## If Giants win the West, credit the management

LOS ANGELES - San Francisco, the only National League team that has not been in the playoffs since 1977, probably will clinch the National League West title during next weekend's series against the Braves at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium. The Giants won the division in the front office.

While Cincinnati's Bill Bergesch and Houston's Dick Wagner refused to make moves, Giants general manager Al Roson shed his conservative ways and made three major deals in six weeks. Entering the weekend, the pitchers acquired by Rosen were 18-6 with eight saves.

"Those trades won them the division," said Houston manager Hal Lanier, who has sparred with Wagner over the Astros' inactivity. "If they didn't make those trades for pitchers, they wouldn't be where they are now.'

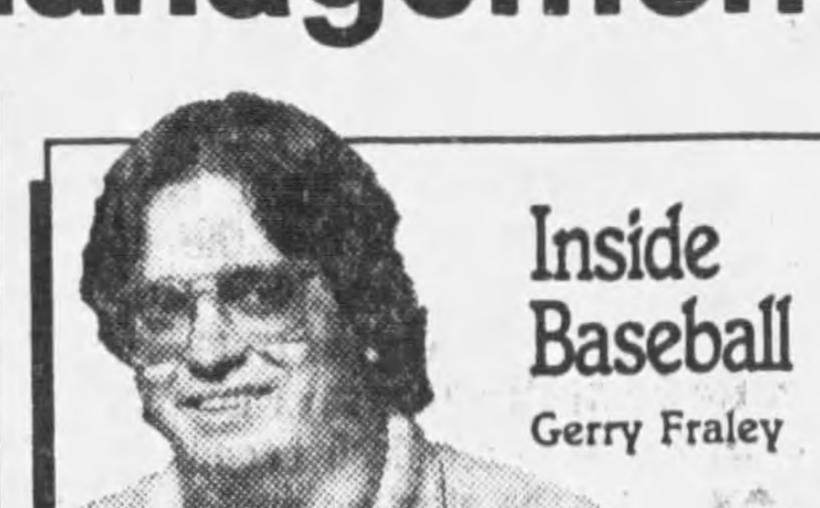
The trades had a major psychological impact. Going into Saturday's game, the Giants were 42-26 since the deal that brought Dave Dravecky and Craig Lefferts from San Diego, 29-16 since the Don Robinson deal with Pittsburgh and 18-7 since getting Rick Reuschel from Pittsburgh.

The Reuschel trade broke Cincinnati and Houston, whose players saw their front offices doing nothing while the Giants became stronger. The Reds started a seven-game losing streak the day San Francisco obtained Reuschel. Houston began the weekend 9-16 since that trade.

Reuschel, who answers to "Big Daddy," will start the playoff opener. Every pitcher who dawdles and does not throw strikes should watch Reuschel. He has thrown more than 100 pitches just once in six starts with San Francisco, and the average time of his games is two hours, 26 minutes. The defense plays better for Reuschel because it is alert.

The Giants still have not won the hearts of the populace. Last Sunday's 49ers season opener drew a 56 percent share of the San Francisco television audience. The Giants, in an important game against Cincinnati, got a 15 percent share of the audience.

The Braves should have their way against Houston's Mike Scott at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium this week. In his last eight road starts, Scott is 0-6 with a 7.56 ERA. It may be just a coincidence, but the home team can find irregularities because it has custody of the balls

