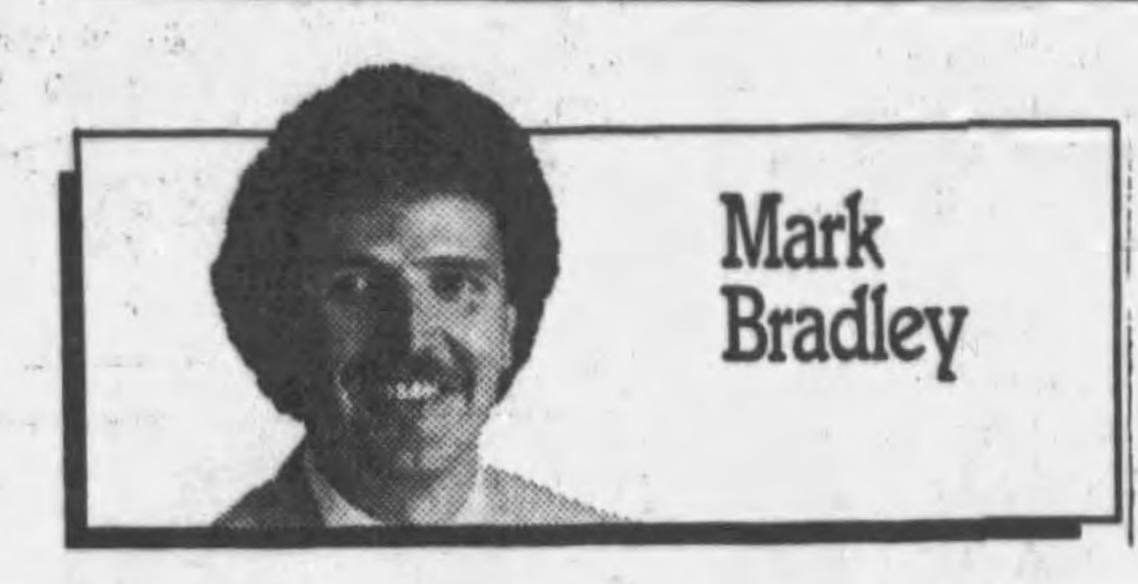
### Two Miami starters suspended from Orange Bowl game against Oklahoma = 4D



The Atlanta Iournal 🗆 THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1987



SECTION

### Sleigh bells and ukeleles

Though the sound of basketballs bouncing is usually music to these ears, that sweet rhythm always seems dissonant when heard on the day reserved for Christmas carols. Basketball is fine most anytime - from the Hot Nets summer league to the NCAA's March madness to the NBA's eight-month odyssey - but hoops on Christmas doesn't just push the envelope's outer edge. It rips it to shreds. Let 'em play every other day, twice on (Darnell) Valentine's Day. But give everybody Christmas off. Alas, no sale. Even McDonald's closes its arches one day a year. Basketball marches on. The NBA has long marketed a Christmas Day game to placate CBS, and since TBS got involved the league has taken to showing another at night. So we get Pistons-Knicks after lunch, Hawks-Sixers after supper. And, if two pro morsels don't suffice, those with radios can snack on Georgia-Oklahoma, a college game played in that wintry wonderland -Hawaii. OK, OK. You're saying, "Christmas in Hawaii? Where do I sign?" But it's not all fabulous. Hearing "Adeste Fideles" strummed on ukeleles qualifies as the ultimate culture shock. So does going to church there. The services aren't a departure. The congregations are. "The year I was out there, we went to church in the morning," said the Hawks' Jon Koncak, recalling a Christmas spent with SMU teammates on Oahu. "Everybody was walking to church in slacks and short-sleeved shirts. It's kind of neat, but it's different.'

# For some, agents' money is only way to survive

### By David Davidson and Tony Barnhart Staff Writers

To University of Texas athlete James Lott, it was not a difficult decision. You turn for help to whomever will offer it. In his case, it was an agent.

"There were times when I had to borrow money from teammates just so I could wash my clothes," Lott said. "I was in a pretty awkward situation where I needed money to get the basic things a regular student has. Things like going shopping at the mall were pretty much out of the question. I did not have the money."

'I wasn't really worried about the details. I was basically thinking about the money.'

