

Jerome Holtzman On baseball

Rojas to be fired? Puzzling to peers

"That's hard to believe," said Detroit coach Vada Pinson.

"Would you please repeat that? I don't think heard you right," said Alex Grammas, the Tigers' third-base coach.

A few minutes later, I broke the news to Sparky Anderson, the Detroit manager: According to a wire-service report out of Los Angeles, which seems accurate, Cookie Rojas is about to go the way of all managerial flesh. Rojas will not be back with the California Angels next season. He is expected to be dismissed Oct. 2-axed, given the boot, a supposed failure in his rookie voyage as a bigleague manager.

Cowboy Gene Autry, who owns the Angels, and Mike Port, his general manager, apparently believe the Angels have the personnel to be in contention for the flag in the American League West. Instead they are fourth, 14¹/₂

Coaches don't come down easy on idea of hardship draft

COLLEGES

College football coaches get nightmares over the notion that their star junior tailback could end up spending his senior year with the Los Angeles Raiders.

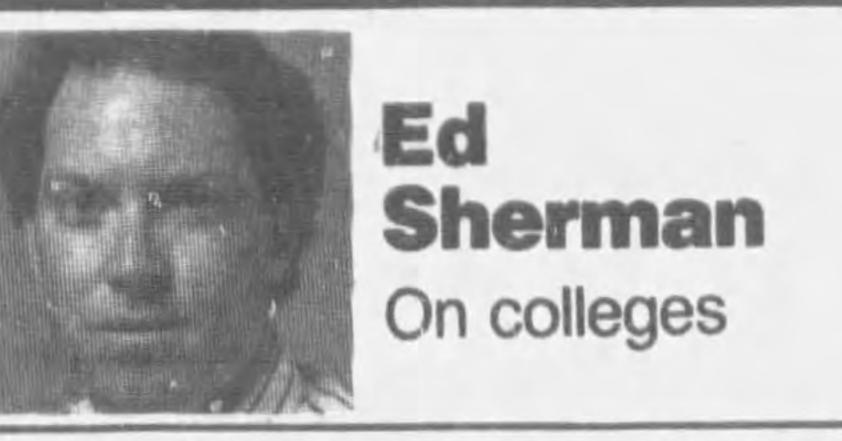
That's why they were applauding the indictments of sports agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom last week. In the future, whenever the subject of whether a college football player should have the right to go hardship arises, the coaches are sure to bring up the unscrupulous Mr. Walters and Mr. Bloom as an argument against it.

The coaches say they have enough trouble keeping the agents away from their teams now. They think the situation would get totally out of hand if college underclassmen were given the right to turn pro before their senior year.

The coaches imagine dozens and dozens of Walters-Bloom clones descending on college campuses and whispering into the sophomore running back's ear: "Turn pro. Turn pro."

"It would be like opening a Pandora's box," said Wisconsin coach Don Morton. "I like the system the way it is."

Purdue coach Fred Akers acknowledges there probably should be a way to allow the elite athlete, such as a Herschel Walker, to go pro early. But he's afraid that the agents won't stop at the Walkertype players.



Coming Wednesday: The outlooks for Northwestern and Northern Illinois and a look back at NU's first night game.

ers, but a lot of agents would try to convince the players that they were Herschel Walker," Akers said. "The player would have a rude awakening. Not only would he lose a pro career, he'd also miss out on college.'

Illinois coach John Mackovic, who was the Kansas City Chiefs' head man for four years, says only "a very small percentage" of college underclassmen would be able to play in the pros.

"I don't think [hardship] is nearly as possible in football as it is in basketball," Akers said. "Football-wise, you need much more maturity. Maybe a few can do it, but it would be a select few. think you'd see a lot of other players getting hurt in the long run."

flunked out of school. The player's agent approached Cooper and asked him to sign a petition that would get the player into the National Football League draft. Cooper didn't sign.

"Flunking out of school, or consorting with an agent, in my mind, are not the proper criteria to be put in the NFL draft," Cooper said.

The folks in Tallahassee, Fla., are going crazy about their No. 1-rated Florida State Seminoles. However, they know the elation can end Saturday night against defending national champion Miami in the Orange Bowl.

"We just want to stay No. 1 all year, and not have to play any games," said Florida State sports information director Wayne Hogan.

