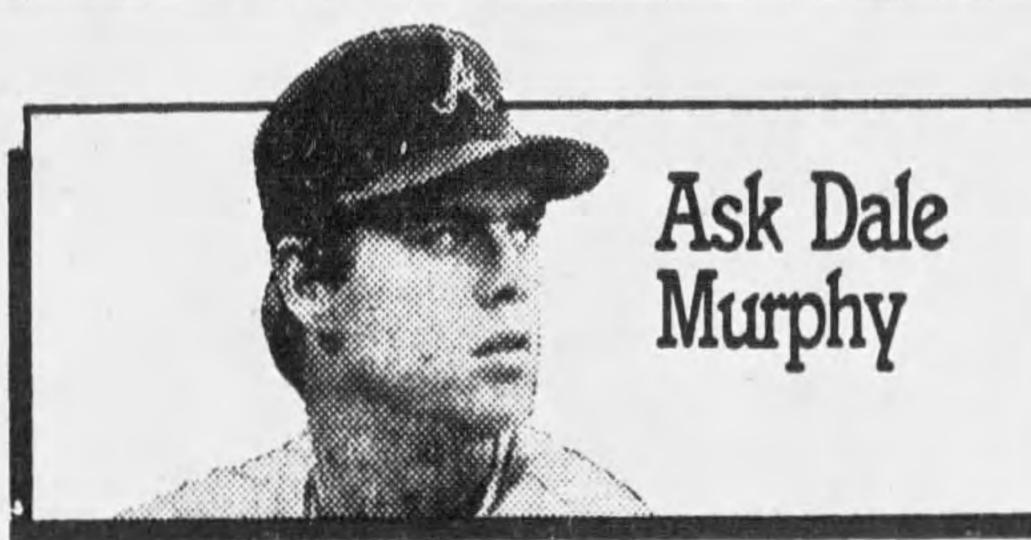
Residence: Athens. Ccupation: Retired.

Career highlights: Won 110-meter high hurdles at the NCAA Championships and the National AAU Championships in 1936. Set world record of 14.1 seconds in hurdles during semifinals of 1936 Olympics in Berlin; won 1936 Olympic finals in 110 hurdles with a time of 14.2. Broke his own world record with a time of 13.7 in Osio, a mark that stood for 14 years. Tied world record of 7.4 seconds for 60-yard hurdles in 1937 Millrose Games. Repeated as NCAA champ in 1937. At one stretch, won 60 straight hurdles races. Was head track coach at Georgia for 34 seasons, longer than any other Bulldog coach in any other sport. Coached Georgia athletes to 21 SEC outdoor titles and five SEC indoor titles. Selected to Georgia Hall of Fame in 1968 and U.S. Track and Field Hall of Fame in 1975.

track," he said. "But somebody already tried that

and it didn't work." Towns, now retired in Athens after 34 years as Georgia's track coach, was the Bulldogs' only NCAA outdoor individual champ until senior Gwen Torrence won the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes this year In Baton Rouge, La.

That meet also provided evidence that something else has changed in track and field - the crowds. There were roughly 5,000 people in Bernie Moore Stadium when Torrence won the 100. When Towns won the hurdles in Chicago in 1936, the crowd numbered 35,000.



## It's simply tradition: No interleague play

Q. I am a big baseball fan, but there's one thing about baseball games that I don't understand. Why doesn't the American League play the National League? - Daniel Brown, 11, Atlanta.

DANIEL: It gets back to tradition, and baseball has always tried to stick to tradition in which the two leagues would only meet under two circumstances: the All-Star Game and the World Series. But there has been talk occasionally of bring-Ing in an American League team that most people have never seen as a way to increase fan attendance.

Personally, I feel that would ruin the tradition of the game, and we don't need inter-league play to keep the interest of the fans. In the National League, we have interesting pennant races every year. Over the last few seasons, we have had different winners just about every year. I think that's what the fans want most — a pennant race where just about every team has a chance of winning the pennant every year.