### — James Lott, University of Texas

NCAA high jump champion, took money from agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom. He is one of 13 college football and basketball players this year who have been declared ineligible for signing representation contracts with agents in violation of NCAA rules. Lott was raised by his grandmother, who is retired and living on a fixed Social Security income in Refugio, Texas. He applied for aid through a Pell Grant but said the grant "never came through." So when Bloom peeled \$800 from a wad of bills he pulled from his pocket, Lott found the temptation too strong to resist.

"I read the contract," Lott said, "but I wasn't really worried about the details. I was basically thinking about the money.

"There's no other means of getting money. If I had it to do over again, I'd sit back and think about it longer. But it's a hard situation to turn down. My teammates were upset that I didn't get to play. They said they'd think about it (taking the money), but they probably would do the same thing."

start receiving money from a shoe contract in January, which is permissible by amateur track standards if used for expenses, and that several pro football teams have expressed an interest in him.

"Guys from my kind of background really don't have any place to turn," Lott said. "Agents are offering to help families and stuff. Guys are in bad situations and it's hard to turn down the money.

"They (Walters and Bloom) said they'd send money to my grandmother monthly. That sounded pretty good. They didn't say how much; they just said they would take care of things." BD •

### **Time stood still for Chaminade**

With the proliferation of Hawaiian quasitournaments, some collegians hit Waikiki as often as Tom Selleck. For Georgia, this is the school's maiden voyage. And Hugh Durham, the coach, fully expected homesickness to strike like a typhoon. "It could be difficult for the players," he said. "I doubt they've spent Christmas away from home. The worst won't be until Christmas Eve; we'll have our get-together then."

And would Durham, that jolly elf, dress up as Santa? "Naw." Would the team exchange gifts? "Yeah." And would Durham give all his players ... oh, new cars? "Maybe," he said, laughing. "Toy cars." Lott, a defensive back and three-time

Lott, still in school, is training for the See IF Summer Olympics. He said he would



Much as coaches try to make Christmas joyous for players halfway around the world from home, games keep getting in the way. Georgia was to play Virginia on Christmas Eve, Oklahoma on Christmas. Who can celebrate with the 100-point-a-game Sooners on deck? The only thing worse than playing on Christmas is losing on Christmas. And when a team ventures to Hawaii, it finds all manner of ways to lose.

On Christmas Day 1984, SMU played the infamous Chaminade. Koncak's layup put the Mustangs ahead with 12 seconds left. The Silverswords raced downcourt and got a shot blocked. The ball rolled out of bounds. The clock showed 0:00. SMU figured it'd won. But a grinch of a timekeeper, one Tadashi Tadani, decreed that the buzzer hadn't sounded. Within a fraction of a second, Chaminade's Keith Whitney found time to catch the inbounds pass, turn, jump, shoot and, naturally, hit. Score the goal. Chaminade (wink, wink) wins. Merry Christmas, Mustangs.

Bad as that was, it paled alongside Durham's first Hawaiian holiday. That was in 1971. Durham was coaching Florida State, a team that would become the NCAA runner-up. FSU lost six games that season, two in Hawaii. In the first, Durham drew two technicals and pitched such a fit that ref Dave Mahukona called the game. Final score: Hawaii 30, FSU 10. Two nights later, the teams played a full game. Hawaii won again. Chastened, the Seminoles boarded a plane for the mainland.

### **Dreaming of a white Christmas**

"We left Hawaii on Christmas Eve," Durham said. "It was 76 degrees. When we got to Portland, Ore. (site of the Far West Classic), it was snowing." Who'd have dreamed a two-loss Hawaiian getaway would become a most welcome white Christmas? TWO AT THE TOP: Dominique Wilkins (left), playing a more well-rounded game, led the Atlanta Hawks to a franchise-record 57 wins, while sprinter Gwen Torrence of Decatur was fifth in the world at 200 meters after sweeping the NCAA indoor and outdoor sprint titles for Georgia.

# Great strides for Wilkins, Torrence

6D 1

### Additional footage for Human Highlight Film

#### By Karen Rosen Staff Writer

Cavs halt

Dominique Wilkins made his reputation as the NBA scoring champion in the 1985-86 season, yet he shrugs off his failure to defend his title. He knows' that he made his points on the court more effectively.