The game, of course, will go on, and CBS is hoping for a repeat of last year's thriller, when Florida State failed to convert a last-second two-point conversion, giving Miami a 26-25 victory. The game originally was scheduled for Oct. 29, but the network prevailed upon the two teams to play Saturday instead. It didn't take much convincing, considering the contest will be shown in prime time and each university will receive a \$350,000 payday. Two notes on Florida State: First, if the Seminoles win the national title, coach Bobby Bowden might market a new drink. It seems he likes to pour

peanuts into his orange soda, allowing him to chew and swig at the same time. Orange Crush II?

Second, Florida State's most famous alum is Burt Reynolds. He's an avid supporter of the program, but NCAA rules prohibit boosters from having contact with recruits. Florida State solved that problem by making Reynolds a drama professor.

Cooper hasn't been in Columbus long, but he already knows what his top priority will forever be at Ohio State. As his players run out onto the practice field, they go past a sign that reads "Beat Michigan.

"The best I can tell, that's what it's all about around here," Cooper said.

The alarms will be set early in Champaign Saturday. Thanks to the TV folks, the Illini's opener against Washington State will kick off at 11:15 a.m. Bagels won't be sold in the concession stands.

... Mackovic is high on wide receiver Elbert Turner. A Proposition 48 casualty last year, Turner has opened eyes in preseason drills.

Florida State returns 32 of its first 44 players. . . . Miami hasn't lost a regularseason game since Florida State beat it Sept. 7, 1985. ... Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz on being implicated in the Minnesota scandal: "I did sleep very well this summer, but not very long."

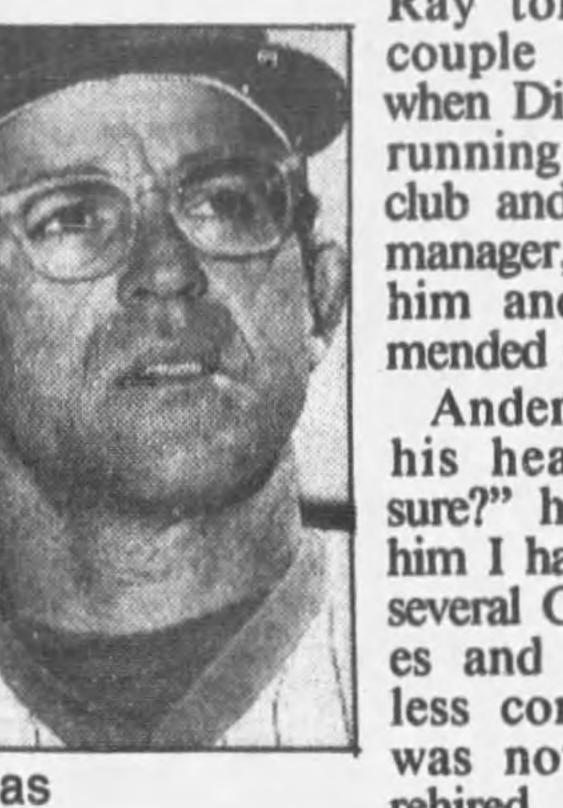
games out of the lead.

Like his coaches, Anderson expressed surprise.

"You know what I was just saying yester-day," Anderson said. "I was with Ray Shore in Milwaukee-he's now scouting for the Phillies-and Ray said, 'Tell me a guy who you think has really done a good job managing?'

"I told him: 'Tony LaRussa has done a good job with the Oakland club. Tom Treblehorn in Milwaukee. And Tom Kelly in Minnesota. But the guy for me is Cookie Rojas in California.'

"And Ray Shore said, 'I was hoping you'd say that because I feel the same way.' Then



Ray told me how a couple of years ago, when Dick Wagner was running the Houston club and looking for a manager, Wagner called him and Ray recommended Cookie Rojas." Anderson scratched his head. "Are you sure?" he asked. I told him I had checked with several California sources and they more or less confirmed Rojas was not likely to be rehired.

Rojas

No managers, of course, are immune unless they own the team, which explains why Connie Mack directed the old Philadelphia Athletics for 50 years. Even the two reigning dugout geniuses-Anderson and Whitey Herzog of the Cardinals-have been given the pink slip. Sparky was dismissed by the Cincinnati Reds, Herzog by the Texas Rangers and the Kansas City Royals.

Seven managers already have taken the fall this season: Larry Bowa, John Felske, Billy Martin, John McNamara, Cal Ripken, Chuck Tanner and Dick Williams. The list is certain to grow. If the Yankees don't win, Lou Piniella is also likely to go.