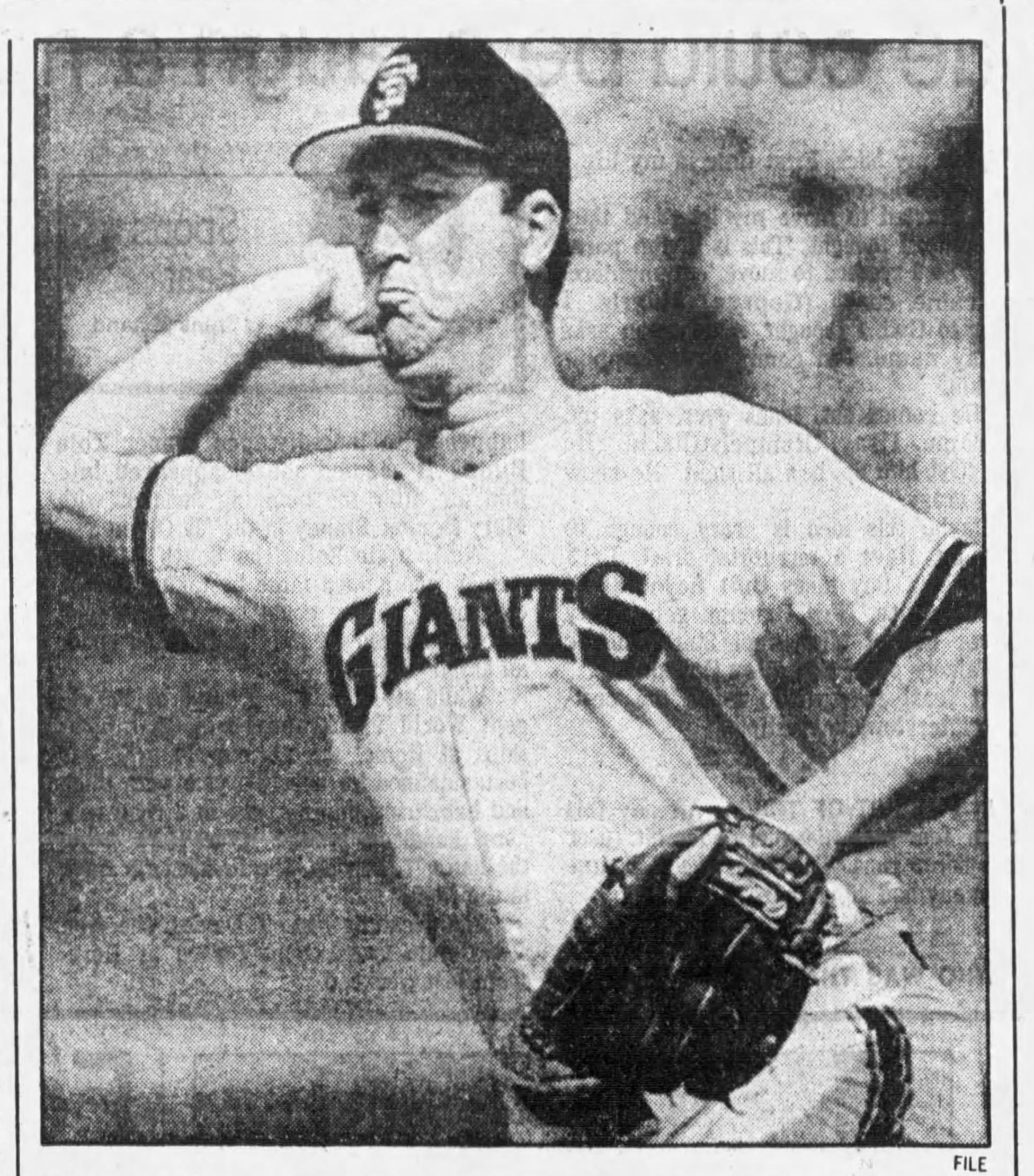


Ken Oberkfell thrown out of play. has served the Braves well, but they want to add more power at third base next year. One name to consider is Seattle's Jim Presley. He has hit more than 20 homers in three straight seasons, but the Mariners have decided to replace him with rookie Edgar Martinez.

One fact to remember when St. Louis and the New York Mets finish the season with three games at Busch Stadium: St. Louis' Vince Coleman has stolen 29 consecutive bases against the Mets in his career without being caught. . . . Jesse Orosco got more than his first save since July 24 in the Mets' win Monday. It was Orosco's 50th appearance of the season, and that guaranteed his contract at a salary of \$1 million for 1988. That will make it harder for the Mets to trade Orosco. Randy Myers has replaced him as the top lefthander in the Mets bullpen.