The Atlanta Hawks won the Central Division with a franchise-record 57 victories in the regular season, seven more

**OF THE YEAR** than when he won the scoring title. Wilkins, the Human Highlight Film, ex-

PRO ATHLETE

kins, the Human Highlight Film, expanded his role on the team and became even more of a star.

"I had an all-around game last year," said Wilkins, the Atlanta Journal Pro Athlete of the Year. "I thought it was my best season ever. I've won it

See WILKINS

Sprinter from Decatur		
spends year	in tast la	ne
By Karen Rosen Staff Writer		

As Gwen Torrence rounded the curve of Rome's Olympic Stadium track on the afternoon of Sept. 3, she turned a corner in her career.

Torrence placed fifth in the 200-meter dash final at the World Championships of Track and Field. She didn't win a medal, as she had in the Pan American Games, the World University

Games, the U.S. Olympic Festival and the NCAA championships, yet she was elated.

AMATEUR ATHLETE

OF THE YEAR

"I came in with nothing and came out fifth in the world," said Torrence, the University of Georgia sprinter from Decatur and the Atlanta Journal Amateur Athlete of the Year. "I was so scared. I said, 'I'm going to get out and

6D (

Too often, basketball at Christmastime wreaks only hardship. Four Decembers ago, Kentucky played at Illinois on Christmas Eve. So much snow fell on Champaign that the Illini publicist couldn't leave his driveway. The assigned referees never got out of the Chicago airport. After winning a game officiated by volunteers, Kentucky found that its iced-over plane wouldn't start. With no reindeer available, the Wildcats chartered a bus. They had supper at Pizza Hut. The ride back to Lexington, a five-hour trip under normal circumstances, took 10 hours. The team arrived at 4 a.m. on Christmas.

"It's really unfortunate any teams have to play on Christmas," said the Hawks' Mike Fratello, whose team does. "I'm big on families being together at Christmas." For that reason, Fratello let the Hawks spend Christmas Eve at home; the team was to fly to Philadelphia on game day, a break from procedure. "I don't care," Fratello said. "I wish we could get back right after the game, but we can't. So we had to have Christmas Eve."

Said Koncak: "Holidays are something you give up to be a basketball player. We play on Easter, we're gone on Thanksgiving, we play on Christmas. You don't like it, but what can you do? For me, this isn't the first time."

No. The first time took him to Hawaii. Remembering, Koncak grinned. "But if you have to play ball on Christmas, better there than Philadelphia."

Journal sports editor Furman Bisher and Constitution columnist Dave Kindred are on vacation. Their columns will resume shortly.

## Georgia win streak 87-54

### Description of the Associated Press

HONOLULU — Mel Kennedy scored 20 points and grabbed six rebounds to lead Virginia over Georgia 87-54 here Thursday.

John Johnson added 17 points for Virginia, while teammate Richard Morgan contributed 15 as the ACC's Cavaliers evened their record at 5-5.

Georgia, which dropped to 7-3 and came into the game with five straight victories, was led by Willie Anderson's 18 points.

Virginia cappped off the first half with a 23-12 spurt, fueled by Kennedy's nine points, to take a 37-19 lead.

The Cavaliers made 67 percent of the shots they attempted during the first half, while holding coach Hugh Durham's Bulldogs to just 30 percent, 7-for-23.



STREAK ENDS: Coach Hugh Durham's Bulldogs had won five straight before Thursday night.

Virginia opened up a 53-26 lead with about 12½ minutes left to play in the game on a three-pont play by Kennedy.

A slam dunk by Mark Cooke with 2:20 left gave Virginia a 77-46 lead, its largest of the game.

# to Falcons' draft need

'10-and-10' adds up

#### By Glenn Sheeley Staff Writer

As he prepares for the college draft, new Atlanta Falcons director of player personnel Ken Herock will apply a theory that has often worked for the Los Angeles Raiders, his former employer.

"When you're drafting a guy high, like we're obviously going to be doing, you want a player that's either going to put 10 touchdowns on the board or take 10 touchdowns off," said Herock. "I want that '10-and-10' type guy."

The Falcons, barring trades, will pick anywhere from first to fifth in next spring's draft. At 3-11, they have the league's worst record along with Detroit, Sunday's opponent at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, and Kansas City. They will get the top pick if they lose to the Lions and the Chiefs beat Seattle.