"There's not that many Herschel Walk-

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A postscript: When new Ohio State coach John Cooper was the head man at Arizona State, he had a player who

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Tribune photos

HIGH SCHOOLS

The curtain goes up, but some stars are missing

By Rich Strom

Chris Neuman's steady rise in the tennis world won't include a state championship.

The Downers Grove South junior, who finished second to Glenbrook North's Julie McKeon in last year's state tournament, has decided to bypass the high school season to prepare for the National Junior Indoors in November.

That just makes her the most recent loss from the ranks of the state's top players as the high school tennis season got off to a rocky start. At last year's state finals, five of the six top finishers were underclassmen. This fall, three of those five underclassmen won't be around for the start of the season, including McKeon, whose hand injury should be sufficiently healed that she gets a chance to defend her title Oct. 21-22 in the state meet. The top returnee is third-place finisher De-

her game, and that can best be served at this time by not playing high school tennis," said Milt Neuman, Chris' father and coach.

"The way high school tennis is set up really doesn't do too much to assist the gifted athlete. Their rules are much more geared to the average high school athlete. When you have someone one step above that, the Illinois High School Association actually legislates against improvement of a top-class athlete [by not allowing them to play in national tournaments during high school season and by legislating ways you can and cannot practice, and that's part of why she's doing what she's doing."

Libertyville sophomore Kaoru Shibata may be joining Neuman on the sidelines. Wildcat coach

I don't want to go out there and play

would be eligible just in time for sectionals. If it's 30 school days, it's adios.

"It's really an unfortunate situation for Kaoru," said Hunter, who expects her back to school Sept. 12. "She's the No. 1 player in her age group in Japan, but because she doesn't live there, she has to pay her own expenses to travel with their national team."

Another top-flight player in Illinois who has gotten her share of international competition, Lyons' Simone Lacher, won't be at the state meet, either. The sophomore, who finished in the top 16 at state last year, suffered torn ligaments in her ankle playing in a summer tournament in Europe and isn't expected to begin practicing again until October. Lyons coach Jim Love said Lacher's parents are leaning toward having her attend school in Europe this

So where does that leave the state of girls tennis in Illinois? Still in pretty good hands, as long as the stress fracture in the right hand of McKeon heals in the expected four to six weeks. "It's feeling better," said the senior, who was sidelined by the injury 11/2 weeks ago while playing for Chicago in a national city team tournament in Kansas City, Mo. "It doesn't hurt like it did when I went to the doctor. It doesn't hurt when you push on

Another tough year for managers.

But Anderson, who has the Tigers in first place in the AL East, continues to thrive. This is his 19th season at the helm: 9 years in Cincinnati and 10 in Detroit. He is the only manager to direct two teams to more than 700 victories and the only manager to have won the World Series in both the National and American Leagues.

And so I asked what makes him different from so many of the others.

Anderson was slow to reply.

"I'll tell you what I told Bobby Cox after the '84 season: 'The only difference between you and me [Cox was then the manager of the Toronto Blue Jays] is I could pick up the phone and say, 'Willie.' You pick up the phone and say, 'Hope.' "

Anderson was referring to relief pitcher Willie Hernandez, who in 1984 had a remarkable season: 32 saves in his first 32 opportunities. Hernandez's only botch came after the Tigers had clinched their division.

And so it's the players who win or lose, not the manager. Obviously, you agree with Casey Stengel, who after guiding the Yankees to one of 10 pennants, said, "I couldn't have done it without the players."

"You can put that in cement," Anderson said. "Take me and put me with the Baltimore club. Or with Atlanta. And I'll be doing exactly what they're doing."

I tried another approach. Who was the best manager he had managed or played against?

"The public won't believe this, but it was Herman Franks. He may have been the very best. Everybody thought he was a grumpy, old guy who spit tobacco juice on the front of his uniform. If I had to choose one, it's Herman. Once the game began, he was the best." I told Sparky that Herman Franks was also in my personal managerial pantheon. But Herman had two problems: He had a gruff manner and was constantly barking at sportswriters, many of whom were fearful of approaching him, and he was impatient with people who weren't as quick on the trigger as he was.

Oswego's Deborah Edelman (above) will be one of the state's top players. Glenbrook North's Julie McKeon (below right), the defending state champion, will miss the first four to six weeks because of an injury. Downers South's Chris Neuman, the state runner-up in 1987, won't compete at the high school level.



borah Edelman of Oswego.

In the last four years, Neuman has risen from 50th in the national rankings to the top 10. Her recently concluded summer schedule of eight tournaments included a second-place finish at the National 16s in Charleston, W.Va.