Numbers: Pittsburgh has at least one win from 16 different pitchers. The Pirates have also used 49 players, 19 of whom have been acquired since the end of last season. ... Baltimore was outscored 74-23 in its nine-game losing streak. ... Texas had 41 comeback wins and 37 losses in which it had the lead entering the weekend. ... Baltimore's Ken "Snappy" Dixon has allowed 31 homers Montreal's bullpen in 105 innings. was 18-3 with 18 saves since the break entering the weekend. . . . Toronto's Jimmy Key, who should win the Cy Young Award, is 8-0 since the All-Star break and has allowed more than three runs only once in his last 22 starts.

Jose Canseco of Oakland and Wally Joyner of California are the first players to start their careers with two consecutive 100-RBI seasons since Ray Jablonski with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1953-54. Canseco and Joyner should be careful. Jablonski had 216 RBI in his first two seasons and 222 RBI in the final six seasons of his career. . . . The umpiring crew headed by Dave Phillips has become the American League's "scuffbusters." The crew has warned Yankees



THE STRAW: The Giants' acquisition of Rick Reuschel broke the Astros and Reds, who saw their front offices doing nothing.

pitcher Rick Rhoden, caught Minnesota pitcher Joe Niekro and warned California pitcher Don Sutton this year about doctoring baseballs. Phillips' crew also caught Gaylord Perry defacing the ball

Toronto, with three lefthanders in its rotation, would prefer not to face Minnesota in the playoffs. The Twins began the weekend with a 25-15 record against lefthanders, best in the majors. ... Toronto first has to beat Detroit, a difficult proposition. The Tigers will have a pitching advantage when the teams play seven times in the last 11 days of the season. Since Aug. 13, Detroit's top three starters

- Doyle Alexander, Jack Morris and Walt Terrell - were 17-3 with a 2.45 ERA entering the weekend.

St. Louis manager Whitey Herzog is not impressed with the Mets' acquisition of the enigmatic John Candelaria. "It could be the answer, but maybe it's not," Herzog said. "He could cost them the pennant." Candelaria, whom the Mets will pay \$87,000 for four starts, was 4-5 with a 5.06 ERA for his last 12 starts with California. . . . Herzog may get Jack Clark back for this week's series at Chicago. Clark, out because of a sprained ankle, had 15 RBI in St. Louis' last 45 games entering the weekend. The Cardinals were 24-21 in those games.

Lanier's refusal to use top reliever Dave Smith in anything but a save situation contributed to the Astros' slide. As their relievers bungled tie games, the valuable Smith went unused. He began the weekend with only three appearances in the last 22 games. Smith wondered if the incentive clause that pays him \$25,000 for 50 appearances had anything for playoffs. Well-rested. Low mileage. | fastball. Reynolds singled.

Will travel." ... Scene of the week: San Diego manager Larry Bowa leading team president Chub Feeney around the field and introducing him to players. Feeney had no idea who the players

Strange but true: San Diego is the only team in the majors without at least one 20-homer hitter. ... Detroit's Alan Trammell could be only the seventh shortstop since 1900 to have 100 runs and 100 RBI in the same season. Trammell could also be the third shortstop in this century to have 200 hits and 100 RBI in the same season. Robin Yount, with Milwaukee in 1982, and Cal Ripken, with Baltimore in 1983, were the others. .:. Kansas City's Bret Saberhagen is 2-6 with a 4.80 ERA since the All-Star break. . . If Los Angeles outfielder Mike Marshall, now roundly booed by the locals, plays in every game for the remainder of the season, he will still have fewer appearances than reliever Mike Marshall had with the Dodgers in 1974. The older Marshall appeared in 106 games. . . Pittsburgh rookie Mike Dunne has 12 victories, more than any St. Louis pitcher. The Cardinals gave up Dunne in the Tony Pena trade. . . . Baltimore's opponent had scored first in 16 consecutive games entering the weekend.