With a win, they would drop below Detroit and Kansas City in the draft order — and possibly Cincinnati and Tampa Bay, both 4-10. The combined won-loss percentage of all four teams' opponents '... you want a player that's either going to put 10 touchdowns on the board or take 10 touchdowns off.'

#### -- Ken Herock, Falcons player personnel director

is lower than that of the Falcons' opponents, and any of those teams would pick before Atlanta in the event of a tie.

Herock is not saying who his "10-and-10" man would be. The 10-touchdown producer could be Notre Dame wide receiver Tim Brown, the Heisman Trophy winner. The 10-touchdown remover could be linebacker Aundray Bruce, Auburn's 6-foot-5, 240-pounder who was a one-man wrecking crew against Georgia Tech this year with three interceptions.

Without a Vinny Testaverde or a Cornelius Bennett to excite NFL scouts, no one senior stands out as the obvious first

See FALCONS

8D 🛊

# 'If your parents don't have any money you've got a problem'

#### FROM 1D

In most cases, the players compromised their eligibility over a relatively small amount of money less than \$2,000. But the players say such an amount can go a long way because they are confined by NCAA rules to receiving only a scholarship - defined as commonly accepted educational needs such as tuition, fees, room, board and books. Boosters are not permitted to provide players with money, either.

Also, athletes are prohibited from holding jobs while they are enrolled in school, except during Christmas holidays and spring break.

"That does a basketball player a lot of good, doesn't it?" said Memphis State athletic director Charles Cavagnaro, who recently was forced to declare starters Marvin Alexander, a junior center, and Sylvester Gray, a sophomore forward, ineligible after it was reported they had signed contracts with ex-agent Jim Abernethy of Atlanta. Athletes from underprivileged backgrounds may apply for a Pell Grant, a federally funded subsidy for college students based on their family's income. However, while the maximum Pell Grant is about \$2,300, NCAA rules prohibit a scholarship athlete from accepting more than \$900 in grant money.

teammate who had already signed a contract with the agent. Bloom set up a meeting with Austin in Pittsburgh and explained the contract. Austin received a \$1,500 bonus for signing and a promise of monthly payments of \$250.

The Atlanta Journal AND CONSTITUTION

At the time, Austin said \$1,500 seemed like a windfall.

"I figured it would take some of the load off my mother because I figured she was having a difficult time of it anyway," said Austin. "Now I wouldn't have to call her and ask for money that she didn't have. I'm sure she sacrificed a lot for me.'

Austin said he was fully aware that he was breaking NCAA rules and jeopardizing his eligibility.

"I knew if I got caught I'd be in trouble," said Austin. "But it's very rare that these things come out, and I just happened to get caught in a



FEED ON NEED: All 13 athletes declared ineligible by the NCAA for signing with agents such as Norby Walters (left) and ex-agents like Jim Abernethy (right) are black and from lower income families.

Rodgers used his own son, a col-

"What if I told him I'd pay for

lege student who is not an athlete,

his tuition, fees, room, board and

books, but nothing else?" Rodgers

said. "And told him he couldn'

work while he was in school. How'

he going to get money for his car?

of these athletes are faced with.

He's not. That's basically what a lot

because the system uses the athlete

but doesn't provide him anything

except a chance to practice and

play and get an opportunity to get

an education, and that's no

letes and agents share in the blame

blame," said John Brantley, a line-

backer. "They should be aware of

the individual's rights and how it

could hurt the individual and the

team. But it's also the players' fault.

I don't know if you'd call it greed or

what. But I think the players know

for flaunting NCAA rules.

what they're doing."

Several Georgia players say ath-

"I think the agents are to

"A lot of kids need the money

as an example.

guarantee."

ing a risk. If you wait, one day the coming out." big money will come rolling in.

"It's hard to understand why they do it. To be offered so much money is tempting, but all it's doing is hurting their chances in the draft if they get caught."

"I blame the athletes," said defensive back Mark Vincent. "If they are that good, they ought to have enough foresight to see they will be able to make a lot of money when they are drafted.

"But I've never had to worry about money. I don't know what it's like to be poor or need the money.