The 16-year-old will play at the 18-and-under level this fall, and in last year's state tournament, winning matches 6-0, 6-0 in the Des Plaines Valley League isn't the route to take in preparing for the step up.

"I don't want to go out there and play halfheartedly," said Neuman, who doesn't enjoy the luxury McKeon has of playing quality competition in dual meets in the north suburbs. "That would just make my game worse."

Instead, Neuman will get ready for the National Indoors by getting some rest before playing in a few satellite tournaments.

"What we have been looking at in terms of how she's going to pursue the next part of her tennis career is what will help her best develop, and part of that right now is getting off the tour a little bit and spending a lot of time continuing the development in

halfheartedly. That would just make my game worse. -Chris Neuman

Craig Hunter is awaiting word from the IHSA on whether the native of Japan, who finished fifth will be eligible.

She's playing in the Canadian Junior Open this week and the U.S. Junior Open next week, which would make her ineligible. Shibata's case is a unique one, however. She's playing with her national team, Japan, and an IHSA rule states a player can compete in a non-high school event if he or she is representing the U.S. If the rule is interpreted to cover anyone representing his or her country in an international competition, Shibata may be allowed to play.

"I've heard from other coaches that the best we probably can hope for is a 30-day suspension," said Hunter. "If that happens, then is it 30 calendar days or 30 school days?"

If it's 30 calendar days, Shibata

Edelman, who lost to Neuman in the state semifinals last year: before finishing third, is healthy and ready to go after a successful summer, during which she defeated Neuman and Maine East junior Mindy Weiner.

Throw in seniors Jenny Karges of Joliet St. Francis, Sheila Considine of Regina Dominican and Tina Coutretsis of Deerfield, sophomores Jennifer Nasser of Hersey (No. 6 last season) and Laura Dvorak of Lyons, and talented freshmen Anne Mall of Libertyville and Julie Kanya of Glenbrook North, and it should be an exciting battle for No. 1.

Top players

Julie McKeon, senior, Glenbrook North-Defending state champ will miss first 4-6 weeks with stress fracture in right hand.

Deborah Edelman, senior, Oswego—Finished third in state as a junior and fourth as a sophomore.

Kaoru Shibata, sophomore, Libertyville---Fifthplace finisher at state last year may be ruled ineligible by IHSA.

Laura Dvorak, sophomore, Lyons---Was 1-1 against teammate Simone Lacher (out with torn ankle ligaments) last season.

Jenny Karges, senior, Joliet St. Francis-Has beaten Edelman since state tournament and beat Weiner at National 18 Clay Courts.

Sheila Considine, senior, Regina Dominican-Lost to Nasser in fourth round at state, then lost to Weiner in playbacks.

Top teams

1. New Trier—How do defending state champs spell success? D-E-P-T-H. Senior Suzy Jacoby and sophomores Kim Andersen and Magan Mawicke return.

2. Homewood-Flossmoor—Nothing iffy about the Vikings' chances with the Okorafor sisters, junior Iffy, sophomore Ngozi and freshman Nnedi, leading the way.

junior doubles team of Stephanie Glover and Britt Johnson.

6. Libertyville---If Kaoru Shibata plays, she and freshman Anne Mall give the Wildcats the best 1-2 punch since New Trier's Michelle Torres and Maeve Quinlan in 1981.

7. Deerfield-Tina Coutretsis returns after missing her junior year with a foot injury. Freshmen Kristen Habinak and Corinna Marliss give a talented group an added lift.

Sparky laughed. "I know what you mean. I used to call him and say: 'Hey, Grump, tell me how do to it? I'm trying to improve.""

But the record shows that Franks' teams never finished higher than second.

"That's the trouble. The pubic judges the manager on how many games his team wins. A manager doesn't win games. All a manager can do is prevent losses. That's the way I look at it. This last weekend, in Milwaukee, we lost two games we should have won. We blew a 5lead in the eighth inning and a 9-4 lead in the sixth. We lost both games. It was my fault. The players had won those games. I gave them away. Two big leads and they both disappeared. If that doesn't prove I'm not a genius, nothing will."

told him it's a long season. Blowing two games isn't so bad.

Sparky Anderson smiled.

"I'm really 0 and 3. I blew another five-run lead earlier in the season. My players are playing better than I'm managing." Sure.

Jennifer Nasser, sophomore, Hersey-Sixthplace finisher could give coach Tom Pitchford his second state singles champ in 4 months.