The Pirates were worried about catcher Junior Ortiz's vision problems. Doctors found nothing wrong with Ortiz's eyes. The problem was his contact lenses. Ortiz had not cleaned them in six months. ... Seattle will add six feet to the top of the left-field fence at the Kingdome next season. Left field is listed at 316 feet, but it is actually 306 feet. ... Floyd Bannister of the White Sox

will second-guess himself for years. In to do with the strategy. He had 44 ap- his one-hitter against Seattle, Bannister pearances at the start of the San Diego | shook off catcher Carlton Fisk on one series. Said Smith, "Maybe I should put | pitch. Fisk wanted a slider to Harold an ad in the paper: Reliever available | Reynolds, but Bannister went with the

# David Davidson

### Pope had Devil of time while in Arizona

Imagine what Pope John Paul II must have thought when he found out the name of the football arena at which he spoke in Tempe, Ariz., last week: Sun Devil Stadium ... There's a movement to draft Dick Bestwick, Georgia's assistant athletic director for academics, as coach at Slippery Rock. "That's the only job I ever really wanted," Bestwick said. "Problem is, they're about 10 years too late." ... Colorado coach Bill McCartney was talking last summer about his team participating in a Jan. 1 bowl, but after last week's 10-7 loss to the Oregon Ducks, some people in Colorado are saying the Buffaloes "quacked under pressure."

No major conference in the nation can claim three worse football teams than the Big Eight's Iowa State, Kansas State and Kansas. . . . Cal State-Fullerton had to travel 4,162 miles to get from Hawaii - where it played last week - to Baton Rouge, La., where it played Saturday night against LSU. The Titans have the distinction of playing in five time zones this season. . . . WCNN-AM will broadcast 10 Georgia State basketball games this season. WRAS-FM, the school station, will broadcast all 27 regular-season games and the Trans America Athletic Conference tournament. ... The Alabama-Florida telecast on WTBS Saturday marked the Crimson Tide's 100th TV appearance, second most of any school in NCAA history behind Notre Dame's 106. Bama is 60-35-4 on the tube, the Irish 53-

"I've got to be the best black golfer in Athens," said Georgia assistant basketball coach Larry Gay after scoring his second hole-in-one at the University Golf Course recently. "From now on, it's nothing but country clubs for me." Gay, who aced the 13th hole in April, sank his tee shot on the 178-yard No. 3 hole.... Georgia assistant trainer Steve Bryant is now director of rehabilitation for athletes recovering from major injuries. . . . Lou Holtz's emphasis on improving strength at Notre Dame seems to be paying off. The Irish now boast 16 players who bench-press 400 pounds or more, and 64 who top 300 or more.

Craig Thompson, former Metro Conference director of communications, hasn't been on the job as commissioner of the American South Conference six months yet, but already he's negotiated a deal to have the league's basketball tournament championship game televised nationally by ESPN on March 6. ... Florida State may have Burt Reynolds to help with recruiting, but Texas Tech has Willie Nelson, who did a benefit concert for the Red Raiders' athletic scholarship fund last week. ... The apartments formerly used as housing for athletes at Florida State are now being sold as condominiums at a \$29,900 "pre-renovation price." ... Lynne Lawrence, niece of former

Georgia wide receiver Kent Lawrence, is

Clemson's reigning homecoming queen.

Since receiving her Ph.D. from Georgia State, Carolyn Curry, wife of Alabama football coach Bill Curry, has received several congratulatory notes addressed to "Dr. and Mr. Curry." ... Dreamland, a favorite eating place for football fans in Tuscaloosa, might be forced out of business after an Internal Revenue Service audit, but a temporary settlement has been reached and Western civilization as we know it will continue for a while. ... Bob Olive, a 6-foot-1, 150-pound walk-on with soft hands from Douglas High in Atlanta, has moved up to No. 2 at the wide receiver position left vacant at Ohio State when Cris Carter was declared ineligible for his dealings with agents Norby Walters and Lloyd

