

# Owners: Strike Won't Stop Us

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Schaumburg, Ill. — NFL owners voted unanimously yesterday to continue the season even if the players strike, using already discarded free agents and whatever players are available to play.

The NFL Management Council said the action was needed to "protect the integrity of the game," according to Jack Donlan, the council's executive director.

The players have voted to strike Sept. 22 if progress is not made toward a new collective bargaining agreement. The five-year contract between the league and its 1,600 players expired Aug. 31.

"We'll play with whatever players we can get, including those who choose not to strike," Donlan said after a meeting that lasted 2 hours, 10 minutes. Donlan also announced that negotiations with the NFL Players Association will resume tomorrow at a site still to be determined. Gene Upshaw, the executive director of the NFLPA, met Wednesday with commissioner Pete Rozelle and was at yesterday's meeting.

During the past two weeks, some teams have offered waived players a \$1,000 option to play in the event of a strike. The 28 club owners also hope to entice dissident union members to cross picket lines and stay with their clubs.

Some players, including San Francisco quarterback Joe Montana and Jets running back Freeman McNeil, have said they would play during a strike.

The owners also announced they had been awarded a line of credit, reported to be about \$100 million, to keep them going in the event of a strike.

In 1982, the strike cost clubs an estimated \$200 million and the players lost \$72 million. Estimates are that a strike would cost teams about \$25 million a week from the television contract and \$12.5 million in gate receipts.

The two sides have met for just 4½ hours since Aug. 14. Talks on Sept. 2 were broken off over the issue of protection for player representatives. But the major issue remains free agency.

The players are seeking a system that would allow players to move from team to team without any kind of compensation or right of first refusal.

The owners are willing only to liberalize the current system, which requires a team signing a free agent to provide compensation. Just one player in 10 years has changed teams under that system.

None of the owners present would characterize

the meeting with Upshaw or discuss Upshaw's meeting with Rozelle, who was not present at yesterday's session.

Donlan said 19 of the 28 teams already had signed players for use in the event of a strike. And while he said he wasn't preoccupied with that issue — "I want to find a settlement," he said — he felt the union had forced the owners' hand.

Asked if playing with free agents was a way of putting pressure on the union members to return, Cowboys president Tex Schramm replied: "That's not our intention. We just want to play football."

## Carter Sues NY Agents

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Columbus, Ohio — Cris Carter, the former Ohio State all-America wide receiver who was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles last week, filed a \$1-million suit yesterday against New York sports agents **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom**.

In the suit, filed in U.S. District Court, Carter alleged **Walters** and **Bloom** induced him by **fraud** and unfair use of Carter's older brother, George, to enter into a representative agreement and to accept a loan while Carter still was eligible to play football for Ohio State.

### Judge Clears Way for Irwindale

Los Angeles — Superior Court Judge Ricardo A. Torres refused to grant a temporary restraining order that would block Irwindale's sale of \$90 million in bonds to finance a new stadium for the Raiders.

Los Angeles City Councilman Ernani Bernardi, who has sued Irwindale and the Raiders over the \$115-million deal that would move the NFL team

out of the LA Coliseum to a gravel pit in Irwindale, sought the restraining order to block the bond sale.

### Oilers Ponder San Antonio Move

San Antonio — The Houston Oilers, besieged by leasing problems at the Astrodome, would consider relocating to San Antonio if a domed stadium is built, team owner Bud Adams said.

San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros wants a stadium built to attract a NFL expansion team in 1990. San Antonio was host to the Gunslingers of the defunct United States Football League.

### Miller Rejects Falcons' Offer

Suwanee, Ga. — Quarterback Chris Miller, the Atlanta Falcons' No. 1 draft pick, was headed home to Oregon after rejecting the latest offer from the NFL team . . . The Bengals obtained a seasoned backup for starting quarterback Boomer Esiason when they signed Turk Schonert, 29, who played for the Bengals from 1980 until 1985.

## Giants Are Running In Place

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team against the run. Now they're concerned.

"I think they have a right to be concerned," John Madden, the CBS Sports commentator and former coach, said yesterday. "You know the quarterback's best friend? A good running game. When you can't run, the quarterback's got to do everything himself. What happens is you run and get frustrated, and you have to try to win by throwing the ball. Now they're playing the Bears, and you can't beat the Bears by being one-dimensional."

Parcells agrees. He said yesterday the development of the running game "is going to have an awful lot to do with how our season turns out. Whether we're going to get in a groove is something I just don't know yet.

"But remember last year. It was a developing thing for us. We started the season — Dallas, San Diego, the Raiders, St. Louis — and the consistency of the running game wasn't very good. But it became a dominating part of our game. Early in the season, it's very difficult to get a fix on your team for all coaches. A lot of strange things happen this time of year. Take a look at the early season last year. The opening game last year, Chicago plays a 41-31 game with Cleveland. They're supposed to be two of the better defenses in the league."