Anne Mall, freshman, Libertyville-Was ranked in top 5 in the nation as a 12-year-old. Can keep up with anybody.

Mindy Weiner, junior, Maine East. Lost in quarterfinals to Edelman last year. Has had success against McKeon.

Tina Coutretsis, senior, Deerfield-Hasn't participated on high school level since playing behind Holly Lloyd as a freshman.

Others to watch-Julie Kanya, freshman, Glenbrook North; Iffy Okorafor, junior, Homewood-Flossmoor; Ngozi Okorafor, sophomore, Homewood-Flossmoor; Nnedi Okorafor, freshman, Homewood-Flossmoor; Eniko Bende, senior, Downers Grove North; Kristen Habinak, freshman, Deerfield.

3. Lyons-Simone Lacher (torn ligaments in ankle) will be missed, but Laura Dvorak heads quality group that includes her freshman sister, Kris, and Kim Wessel.

4. Glenbrook North-When the stress fracture in Julie McKeon's right hand heals, the defending state singles champ will join a formidable lineup that includes standout freshman Julie Kanya.

5. Hersey-The Huskies are loaded with young talent, led by sophomore Jennifer Nasser and the

8. Hinsdale Central-If the Red Devils find the right combinations at doubles, they'll be tough. The top two singles players are back: Carole Witteman and Missy Johnson.

9. Fremd—Four of the top six players are back, led by seniors Margaret Musgrave and Susie Hemphill. Ann Tierney and Carrie Bauer also return. 10. Oak Park-Lost 4 of 6 from last year's state runner-up, but still could make a run behind Lisa Pucci, Christa Berg, Christine Olah and Suzanne Trezevant

Hinsdale Central soccer team sets goals and scores them

Hinsdale Central soccer coach Dick Flesher is hoping to go all the way to the state supersectionals this season.

With eight starters returning from last fall's 7-11-3 team, he believes he can make it.

"I think if our kids will work as a team, we'll be in good shape," said Flesher, whose team opened its season Monday with a 5-0 victory over Stagg in the Hinsdale Central Tournament.

"We need to develop a real chemistry out there. In soccer, as in football, it's absolutely crucial that everyone does the same thing.'

Flesher expects big things from

HIGHLIGHTS

four-year starter Richard Andrusko and from Red Devils' most valuable player last year, Dan Buron, who is recovering from a recently broken ankle.

Monday's season-opening shutout was a good omen: Andrusko scored three goals and Steve Carmichael and Matt Guido had one apicce.

In the other Hinsdale tournament game, Leyden also opened with a shutout, defeating Glenbard North 1-0. Kim Chung scored the only goal.

Christian Brothers Cup-For St. Joseph, Scott Berndt, Gustavo Nicosia and Darren Dragicic all had two goals in a 7-1 victory over St. Patrick.

Lincoln-Way tournament-

Steve Andrzejewski's goal in the

third quarter tied the score 1-1,

and teammate Bjorn Skogstad

scored with 50 seconds left in the

fourth for a 2-1 Joliet Catholic

victory over Argo. Lincoln-Way

beat Ottawa 2-0 on goals by Tim

Rich Central 8, Joliet Central

2-Jeff Ahmadian scored four

goals and Chris Slater two to

power Rich Central in its opener.

Mudd and Mark Wasko.

Lake Zurich 1, Mundelein 1-Larry Piemontese's goal in the second quarter gave Mundelein the tie. Chad Cooper scored for Lake Zurich.

St. Viator 3, Glenbrook North 2-Goalies Joshua Silva and Mike Murphy shared 12 saves and Mike Kenny and John Olesyk each had a goal to lead St. Viator.

Lake Park 3, Elk Grove 1-Jeff Nicastro, Greg Boltz and Joe Cormany scored in Lake Park's opener.

Volleyball

Batavia d. East Aurora-

Karen Gruca served seven in a row to carry Batavia from a 6-1 deficit in the first game to a 15-8, 15-4 season-opening victory.

Naperville Central d. Lincoln-Way-Gretchen Gunther had eight kills and Stephanie Risek six in Naperville's 15-11, 15-2 opening victory.

St. Viator d. Streamwood-St. Viator defeated Streamwood for the first time in four years 11-15, 15-10, 15-7.

Palatine d. Gienbard North-Vikki Simonson had seven kills to lead Palatine to the 15-13, 15-0 triumph. Susie Bachmann added eight assists.