Three consecutive plays during last weekend's game between Clemson and Virginia Tech totaled 223 yards: an 89yard touchdown run by Clemson's Wesley McFadden, Virginia Tech freshman Ron Jeffries' 92-yard kickoff return for a touchdown and Clemson sophornore Joe Henderson's 42-yard kick return. . . . Florida coach Galen Hall is working with 79 scholarship football players this season: 14 seniors, 19 juniors, 17 sophomores, nine redshirt freshmen and 20 true fresh-

The U.S. Baskeball Writers Association's preseason All-America basketball team consists of Kansas' Danny Manning and North Carolina's J.R. Reid at forwards, Syracuse's Rony Seikaly at center, and Kentucky's Rex Chapman and Michigan's Gary Grant at guards. . . Penn State coach Joe Paterno's reaction to beating Bowling Green for his 200th career victory? "I'm thinking about No. 201." ... Wake Forest coach Bill Dooley will speak to the Atlanta Touchdown Club's noon meeting Monday at the Omni International Hotel.

#### Braves worst since the All-Star break

The Atlanta Braves have been more than bad since the All-Star break They have been the worst. Entering the weekend, the Braves had the worst record in the majors since the break. The 10 worst won-lost records since the break:

Atlanta Braves	21-38
Los Angeles Dodgers	24-35
Seattle Mariners	24-35
California Angeles	24-35
Cleveland Indians	25-36
Chicago Cubs	24-34
Cincinnati Reds	26-33
New York Yankees	26-32
Oakland Athletics	28-32
Minnesota Twins	27-30



Chuck Tanner

## Some memories if they strike...

After Tuesday, when an NFL players strike is likely to occur, these will be memories of the interrupted 1987 season:

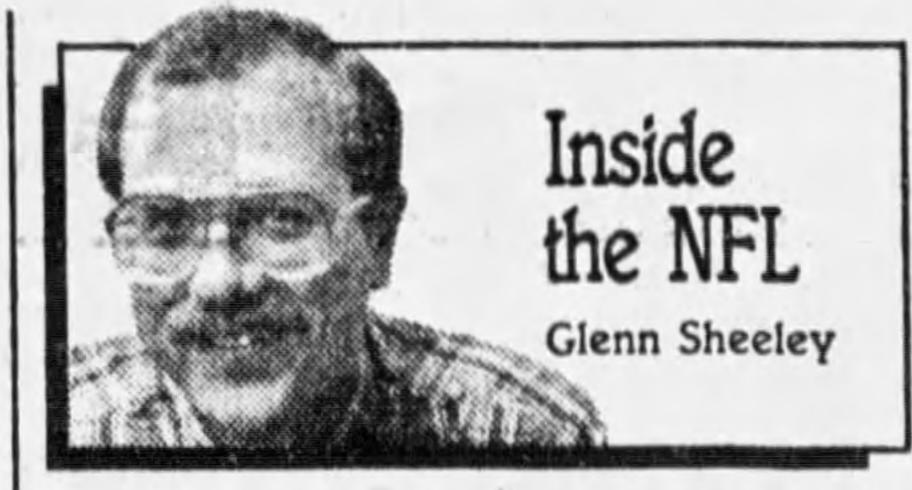
Pittsburgh Steelers President Dan Rooney, instrumental in settling the 1982 strike, speaking of the current impasse: "We lost the fans (before). We're making less money from TV because of the last strike. What are we supposed to do, sit back and say they can do anything they want? They (the players) are irresponsible. They ask for something we can't give. They have to show that they're tough, they're macho. And then they want me to buy out their difficulties."

Cincinnati center Dave Rimington, pondering games the owners say will be played during the strike with "scab" players: "I hope they're halfway decent and keep our record intact. I'd hate to win two games and have them blow it."

... Said teammate Louis Breeden, the cornerback and 10th-year man, "I'll stand on the viaduct with my son and throw rocks at 'em. I'll threaten the guy who's wearing my number."