Vincent, Goldberg and Brantley are white and from moderate to affluent backgrounds. All 13 athletes who have been declared ineligible are black and from families of limited financial means. "The problem is that the system is set up so the only way you can get money is from your parents, and if your parents don't have any money you've got a problem," said junior Bobby Humphrey, a black running back from Alabama. "If a guy finds out he can get some help from somebody else, he's going to find it pretty hard to resist rather than do without." Georgia senior tailback Lars Tate, who is black, says he has been receiving phone calls and letters from agents since his junior season He understands why athletes of modest means are willing to take just about any risk.

Said defensive tackle Bill Gold- There are guys playing right now berg, "It's their career. They're put- (who transferred to other schools) ting everything on the line. They who signed with agents or had dealknow they're going to get caught. ings with agents. I'd be very sur-It's like using steroids. You're tak- prised if there's not more names

> Ultimately, some players and why coaches do not see the question as one of need and greed, but rather of fairness.

"Why do the athletes takenthe money?" said LSU basketball coach Dale Brown said. "Because last year \$42.5 billion was generated by sports and everybody benefited from it but them. They see coaches taking new jobs for more money, but the athletes can't leave. They see coaches getting \$150,000 for making them wear a particular brand of shoe. They see NCAA officials taking interest-free loans."

Said Atlanta agent/attorney Richard Howell, "There's a perception, correctly or otherwise, among some athletes that college sports is big business. An awful lot of money is made by somebody or some institution, and they feel they deserve a portion of it." Whatever the motivation. all those interviewed said some adjustments in the system are needed or athletes will continue to be involved with agents. The time has come, they all said, to give the athlete compensation to combat the temptation. "I think the NCAA should provide some kind of payment so you could take a date out or wash your clothes," Lott said. "I would just give the kid some spending money," said Humphrey. "If they've got some money in their own pocket, then maybe they wouldn't be fooled by somebody trying to take advantage of them. Until then, it appears likely there will be more athletes losing their eligibility. Said Humphrey, "Most, guys don't anticipate they'll ever get caught. They don't believe it will happen to them."

Teryl Austin, a junior defensive back from the University of Pittsburgh, is the rarest of college athletes in that he took money from agents and was able to get his eligiblity restored with the NCAA through full restitution. Austin received \$2,500 from Bloom.

Like Lott, Austin comes from low-income background. His parents are divorced and his mother is employed as a secretary at a Sharon, Pa., steel mill which has already declared bankruptcy and is scheduled to close soon. Austin's father is unemployed.

"Every now and then my mom would send me \$20 but we were having a tough time," said Austin. "My sister is still in high school and my mother was having to support both of them."

Like Lott, Austin said he applied for a Pell Grant but did not receive it. "I really don't understand why and haven't found out yet," he said.

Austin said he met Bloom through Tony Woods, a Pittsburgh

situation where things didn't go too smoothly.

"I just thought I'd be dumb if I didn't take the money based on the way things were going. I wasn't living very well. But I wasn't taking it to buy a car or anything. It was strictly on need."

While need is the factor most cited when athletes sign with an agent, SEC commissioner Harvey Schiller questions whether that's just an excuse.

"We have seen as many cases where there was no need as where there is need," Schiller said. "So what's need? In most cases, we're talking about an athlete accepting between \$800 and \$1,500, occasionally as much as \$2,000. That doesn't seem like a lot of money. In about half the cases, that kind of money certainly is within the financial capability of the family.

"In some cases, it becomes an ego thing. A player at one school reads in the paper that a player at another school received money from an agent and he sends word to that agent, 'What about me?'"

Schiller points out that athletes often sign a contract that is less beneficial to them than to the agent.

"If a recruiter went to an engineering school and offered an undergraduate \$1,500 for 15 percent of what that student earns from now on, how many do you think would agree to that?" Schiller said. "Very, very few.

"Then why do the athletes do it? You'd think that players with doesn't seem fair sometimes."

that kind of ability would seek out an agent who would protect those interests."

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Austin concedes the element of greed exists among college players who are involved with agents.

"You can tell something is going on when a guy who has nothing all of a sudden is running around with six gold chains, a new car, new everything," said Austin. "There are some guys who take things and just don't need it. They're not hurting."

\* \* \*

Lott, Austin, and the other 11 who lost their eligibility this year were not the first athletes to suffer hardships.

