

Odds Favor Jet Rookies

Several personnel changes expected

By Greg Logan

It's a good time to be a rookie with the Jets, who are in the middle of — coach Joe Walton hates the word "rebuilding" — a remodeling phase. The draft picks attending the rookie minicamp opening today at the Jets' Hofstra training complex should have more than the usual optimism about their chances.

First-round tackle Dave Cadigan and second-round cornerback Terry Williams already have been handed starting jobs, and it seems the first six picks all will have to trip over their own shoelaces to keep from making the 45-man roster. The defensive backfield, in particular, appears to be in for a major overhaul.

"You've got that right," Walton said recently, not hiding his disdain for last season's inept play.

Second-year man Sid Lewis and 10th-round pick James Booty will line up at left corner behind Williams. For the moment, veterans Carl Howard and Bobby Humphery rank ahead of third-round pick James Hasty at right corner, but the Jets traded up to make Hasty their second pick in the third round.

"Howard has played well for us and is improving, but Hasty has a darn good chance to compete there," Walton said.

The Jets used their first selection in the third round on free safety Erik McMillan and then moved starting free safety Harry Hamilton to strong safety to compete with veteran Lester Lyles. As a result, McMillan will work behind veterans Jerry Holmes, who is moving from left corner, and Rich Miano.

The play of Williams is the key to the moves in the secondary. "He's some kind of athlete," player personnel director Mike Hickey said. "He has very quick feet and loses nothing on his turns. He has outstanding speed and excellent size and hands. Some of these things may be new concepts from what we're used to."

Fifth-round tackle Mike Withycombe has been penciled in behind Cadigan at left tackle, and sixth-round pick Paul Frase is set to back up veteran left defensive end Mark Gastineau. Borderline prospects to make the team include seventh-round running back Gary Patton, eighth-round tight end Keith Neubert and ninth-round guard / defensive end Ralph Tamm.

Inside linebacker John Galvin, the 11th-round pick, and 12th-round defensive tackle Albert Goss must be regarded as longshots, but even longshots have a chance with the Jets this year.

Williams' Swan Song

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team appears to be going nowhere. They were 78-84 last year, the best finish in their 11-year history. From that standpoint, Williams has been successful. "I've worked just as hard in each city," he said.

Howard added, "With him, today's game has always been the most important. He says, 'This is the big leagues; let's play like big leaguers.'"

But his memories are with the A's, the captivating team of Reggie Jackson, Catfish Hunter, Rollie Fingers, et al. "Any time you win it all, you remember those things," he said.

Williams, usually crusty at best, is in a wistful mood these days. The A's were his dream team, winning the World Series for him in 1972 and '73 en route to three straight world championships. His teams also are credited as being the first with players who had facial hair.

"We were on a flight one time, and someone said, 'Did you see what Reggie's doing? Growing a beard,'" Williams said. "It was actually a prank. Mr. [Charlie] Finley said, 'Let's all grow one,' and he gave us \$300 apiece to do it." Williams joined his players and never shaved the mustache after that.

He wore it to Montreal, where he took a non-contender to the brink of the East Division title in 1979, going 95-65 and finishing two games behind the Pirates. In 1984, back on the West Coast, he led the Padres to their first and only National League pennant. Williams and the Padres had the misfortune of facing the Tigers, baseball's super team that year, in the World Series, and they were beaten in five games.

He is second among active managers in victories with 1,562. (Sparky Anderson is first with 1,632.) He has seen and done it all as manager of six different ballclubs. He's been hired and fired and is ready to be

retired.

If there is one longing, it goes back to 1973, when he was, in his own words, "all signed" to manage the Yankees under George Steinbrenner. "The deal was announced at Tavern on the Green," he recalled. But it was voided as Finley refused to let Williams out of the final two years of his contract.

'He's on top of everything. He's still fiercely competitive. He still has that great desire to win.'

— Frank Howard, Mariners coach

Williams said he was not bitter — maybe a bit disappointed. "It was a huge market," he said of working in New York. "Any player or manager would want to give it a try." Williams said Steinbrenner contacted him again in 1982, but they could not strike a deal. Williams, as fiery a manager as Billy Martin, though in a different style, never would get the chance to work with — or against — Steinbrenner.

How would it have worked out? That's one answer Williams does not have. "We'll never know," he said, "will we?"

45-Day Suspension for Oscar

Trainer Oscar Barrera received a 45-day suspension yesterday, by order of the stewards at Belmont Park. The ruling is the result of positive findings for Prednisolone and Prednisone in the Barrera-trained Straight Dancer, who finished first in the third race April 18 at Aqueduct. The horse subsequently was disqualified and the purse was redistributed. Barrera's suspension begins today and runs through June 30.