Or New York Jets safety Harry Hamilton, the only non-union member on the team: "I don't know if I'd go out and play with guys who, in management's eyes, don't have the talent to play the game. But I'd help the coaches work with them and break down film if there's a strike." ... Or NFLPA executive director Gene Upshaw telling players in Dallas late last week that if the season goes more than two weeks, it will go the en-

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. Or Washington's Neal tire season. Olkewicz making no small point about keeping watch on a picket line: "I would fight. I'm saying I would do that. I expect that the guys who signed those (\$1,000) contracts will try to come back and play. I understand that. But they better understand why I'm doing what I'm doing." ... Or Buffalo quarterback Jim Kelly, looking out for himself and all those millions: "I don't listen to those (union) guys. I'll do what Jim Kelly wants to do. It's my future, my contract, my team. I don't care what anybody else

America's Losing Streak? Yes, the Dallas Cowboys had the longest losing streak in the NFL (six games) after last week's loss to St. Louis, matching their worst period since the Kennedy adminstration (1962-63). Today, against the New York Giants, the Cowboys try not to take another step toward their record of the Eisenhower adminstration, when they lost 10 straight in 1960. ... Yale graduate Jeff Rohrer, the Dallas linebacker, got sidetracked from the King's English after losing to St. Louis. "We played like

a lifeless bunch of drones," he said. "If we keep playing like this, we won't win a game all season. I'm embarrassed. It makes me want to puke." ... The Cowboys, believe it, are 12-point underdogs against the Giants. That's the worst the bookies have treated them since Oct. 4 1964, when Dallas was a 14-point underdog at Cleveland and lost 27-6 in a 4-10 season. "That's just what people think of us," said Cowboys running back Tony Dorsett, "and, I guess, rightfully so. I hate it, but we've earned it. Until we correct it, you may see a point spread of 90, or even higher."

current Washington assistant, was asked a question last week at the Redskins' training facility by an ESPN reporter about "preparing for the Redskins." Stunned, Henning said, "What are you talking about?" Replied the TV person, "You're Dan Henning, aren't you? Don't you coach the Falcons?" ... The New Orleans Saints, who upset Cleveland last week, took undisputed possession of first place in the NFC West for the first time in their existence. Atlanta, San Francisco and the Los Angeles Rams all lost. If the Saints win today at Philadelphia, they will be 2-0 for the first time. They foiled Cleveland chiefly on field position, forcing the Browns to start their average possession at the 13-yard line. The Saints downed punts on the 15, 12, 5, 9 and 1, the final two leading to safeties. Rueben Mayes' 147 yards rushing were the most

against a Cleveland defense since 1981. Statistic of the season: The Giants haven't won a game in Chicago since Mike Tomczak and Doug Flutie were nine days old. Each was born Nov. 23, 1962. ... From Air Coryell to Ground Saunders? No San Diego receiver caught a ball last week in the loss to Kansas City. ... Equally amazing was the fact that Chiefs rookie running back Christian Okoye became only the second Kansas City player since 1982 to gain 100 yards rushing. In that same span, Chicago's Walter Payton has 32 games over the 100-yard mark.

Tampa Bay quarterback Steve De-Berg, who destroyed the Falcons last week, watched the Bears' defense compile eight sacks against the Giants Mon-Dan Henning, ex-Falcons coach and day night. ... "I saw the horror show Monday night," said Deberg, who faces the Bears today. "I put myself in Phil Simms' shoes and it was scaring the hell out of me." ... Leeman Bennett, whose last two head coaching jobs were with the Falcons and Bucs, said, "I think the Falcons have a better football team than Tampa Bay. They just ran into DeBerg on an unbelievable day." Bennett, who owns a car dealership in Buford, Ga., and has moved back to the Atlanta area, calls himself "a Falcon fan." He only watched a quarter of the 48-10 Atlanta loss because "I had a few things I needed to do out in the yard."

There were 173 rookies and 21 firstyear free agents on the 28 opening-day rosters. Starting jobs went to 29 rookies. The lowest-picked starter was eightrounder Dennis Gibson, an outside linebacker from Iowa State.