Former Georgia Tech linebacker Lucius Sanford, who played from 1974-77, enrolled in summer school prior to his senior season to earn enough credits so he could graduate in four years. He needed a summer job to help support his family, so former Yellow Jackets coach Pepper Rodgers arranged an internship at an Atlanta bank.

"When a story came out in the paper that mentioned the fact he was working while he was enrolled in school," Rodgers said, "someone reported it to the NCAA. Not only did Lucius have to quit the job, he had to pay back the \$500 to \$600 'he'd already earned.

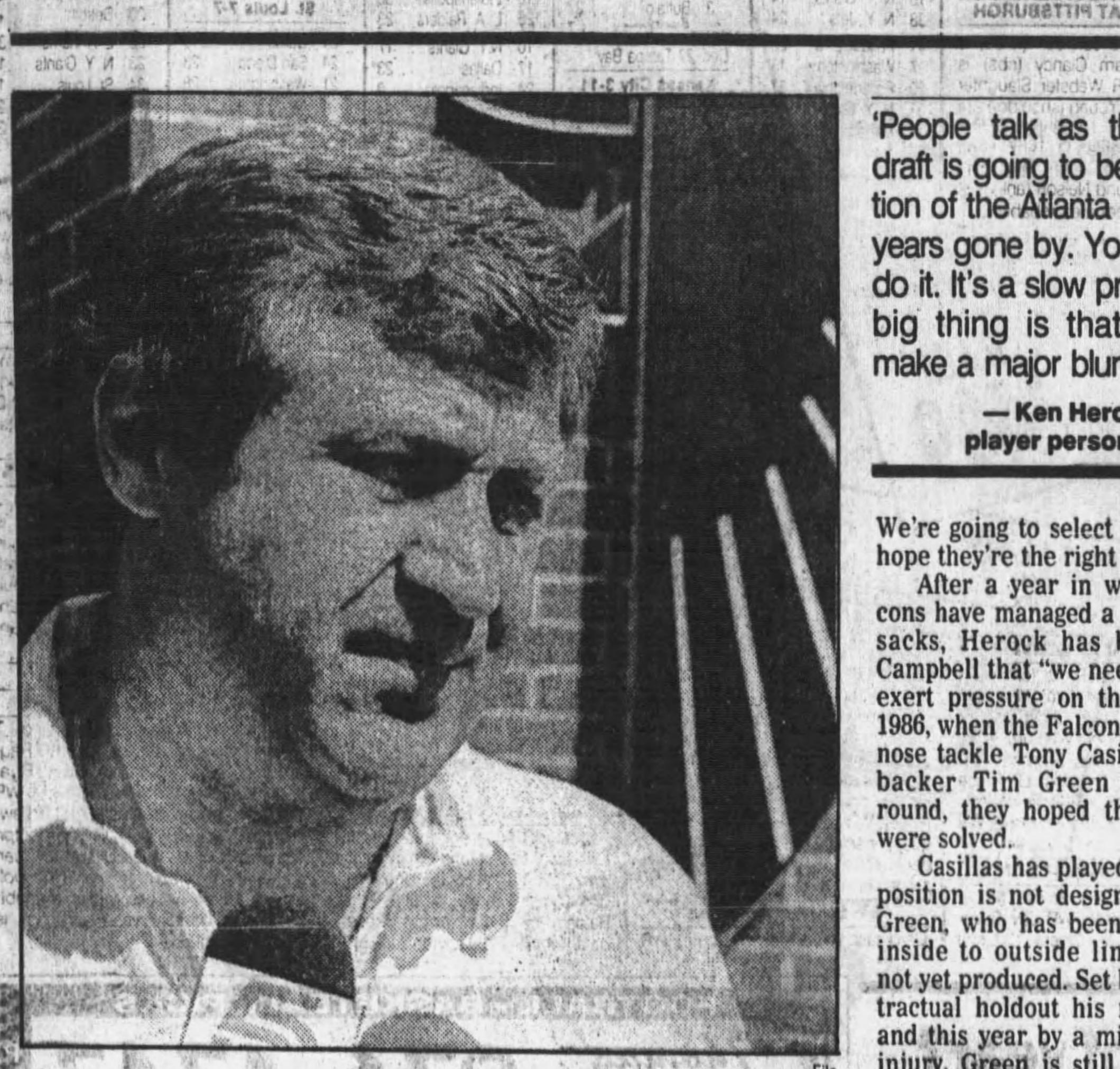
"That's some system, huh? The system is very complicated. It

"Some players are really in need of financial help," said Tate. "So if a guy offers them money, they are going to jump on it. Players are going to do it if they need the money.