Q. What are the clay circles right outside the foul lines, about 10-15 feet from home plate. What is their purpose? (not the on-deck circles). Ned Green, 18, Atlanta.

NED: If you ever get to the game for batting practice, you'll see coaches hitting ground balls, called fungoes, to the infielders. Those clay circles are a ready-made practice area, designed specifically for those coaches hitting grounders.

The coaches stand in that area so they won't kill grass that would otherwise be there.

Q. If the game is in the eighth or ninth inning with the Braves behind by one run with one out and a man on third, what would you do? - Mark Snell, 12, Dalton.

MARK: As a manager, I might want to pinch hit, depending on who the batter was, or try a squeeze bunt to score the run. If executed properly, the squeeze bunt is impossible to stop. The only way to prevent the squeeze play is for the other team to pitch out.

About the only other option is to try to let the hitter hit away and hope that (A) if he hits a ground ball, it's to the shortstop or the second baseman so the run will score, or (B) a fly ball is deep enough to score the run to tie the game up.

As a hitter, I would try to stay away from hitting a ground ball to the first or third baseman, if the infield is playing back, and hopefully get a base hit or fly ball deep enough so the runner at third can score.

Q. Do you think that teenagers shouldn't be allowed to drive and drink at the age of 18? -Tania Ervin, 13, Cedartown. TANIA: It's obvious that no one should be al-

lowed to drink and drive at the same time. The court system is seemingly taking a strong stand on this issue, and I totaly agree with it. I'm thankful that we seem to be making progress against drinking and driving.

As for my religious beliefs, I don't believe in drinking any alcoholic beverage - regardless of

Atlanta Braves outfielder Dale Murphy answers questions each Saturday. Address your questions to Atlanta Journal-Constitution Sports, P.O. Box 4689, Atlanta, Ga., 30302. Include your name, address, telephone number and age. Due to the volume of mail, only letters selected for publication can be answered.

## Hawks retain partial-season ticket program

The Atlanta Hawks have started their season ticket program for the 1987-88 season and will keep their partial-season plan.

Most ticket prices have been increased for next season, with almost all of the seats in The Omni now selling for \$5, \$10, \$15 or \$20. The biggest increase comes in the courtside seats. Those seats sold for \$20 and \$25 last season, but go up to \$40 and \$50.

The \$5 ticket will be retained. "That's something we wanted to maintain," said Hawks president Stan Kasten. "People can always come to a Hawks game. it was important for us to maintain that price ticket."

The partial-season ticket plan covers 22 games and costs \$330 for \$15 tickets and \$220 for \$10 tickets. A fan can pick 20 games of his or her choice, with the other two games being the preseason game against the Houston Rockets and the home regularseason opener.

Ticket Tips

Full-season ticket prices are \$756 (\$20 seats), \$567 (\$15 seats), \$378 (\$10 seats), and \$210 (\$5 seats). Season ticket holders have the rights to the same tickets for any playoff games and the rights to additional playoff tickets.

Kasten says the price increase puts the Hawks in the middle of the NBA in ticket prices.

For more information on Hawks tickets: 681-

HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER: The Georgia Athletic Coaches Association state high school soccer all-star games will be played Saturday night at St. Pius High

School. Teams are divided between East and West for boys, East and Metro for girls. The girls game will be held at 6 p.m. and the boys at 8 p.m. Tickets are

ATLANTA BRAVES: The Braves are home Saturday and Sunday for afternoon games against the Cincinnati Reds. Game times are 1:20 Saturday and 2:10 Sunday.

Single-game tickets cost \$8.50 for club level, \$7 for field level and \$5 for upper and lower pavilions. General admission tickets, sold of the day fo the game, are \$3 for adults and \$1 for children.

Ticket can be purchased at Gate G at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium and all SEATS locations and can be ordered by phone at 577-9100.