This is the first time the Cuban-born trainer has been caught with a drugged horse. The drugs involved are used to control swelling, and are not the type that would cause dramatic improvement in a horse's performance.

The 60-year-old Barrera began training in New York in 1966, 22 years after he started his career at Oriental Park in Havana. He suddenly rose to prominence in 1983, when he saddled eight consecutive Aqueduct winners in April and won the first of four consecutive New York training titles. His style, claiming horses who immediately show increased ability at a higher level, has led to accusations that he uses

illegal drugs, but none of the allegations ever had been proven. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Barrera waived his right to appeal the suspension before a representative of the New York State Racing and Wagering Board, and the original suspension of 60 days was reduced to 45. During the suspension, Barrera will be denied all access to the grounds at Belmont Park and Aqueduct, and his horses will be trained by his brother Guillermo (Willie) Barrera.

— Mark Berner

Lost Code's Owner Claims Foul

Baltimore — An appeal of a decision by the Pimlico stewards denying a claim of foul by Pat Day, rider of Lost Code, runnerup in Saturday's \$500,000 Pimlico Special, was filed yesterday with the Maryland Racing Commission by the horse's owner, Donald Levinson.

Stewards repeatedly reviewed a videotape replay of the stretch run that showed the winner, Bet Twice, bearing out throughout the stretch, but ruled that any foul was inconsequential to the result. — Paul Moran

ARENA

Mayotte Is Upset, But U.S. Captures Team Cup Match

The United States came from behind to edge Switzerland, 2-1, yesterday in the opening round of the \$750,000 World Team Cup tennis tournament in Duesseldorf, West Germany.

Switzerland took an unexpected 1-0 lead when Jakob Hlasek, coming off a four-month layoff following an auto accident, upset Tim Mayotte, ranked 10th in the world, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2. But Aaron Krickstein trounced Roland Stadler, 6-3, 6-0, and Ken Flach and Robert Seguso gave the U.S. the victory by defeating Hlasek and Stadler in doubles, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

The eight-nation event is being played on red clay as a warmup event for next week's French Open in Paris. Sweden, led by Stefan Edberg and Kent Carlsson, is the overwhelming favorite to win the title, worth \$300,000.

Soviet Stars Still on Hold

The Canucks are at least a year away from luring Soviet stars Igor Larionov and Vladimir Krutov to the NHL team. Club president Pat Quinn, back from a visit to Moscow, said: "Russian coach [Viktor] Tikhonov is not prepared to break up his big five. Vyacheslav Fetisov is the only player who may be allowed to go." There have been reports that the Soviets have reached agreement with the Devils to allow Fetisov to play in the NHL next season.

NFL Compromise Reached

Both sides claimed victory after the Patriots agreed to pay offensive lineman Brian Holloway an undisclosed sum and the NFL Players' Association said it would drop charges that he was traded because of union activities. Holloway, a three-time all-Pro, was traded to the Raiders Sept. 2, a day after he appeared on national television criticizing NFL management for a breakdown in labor talks. The union charged that Holloway, a union vice president and the Patriots' player representative, was traded because of his labor activities. The club claimed his skills had deteriorated, making him expendable.

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The Colts have agreed to contract terms with free-agent cornerback Louis Breeden, who has played with the Bengals since 1978.

Walters Accord Reported

An attorney for **Norby Walters** said an agreement has been reached to settle the criminal and civil cases against the New York sports agent for his dealings with former University of Alabama basketball star Derrick McKey. Jack Drake, one of three lawyers representing **Walters**, said "the details are being implemented."

Drake described the agreement as "a complete settlement," covering both the misdemeanor charges against **Walters** and a \$3-million suit filed by the university because it was forced to return \$250,000 in revenues from the 1987 NCAA Tournament when it was learned that **Walters** had advanced McKey a loan.

Spinks to Sign at Last

Michael Spinks and Butch Lewis, his promoter-adviser, are scheduled to sign contracts today for Spinks' fight against heavyweight champion Mike Tyson June 27 in Atlantic City, Lewis' attorney said. All other parties in the fight reportedly have signed.

Furthermore . . .

A judge in **Iowa** City set a May 26 arraignment for former **Iowa** running back **Kevin Harmon** of Bayside on a misdemeanor charge. **Harmon**, drafted by the Seahawks last month, is accused of punching a pedestrian who "assaulted" **Harmon**'s car at an intersection . . . Former Syracuse basketball standout **Tony Bruin** was charged with violating his probation following a drug conviction by failing to report to his probation officer and flunking a drug screening test. The case was set for May 23.

Edited by Parker Smith