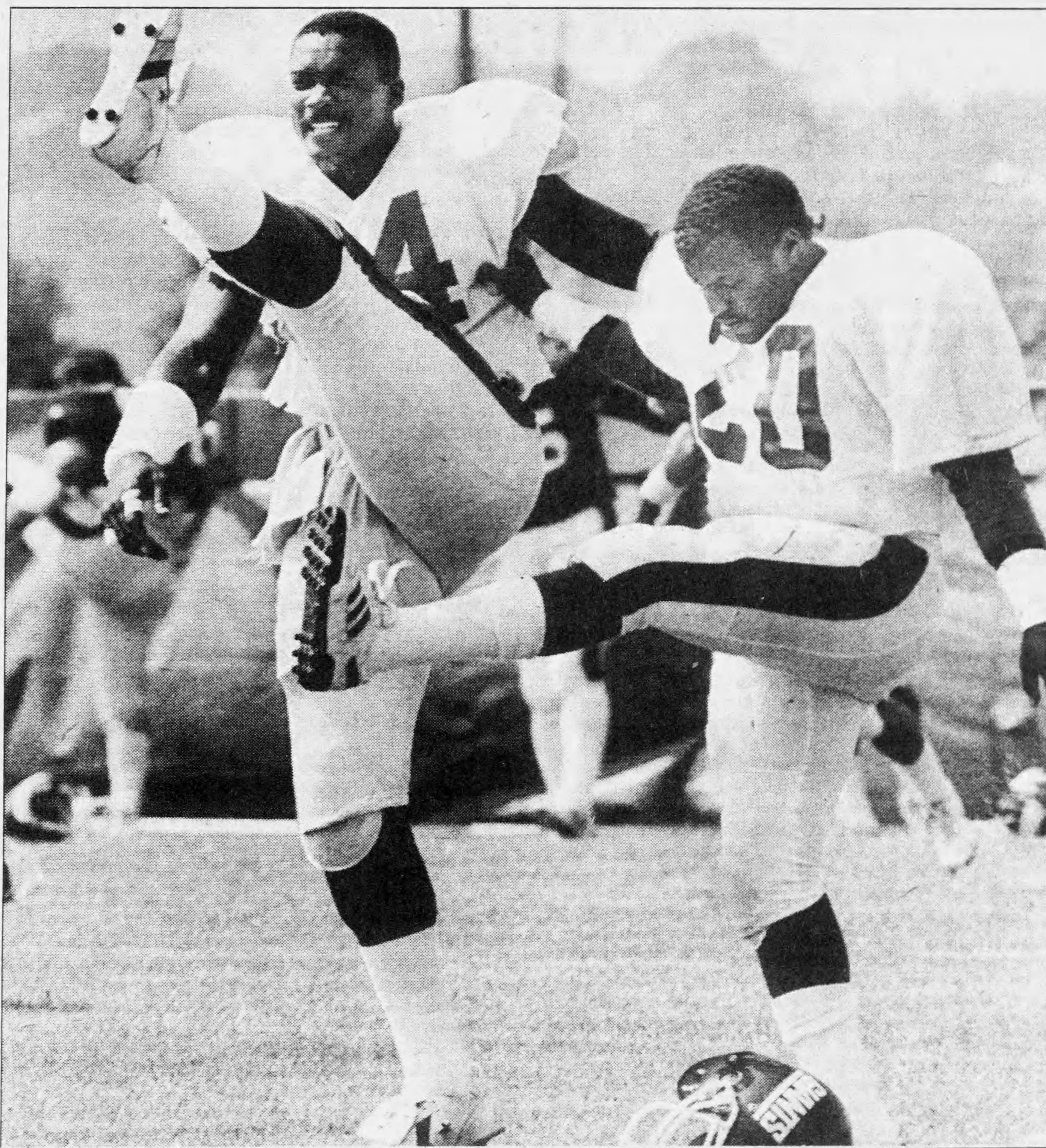
Roberts said he felt comfortable in the job, and he felt he's playing well. "I think it's good we haven't run that well yet," Roberts said.

If there's a good sign in all of this for the Giants, it's that they averaged 3.1 yards a rush in the preseason last year, in which Morris played only one game because of a contract dispute. That's what Parcells and the players have been saying this week.

"I don't think there's any reason for panic," starting fullback Maurice Carthon said. "In the preseason, we did a lot of things we wouldn't normally do."

But Morris, who will get the majority of the carries Monday, rushed 34 times in the preseason. No other back had more than 22.

And Morris averaged 2.8 yards a rush. Thus the concern.



Tight end Zeke Mowatt, left, and running back Joe Morris limber up yesterday; Morris had 34 carries in the preseason, averaging only 2.8 yards.