Vincent, who transferred from SMU when the program there was suspended because boosters were providing thousands of dollars to players, said, "There's no telling how many players at SMU signed.

Staff writer Thomas O'Toole also contributed to this story.





### FORMIDABLE JOB: Ken Herock knows Falcons are relying on him

'People talk as though this draft is going to be the salvation of the Atlanta Falcons for years gone by. You just can't do it. It's a slow process. The big thing is that we can't make a major blunder.'

> - Ken Herock, Falcons' player personnel director

We're going to select the players. I hope they're the right players." After a year in which the Falcons have managed a league-low 16 sacks, Herock has been told by Campbell that "we need someone to exert pressure on the passer." In 1986, when the Falcons drafted both nose tackle Tony Casillas and linebacker Tim Green in the first round, they hoped their problems

Casillas has played well, but his position is not designed for sacks. Green, who has been shifted from inside to outside linebacker, has not yet produced. Set back by a contractual holdout his rookie season and this year by a midseason knee injury, Green is still considered a worthwhile prospect.

"He might still be the guy," Her-

# IT'S ALL DOWNHILL FROM HERE!



to rebuild the team but admits 'it's not going to be done in one year.'

### Falcons FROM 1D

pick. As a result, other teams are not likely to line up and discuss deals with that team for the No. J choice.

Herock still speaks highly of the crop. "There are a lot of players," said Herock, "that if there was a Vinny Testaverde, they'd be very acseptable as the second guy."

Other players besides Brown and Bruce who could fall into that category include tight end Keith Jackson and defensive back Randy Dixon of Oklahoma, Ohio State linebacker Chris Spielman and Nebraska defensive lineman Neil Smith.

Besides the obvious need for a pass-rushing, "impact" linebacker - head coach Marion Campbell has said he's "begging for one" - there are other positions with needs almost as pressing. If the pass rusher were taken before their turn, the Falcons might look at a wide receiver, tight end, defensive back or inside linebacker. The only areas of the team not considered top prioriguarterback.

With the departure of Tom Braatz to Green Bay, the Falcons' draft was in disarray last year. Herock, a former draft supervisor with the Raiders (along with Ron Wolf) and at Tampa Bay, is confident that gains can be made. He also warns that an immediate transformation should not be expected.

"People talk as though this draft is going to be the salvation of the Atlanta Falcons for years gone by," said Herock, who has hired a new scouting staff. "You just can't do it. It's a slow process. The big thing is that we can't make a major blunder."

With the Raiders, he said, the goal was to get four players who could be "four-year starters with Pro Bowl potential" out of 12 picks. The acceptable rate is two or three out of 12.

Herock is aware of statements by both team owner Rankin Smith Sr. and president Rankin Smith Jr. that have piled responsibility on him.

"They're depending on me to help rebuild this organization." Herock said, "but it's not going to be done in one year. "Pressure doesn't bother me.

ock said. "Who knows? I think we have to wait on him a little."

Herock will sit in the Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium press box Sunday as the scenario unfolds. Though any director of player personnel would welcome the No. 1 pick in the draft, Herock said the possibility will not affect his feelings about the Lions game.

"I'm rooting for us to win," he

**NOTES:** The Falcons have one distinction nearly wrapped up the NFL's lowest attendance average. Going into Sunday's game, the Falcons have drawn an average of 25,144. Next are Detroit (27,251) and St. Louis (27,821). Hurt by being the NFL's only team with three home games during the strike, when they drew an average of 13,721, the Falcons drew an average of 33,686 for their other four dates. They could challenge their all-time low attendance (10,020) Sunday. ... Defensive tackle Tony Casillas (ankle) and linebacker John Rade (shoulder) will not play Sunday. Joe Costello starts for Rade. Without Casillas, the four-man front will have **Dennis** Harrison and Rick Bryan at the ends with Mike Gann and Greg Brown at the tackles. ... Cornerback Scott Case (foot) practiced Thursday and is a likely starter.